

Alhassanain (p) Network for Islamic Heritage and Thought

Nahjul Balaghah

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Audio of Nahjul Balaghah Links:

Sermons:

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Preface By the Compiler of Nahjul Balaghah, al- 'Allamah ash-Sharif ar-Radi

In the Name of Allah, the Merciful the Compassionate

So now, praise is due to Allah who has held praise as the price of His bounties, protection against His retribution, pathway to His paradises and means for multiplication of His good treatment, and blessings be on his Messenger, the Prophet of Mercy, the torch of the people, the chosen one from the origin of greatness and family of long-standing honours, the plantation of all engrossing glory and the branch of sublimity full of fruits and foliage, and on the members of his family who are lanterns of darkness, protection of the peoples, brilliant minarets of religion and high standards of greatness, Allah may shower upon them all blessings befitting their distinction as reward for their actions and suitable to the chastity of their lineage so long as the morning dawns and the stars twinkle.

In my early age at the dawn of youth I commenced writing a book on the characteristics of the Imams covering the account of their virtues and masterpieces of their utterances. The purpose of the compilation was stated by me in the beginning of the book. Therein I completed the portion relating to the account of Amir al-mu'minin 'Ali (peace be upon him) but I could not complete that part concerning the other Imams due to impediments of the time and obstacles of the days. I divided the book into several chapters and sections, in a manner for its last section to comprise whatever had been related to 'Ali's (p.b.u.h.) short utterances such as counsels, maxims and proverbs but not long lectures and detailed discourses.

A number of my friends and brothers-in-faith, while wondering at its delicate and blossoming expressions, admired the contents of this particular section, and desired me to complete a book which should cover all the forms of the utterances of Amir al-mu'minin, including diverse materials such as lectures, letters, counsels, ethics, etc., as they were convinced that the entire proceedings would comprise wonders and surprises of eloquence and rhetoric's, brilliant jewels of Arabic language and shining expressions about faith; collected in any other work, nor found together in any other book, because Amir al-mu'minin was the fountain of eloquence and the source of rhetoric's.

Through him the hidden delicacies of eloquence and rhetoric's came to light, and from him were learnt its principles and rules. Every speaker and orator had to tread on his footprints and every eloquent preacher availed of his utterances. Even then none could equal him and so the credit for being the first and foremost remained '4th him, because his utterances are those that carry the reflection of Divine knowledge and savour of the Prophet's utterance.

Accordingly, I acceded to their request as I knew that it meant great reward, handsome reputation and a treasure of recompense. The object of this compilation is to bring forth Amir al-mu'minin's greatness and superiority in the art of rhetoric's, in addition to his countless qualities and innumerable distinctions, and to show that he had risen to the highest pinnacle of this attainment; was singular among all those predecessors whose utterances are quoted here and there, whereas his own utterances are

such an on-rushing stream that its flow cannot be encountered and such a treasure of delicacies that cannot be matched.

Since I proudly trace my descent from him I have a pleasure of quoting a couplet of al-Farazdaq: "These are my forefathers O' Jarir. When we get together, can you claim forth their equals?"¹

In my view Amir al-mu'minin's utterances are divisible in three categories; firstly Sermons and Decrees, secondly Letters and Communications and thirdly Maxims and Counsels, Allah willing I have decided to compile first the Sermons, then letters, and finally the Maxims and Counsels, whilst proposing a separate Chapter for each category, leaving blank page in between each so that if anything has been left out and becomes handy afterwards it may be inserted therein, whereas any utterance which is routine or in reply to some question or has some other aim does not fit in with any of my divisions should be included in the category for which it is most suitable or to which its subject matter is most akin. In this compilation, some sections and sentences have crept in whose arrangement savours of disarray and disorderliness.

This is because I am only collecting the most representative brilliant utterances but do not wish to arrange or array them.

The characteristic of Amir al-mu'minin² in which he is un-paralleled and is shared by no one, is that his utterances on reclusion, piety, remembrance of Allah and admonition are such that when a person peruses them without bearing in mind that they are the words of a man who enjoys great and ruling position and who controls destinies of men he can have no doubt that it is the utterance of a man who has no interest other than reclusion and no activity save worshipping; who is confined to the interior of some house or the valley of some mountain where he hears nothing save his own murmur and sees no one except himself.

He would not believe that this is the utterance of one who plunges in battles with drawn sword severing heads and vanquishing the heroes and comes back with his sword dripping with blood and heart's fluid. And despite all this he is supreme among the recluse and chief among the saints.

This distinction is one of those astonishing characteristics of Amir al-mu'minin with which he collected in himself contradictory qualities and patched together diverse greatneses. I often mention these to my brethren-in-faith and put them wondering over it. It is indeed a subject to ponder over and think about.

Within this compilation, some repetition of words or subject matter are to be expected, as the utterances of Amir al-mu'minin have been known to be related in numerous forms. Sometimes it happened that a particular utterance was found in a particular form in a tradition and was taken down in that very form. Thereafter, the same utterance was found in some other tradition either with acceptable addition or in a more attractive style of expression. In such a case with a view to further the object of compilation and to preserve the beautiful utterance from being lost it was decided to repeat it elsewhere. It has also happened that a particular utterance had appeared earlier but due to remoteness it has been entered again. This is through omission, not by intent.

In spite of all this I do not claim that I have collected Amir al-mu'minin's utterances from all sources and that no single sentence of any type or construction has been left out. In fact I do not rule out the possibility that whatever has been left out might be more than what has been collected, and what has been in any knowledge and use is far less than what has remained beyond my reach. My task was to strive to the best of my capacity and it was Allah's part to make the way easy and guide me to the goal; Allah may will so.

Having completed my work, both in the collection and compilation of this manuscript; Nahjul Balaghah, the pathway of rhetoric's would be the appropriate title of the book, in that it would open the doors of eloquence for the reader and shorten its approach for him; the scholar and the student would meet their needs from it while the rhetoricians as well as the recluse would find their objectives in it as well.

In this book would be found a wonderful discussion on Allah's One-ness, Justness and His being free from body and form, that would quench every thirst (for learning), provide cure for every malady (of un-belief) and remove every doubt.

I seek from Allah succor, protection against straying, correctness of action and His assistance. I seek his protection against mistakes of heart before mistakes of tongue and against mistakes of speech before mistakes of action. He is my Reliance and lie is the best Trustee.

Notes

1. Al-Farazdaq, whose name was Hammam ibn Ghalib, belonged to the tribe of Bani Darim and was a notable poet. He was generally at loggerheads with another Arab poet named Jarir ibn 'Atiyyah and they showed their merit only in mutual abuse and boasting over each other. The quoted couplet of al-Farazdaq is a link from that chain, wherein he addresses Jarir saying "My forefathers were such as you have just heard, now you come forward with what your forefathers were, and if there were any one like mine, name them before all of us."

Reciting this couplet about his own fore father's as-Sayyid ar-Radi challenges everyone to bring forth their like, if any. Al-Farazdaq had addressed only Jarir but its quotation here has made it general and universal when its addressee is no more one single individual, but every person can consider himself to be its addressee. Despite this generality and universality the challenge to name their "like" remains unresponded like the Qur'anic challenge "then bring forth it's Like."

As-Sayyid ar-Radi has pointed at this relationship and distinction at such an appropriate moment that there can be no better occasion, because the greatness of the personality (namely Amir al-mu'minin) through whom he claims pride has already been mentioned and eyes have stood dazzled at the brilliance of his status while mind has acknowledged the sublimity of his position. Now hearts can easily be made to bow before the height and greatness of this individual who bears relationship to him.

Thus at the moment when heart and mind were already inclined as-Sayyid ar-Radi's eloquence-conscious eyes turned the sight towards himself as he was the ray of the sun whose abundant light dazzles the eye, and a scion of the same lineal tree whose root is in the earth and whose branch extends up to the sky. Now who is there who would remain unaffected by this relationship and distinction and refuse to acknowledge his greatness and sublimity?

2. In the world such persons are rarely found in whom besides one or two virtuous qualities other qualities might also attain prominence, much less the convergence of all contradictory qualities, because every temperament is not suited for the development of every quality, each quality has a peculiar tempo and each virtue needs a particular climate, and they are appropriate only for such qualities or virtues with which they accord, but

where there is contradiction instead of harmony the natural tendencies act as obstacles and do not allow any other quality to grow.

For example, generosity and bountifulness demand that a person should possess the feeling of pity and God-fearing so that on seeing anyone in poverty or want his heart would rend, and his feelings would be disturbed at other's tribulations while the dictates of bravery and fighting require that instead of pity and compassion there should be the passion of blood-shed and killing, prompting the person at every moment to enter into scuffle, ready to kill or be killed. These two qualities differ so widely that it is not possible to fuse the delicacies of generosity into the stiff manifestations of bravery just as bravery cannot be expected from Hatim nor generosity from Rustam.

But the personality of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib (p.b.u.h.) showed full accord with every greatness and complete harmony with every accomplishment, and there was no good attribute or accomplishment which he lacked, nor any robe of greatness or beauty which did not fit his body. Thus the contradictory qualities of generosity and bravery were found in him side by side. If he rained like the cloud in generosity, he also fought bravely standing firm as a mountain.

Thus his generosity and liberty of nature was of a degree that even during days of want and starvation whatever he earned as the wage of his day's toil its major part was distributed among the poor and the starving, and he would never allow a beggar to return disappointed from his door, so much so that even when in the battle field the enemy asked him his sword he threw it before him being confident of the prowess of his naked arm. An Urdu couplet says:

The unbeliever depends on his sword but the believer fights even without it.

And his bravery and courage was such that the onslaught of armies could not shake the firmness of his foot with the result that he achieved success in every encounter and even the bravest fighter could not save his life in an encounter with him. Thus Ibn Qutaybah writes in al-Ma'arif, "Whomever he encountered was prostrated."

The heartless nature of the brave is not won to thinking or pondering nor do they have anything to do with foresight or fore-judging but 'Ali (p.b.u.h.) had the quality of thinking of the highest degree. Thus, ash-Shafi'i said as follows: "what can I say about a man in whom three qualities existed with three other qualities that were never found together in any other man - generosity with want, bravery with sagacity and knowledge with practical achievements".

It was the result of this proper thinking and correct judgment that when after the death of the Prophet some people advised him to fight and promised to enlist warriors for him he rejected this advice, although on such occasions even a slight support is enough to encourage the heartless brave, yet 'Ali (p.b.u.h.) far-sighted mind at once foresaw that if battle was raged at that moment the voice of Islam would be submerged under the clutter of swords, and then even if success was achieved it would be said that the position was gained by dint of sword and that there was no right for it.

Thus, by withholding his sword on the one hand he provided protection to Islam and on the other saved his own right from the imputation of bloodshed. When the veins are full of daring blood and the bosom full of flames of anger and wrath it is extremely difficult to curb the passion of vengeance by adopting the course of forgiving and, despite authority and power, to pardon and overlook.

But 'Ali's (p.b.u.h.) metal used to shine on such occasions when his forgiving nature would accommodate even his blood-thirsty foes. Thus, at the end of the Battle of Jamal he made a general proclamation that no one who flees away from the field or seeks our protection would be molested and he let go without any punishment even such enemies as Marwan ibn Hakam and 'Abdullah ibn Zubayr.

And the treatment that he meted out to 'A'ishah matchless manifestation of his nobility and high character - is that in spite of her open enmity and rebellion he sent with her women in men's garb to escort her to Medina. By giving his own personal malice the garb of fundamental differences, man not only deceives others but also tries to keep himself under deception, and in these conditions such a delicate situation arises that a man fails to distinguish and separate his personal malice from a fundamental difference but easily mixing them together considers that he has followed the Command of Allah, and In this way he satisfies his passion for vengeance as well.

But Amir al-mu'minin's discerning eyes never got deceived nor did they willingly deceive themselves. Thus, on an occasion when after prostrating the opponent he placed himself on his bosom the vanquished opponent spat on his face. As man his rage should have risen and his hand should have moved quicker but instead of being enraged he got off from the man's bosom lest his action would be tarnished by personal feeling, and slayed him only after the anger had subsided.

There is nothing in common between combat and encounter and reclusion and God-fearing because one shows valour and courage while the other supplication and submission. But Amir al-mu'minin was a unique combination of both these qualities as his hands that were bound in devotion were equally active in the battlefield, and side by side with relaxing in seclusion for devotion he was a common visitor of the field of action.

The scene of the night of Harir puts human wit in astonishment and wonder when closing his eyes to the bloody action around he spread his prayer cloth and engaged himself in prayer with full peace of mind and heart while arrows were darting off sometimes over his head and sometimes from his right or left. But he remained engaged in Allah's remembrance without any fear or apprehension. After finishing he again cast his hand on the sword's handle and the fierce battle that then followed in unparalleled in history. The position was that on all sides there was such hue and cry and fleeing activity that even voices falling on the ears could not be discerned.

Of course, after every moment or so his own call of Allahu Akbar rose in the atmosphere and resounded in the ears, and every such call meant death of a foe. Those who counted these calls of takbir recorded their number as five hundred and twenty three.

The taste for learning and God-knowing does not combine with material activity but Amir al-mu'minin adorned the meetings of learning and scholarship along with war-like pursuits, arid he watered the field of Islam with springs of learning and truth along with shedding streams of blood (in battles).

Where there is perfection of learning, then even if there is not complete absence of action, there must no doubt exist shortness of action. But Amir al-mu'minin treaded the field of knowledge and action equally, as has been already shown in ash-Shafi'i's verse. Examples of harmony in utterance and action are quite rare but Amir al-mu'minin's action preceded his utterance, as he himself says: O people I do not exhort you to any action but that I myself first proceed towards it before you and do not desist you from any matter but that I first desist from it myself.

As soon as we think of a recluse and a pious man we visualise a face null of frowns because for piety severity of temper and hardness of face are inseparable so much so that the thought of a smile on the lips of a pious man is regarded as a sin. But despite extreme piety and self-denial Amir al-mu'minin always had such appearance that his light temper and brightness of face was apparent from his looks and his lips always bore playful smile.

He never showed frowns on his fore-head like the dry recluse, so much so that when people could not find any defect in him this very lightness of temper was taken to be his fault, while hard temper and bitter face was held to be a virtue. If a man possesses cheerful heart and joyous temper he cannot command authority over others; but Amir al-mu'minin's cheerful face was so full of awe and dignity that no eye could face it. Once Mu'awiyah tauntingly said "Allah bless 'Ali. He was a man of cheerful taste," then Qays ibn Sa'd retorted. "By Allah despite cheerful disposition and entertaining countenance he was more awe-inspiring than a hungry lion and this awe was due to his piety not like your awe over the non-descripts of Syria."

Where there is rule and authority there is also a crowd of servants and workers, checks of grandeur and eminence with equipment of pageantry but Amir al-mu'minin's period of rule was an example of the highest simplicity. In him people saw only a tattered turban in place of a Royal Crown, patched apparel in place of the regal robes and the floor of earth in place of the ruler's throne. He never liked grandeur and pageantry nor allowed show of external grandiosity. Once he was passing on a horse back when Harb ibn Shurahbil started walking with him and began talking. Then Amir al-mu'minin said to him, "Get back because walking on foot with me by one like you is mischievous for the ruler (me) and an insult to the believer (you).

In short he was such a versatile personality in whom numerous contradictory qualities had joined together and all the good attributes were centered in their full brightness as

though his oneself was a collection of several selves and each self was an astounding portrait of achievement which showed forth the delineation of distinction in its untained form, and on whose accomplishment one wonders with bewilderment.

A Persian couplet says:

The figure of my beloved is so beautiful that when I cast my glance on the body from head to foot, every spot thereof calls my attention claiming to be the most enchanting.

Lineage of 'Allamah ash-Sharif ar-Radi and his Life

In the galaxy of the outstanding Shia Scholars two brothers from an eminent family of the descendants of the Prophet (saw) outshone all the others due to their extraordinary brilliance in their time. They were al Sharif al-Murtada, who occupied the chair of his teacher as his successor to the marji'iyah of the Shi'ah world of scholarship, and his younger brother al-Sharif al-Radi, acclaimed to be a great genius of versatile talents, still unprecedented in the history of Islamic scholarship and Arabic literature.

Al-Radi (359-406/970-1015) died young, much earlier than his elder brother, but left his mark on the history of Muslim thought and poetry, which in no way can be described as less significant than that of any other Imamiyyah scholar who lived much longer than him. He shone on the bright horizon of the fourth century Hijri, regarded as the most extraordinary period of all round intellectual and cultural renaissance in the history of Islam, lived for a short period of forty-seven years but generated enough light to lead human quest for excellence for centuries.

Al-Radi's parents' lineage came directly from the Imams (as) of the Prophet's Family. From his father's side he descended from al-Imam Musa al-Kazim (as) ibn Ja'far al-Sadiq (as) ibn Muhammad al-Baqir (as) ibn 'Ali Zayn al-'Abidin (as) ibn al-Husayn (as) ibn 'Ali (as) in the following order: Abu Ahmad Husayn Tahir al-'Awhad Dhu al-Manaqib ibn Musa ibn Muhammad ibn Musa ibn Ibrahim al Mujab ibn Musa al-Kazim (as). All his forefathers were eminent in their own right. From his mother's side he descended from the famous al-Nasir al- Kabir also known as Nasir al-Haqq (225 or 230-304/840 or 844-916) who descended from the second son of al-Imam 'Ali ibn al-Husayn (as) ibn Ali (as).

Al-Sayyid al-Murtada, in Nasiriyyat, a commentary upon al-Nasir al-Kabir's book Mi'at mas'alah, writes that: My mother Fatimah [was] the daughter of Abu Muhammad al-Husayn al-Nasir (al-Saghir) ibn Abi al-Husayn Ahmad ibn Abi Muhammad al-Hasan al-Nasir al-Kabir (the conqueror and ruler of Daylam) ibn al-Husayn ibn 'Umar al-Ashraf ibn Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib.

Al-Sharif al-Radi's name was Muhammad and his kunyah was Abu al Hasan. He was the second son of al-Husayn ibn Ahmad, known as al-Tahir al-Awhad and Dhu al-Manaqib. Al-Radi's title 'al-Sharif' was a common title used for those who were descendants of the Prophet (saw) from both the maternal and paternal sides.

The word which is now commonly used for al-Sharif is al-Sayyid in Persian and Urdu. Al-Radi's father was the most eminent among the Alawids of his time. He held all the important positions which a Shi'ah could attain under the 'Abbasid regime during the fourth century H. Al-Thalibi (d. 429), in Yatimat al-dahr, a bibliography of poets and writers of Arabic, writes about the father of al-Radi: His forefathers were held in high respect by the people of Iraq.

His father, Abu Ahmad for a long time occupied the post of Naqib of the Talibiyyin, a position that empowered him to look after the Sayyids of Abu Talib's lineage. At the same time he held the office of the Nazarat Diwan al-mazalim (headship of the highest court of appeal) as well as the office of the

chief of hajjaj (pilgrims to the Holy Ka'bah). In the year 380/990 he relinquished these posts in favour of his son al-Sayyid al-Radi.

Ibn Abi al-Hadid (d. 655 or 656/1257 or 1258), in his preface to the *Sharh Nahjul Balaghah*, confirms this statement saying: His father al-Naqib Abu Ahmad was held in high regard at the courts of Banu 'Abbas and the rulers of Al Dayalimah, and was entitled as al-Tahir Dhu al-Manaqib. Baha' al-Dawlah al-Daylami called him al-Tahir al-'Awhad, which meant "uniquely purified". He was appointed the Naqib of the Talibiyin five times, and apart from this job; he occasionally performed duties of great political sensitivity also; for instance, he served as a negotiator to settle certain disputes between the Caliphs and the Buwayhids on the one hand, and the Hamdani rulers on the other.

Because of his political influence he was so feared by Baha' al-Dawlah's son 'Adud al-Dawlah (reigned 367-72/978-83), that in 369/980 he imprisoned him in a fort in Fars, where he underwent the hardships of prison life for seven years. 'Adud al-Dawlah (d. 372/982-83) arrested along with him his brother Abu 'Abd Allah ibn Musa and another influential 'Alawid, Muhammad ibn 'Umar, also. Abu Muhammad, the chief qadi of Baghdad, and Abu Nasr Khwanshadh were also arrested and imprisoned in the same year, 369/980.

With Abu Ahmad's arrest his entire property was confiscated, and his family had to live for seven long years in dire poverty. It was, most probably, in this period that al-Radi and his brother al-Murtada were brought to al-Shaykh al-Mufid by their mother for being educated in fiqh and other religious sciences. And perhaps it was during this period that Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Ahmad al-Tabari, a Sunni Maliki faqih, gifted a house to al-Sayyid al-Radi when he came to know that the brightest of his pupils had no residence of his own for his wife and had to live with his mother.

During the period of his father's imprisonment, al-Radi composed many poems to pay tribute to him. Abu Ahmad was set free by Sharaf al-Dawlah, son of Adud al-Dawlah, while proceeding to Baghdad from Kirman in 376/986-87 to depose his brother Samsam al-Dawlah, who also had not released Abu Ahmad and other captives. It is to be noted that 'Adud al-Dawlah was a Shiah of Zaydi inclination, but for him, like most of the monarchs of the Muslim world, political expediency and interest were much more important than the matter of faith.

As even the 'Abbasid caliph of his time was afraid of al-Radi's connection with the Prophet's Family and his influence among the people, probably 'Adud al-Dawlah was also afraid of al-Radi's father, fearing that if at any time he aspired to wrest power out of his hands he could pose a serious challenge to him. Abu al-Faraj al-Jawzi has also referred to the arrest of Abu Ahmad in the course of recording the events of the year 369/979-80.

The influence of Abu Ahmad and his family assumed greater dimensions in the eyes of the rulers due to the tense and highly explosive situation created by the rivalries and conflicts between the Sunnis and the Shi'ah and the Turks and the Daylamites. These clashes resulted in looting, killing and

burning of al-Karkh, a predominantly Shi'ah locality, for one week continuously, in the year 361/971-72, that was repeated in 363/974.

Moreover, there was a conflict between Bakhtiyar al-Daylami, the vizier, and 'Adud al-Dawlah, in which the latter emerged victorious later. Abu Ahmad was on good terms with Bakhtiyar also, which was a sufficient reason for 'Adud al-Dawlah to regard him as an enemy. Abu Ahmad died at the age of 97 in 403/1012-13, and the high offices held by him fell upon al-Radi.

From his mother's side al-Radi belonged to a lineage that was more distinguished for its political activities than the former. His grand-father al-Nasir al-Saghir al-Husayn ibn Ahmad (d. 368/979) was a pious and respected man. According to al-Sayyid al-Murtada he was held in high regard by Mu'izz al-Dawlah (reigned 320-56/932-967), who appointed him to the office of the Naqib of al-Talibiyin in 362/972-73 when Abu Ahmad was stripped of this post. Al Wasir al-Saghir's father Ahmad ibn al-Hasan served as a commander in his father's army, and was known for both his valour and virtue.

Al-Nasir al-Kabir whose name was al-Hasan ibn 'Ali, was responsible for propagating Islam among the Daylamites after himself conquering Daylam. He was a commander of the army of his cousin Muhammad ibn Zayd al-'Alawi, popularly known as al-Da'i al-Kabir, who conquered Mazandaran in 250/864 and laid down the foundation of the 'Alawis' rule there. Al-Mas'udi, in Muruj al-dhahab, has mentioned him at two places as al-'Atrush, which meant "the deaf".

At one occasion, he writes: Al-'Atrush appeared on the scene of Tabaristan (Mazandaran) in the year 301/913-14, and drove away the 'Abbasids, called "the Black robed people", from there. He was a gifted man with great intelligence, scholarship, knowledge and conviction of faith. He lived for a long time among the Daylamites, who were Zoroastrians, and some even pagans, living in complete darkness.

The people of Gilan also lived in the same conditions. Al-Nasir al-Kabir invited them to worship the One God, and they embraced Islam accepting his call. In those days the Muslims reached Qazwin and the adjoining areas. Al Nasir al Kabir built a mosque in Daylarn.

At another place, mentioning al-'Atrush's efforts to convert the Zoroastrians to the fold of Islam, he writes that it was he who built mosques in the cities of Tabaristan (Present Mazandaran and Gilan), and extended the frontiers of the Muslim rule up to Qazwin and Chalus.

There is a common misunderstanding regarding al-Nasir al-Kabir's faith. As he supported the Daiis of the Zaydi rule and was instrumental in laying the foundation of the Zaydi dynasty, he was called a Zaydi by many historians as well as by the Zaydis themselves. Al-Najashi (d. 450/1058), a contemporary of al-Radi and al-Murtada, dispels such claims: Al Hasan ibn Ali ibn al-Hasan ibn 'Umar ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib Abu Muhammad al-'Atrush believed in the imamah, and wrote several books in strict adherence to this faith, viz. Kitab al-'imamah, Kitab at-tallic, a larger book on the Imamah, Kitah Fadak wa al-khums, Kitabb al-shuhada',

Kitab fasahat Abi Talib, Kitab ma'adhir Bani Hashim fi ma nuqim 'alayhim, Kitab ansab al-A'immah wa mawalidihium (up to the Twelfth Imam (as)).

However, it seems to be a mere conjecture that he was a Twelver Imami, for al-Murtada, his grandson, in al-Nasiriyyat, criticized some of his views for being against the Twelver Imami faith. 'Ali Dawani, subscribing to the views of some early Shi'i 'ulama', holds that he was a Twelver Imami but without any conclusive evidence. Most probably he was a Zaydi Shi'ah. According to Ibn Abi al-Hadid, he fought battles against the chiefs of the Samanids and died in Mazandaran in 304/916 at the ripe age of seventy-nine. Ahmad ibn 'Ali ibn Dawud al-Hasani, known as Ibn 'Anabah (d. 828/1425), a Sunni descendant of the Hasani Sayyids, in his famous work 'Umdat al-talib, describes him as being called Nasir al-Haqq, and writes that he died in Amul in the year 303/915.

Al-Nasir al-Kabir's father, 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, and his grandfather, al-Husayn ibn 'Ali, were both regarded as eminent scholars and men of virtue. The latter is reported to be a narrator of hadith also. 'Umar ibn 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, son of the Fourth Imam (as) and known as al-'Ashraf, was among the eminent personalities of the 'Alawids. Al-Shaykh al-Mufid, in al-'Irshad, writes about him: 'Umar b. 'Ali b. al-Husayn, peace be on them, was a man of merit and of high standing.

He was in charge of the endowments (sadaqat) of the Apostle of God may God bless him and his Family, and the endowments (sadaqat) of the Commander of the Faithful, peace be on him. He was pious and God-fearing. Dawud ibn al-Qasim, on the authority of al-Husayn ibn Zayd, who was a nephew of 'Umar al-'Ashraf, described him to be extremely honest and cautious in dealing with the matters related to the income of the endowments and their proper management. Some traditions of the Prophet (saw) and the Imams (as) are also reported on his authority. He was treated with respect even in the court of the Umayyads.

Al-Sayyid al-Radi's mother Fatimah bint al-Da'i al-Saghir was a pious and learned lady, who brought her two sons and daughters up with care and arranged for their proper education during the seven-year period of her husband's imprisonment. It is said that al-Shaykh al-Mufid wrote his book Ahkam al-nisa' at her instance, as she asked him to compile a book according to Islamic Law, which could serve as a guide for women.

It was she who took her two sons to al-Shaykh al-Mufid after al-Murtada and al-Radi had completed primary stage of their education. Ibn Abi al-Hadid, in Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, narrates a story which is indicative of the high position of this lady of great virtue. The story goes that one night al-Shaykh al-Mufid dreamt that Fatimah (as), the Prophet's daughter, came to his place in Karkh bringing her two young sons, al-Hasan (as) and al-Husayn (as), and asked that he take up the task of teaching them. Al-Mufid awoke amazed at the dream.

The next morning Fatimah, mother of al-Sayyid al-Murtada and al-Sayyid al-Radi, came to his mosque surrounded by her servants, bringing her two small sons, asking that he teach them. Al-Sayyid al Radi in his elegy on her death paid rich tributes to her virtue, piety, religiosity, courage and other qualities of the heart and the mind. She died in the month of Dhu

al-Hijjah 385/995. Al-Sayyid al-Radi was twenty-six years old at the time of his mother's death.

Al-Radi was born in 359/970 four years after his elder brother al-Murtada. His genius came to the notice of his family and teachers at a very young age. He started composing poetry at the tender age of nine. His wit and alertness of mind surprised all. He went to different teachers to study various branches of Islamic sciences, Arabic language and literature. He studied Sharh al-'Usul al-khamsah and Kitab al-'umdah under al-Qadi 'Abd al Jabbar al-Mu'tazili (b. circa. 325/936, d.415/1025), and studied Arabic language and grammar under Abu Sa'id al-Hasan ibn 'Abd Allah ibn Marzban al-Sirafi (284-368/897-979), an expert of Arabic language and literature.

He also went to study the language and literary sciences to Abu Muhammad al-'Asadi al-'Akfani, Abu al-Hasan 'Ali ibn 'isa al-Rummani (296-384/908-94), Abu al-Fath 'Uthman ibn Jinn; (330-392/942-1002) and Ibn Nubatah (335-94/946-1004). He studied hadith under Muhammad ibn 'Imran al-Marzabani (d. 378/988) and Abu Masa Harun ibn Musa al-Tal'akbari (d. 385/995). His teacher in fiqh, besides al-Mufid, was Muhammad ibn al-'Abbas al- Khwarizmi (d. 383/993).

Abu Hafs 'Umar ibn Ibrahim al-Kinani was his teacher in qira'ah and the Quran. Most of his teachers were eminent scholars and writers of Arabic. He had started teaching at the young age of seventeen when he was himself studying. He completed his education at the age of twenty. Very soon he acquired fame as a scholar, commentator of the Quran, thinker and poet. His fame as a poet overshadowed his excellence in all other fields.

Among his teachers a few other names may be mentioned: Abu 'Ali al-Hasan ibn Ahmad al-Farsi (307-77/919-87), a Mutazili; Abu al-Hasan al-Karkhi; 'Ali ibn 'Isa ibn Salih al-Rub'i (328-420/939-40-1029); and Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Ahmad al-Tabari (d. 393/1002-3), a faqih of the Maliki school. In those days due to a climate of tolerance at least among scholars and students, the Shi'ah and Sunni students used to attend classes of teachers belonging to different sects. A number of al-Radi's teachers were Sunni and Mu'tazili.

Al-Sharif al-Radi had intimate friendly relations of mutual respect and love with eminent contemporary scholars, poets and writers professing different faiths, which was an indication of his broad humanism and tolerance. Al-Sahib ibn 'Abbad (326-85/938-95), one of the most influential of Muslim prime ministers and a great scholar of his age, was a patron of scholars and poets.

Yaqut al-Hamawi says that five hundred poets composed qasa'id in his praise. Al-Radi, despite being much younger to him, was highly respected by him. Abu al-Hasan al-'Umari, who is reported to be alive till the end of the first half of the fifth century Hijrah, was from the descendants of 'Umar ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, and was an expert of genealogy. He was in close contact with the al-Sharif family. Abu al-'Ala' al-Ma'arri (363-449/973-1057), one of the greatest poets of Arabic, attended al-Murtada's lectures and was a great admirer of al-Radi.

Upon receiving the news of al-Radi's death in his hometown, al-Ma'arri paid rich tributes to him in an elegy, included in his book *Siqt al-zand*. Al-Husayn ibn Ahmad al-Nili al-Baghdadi, known as Ibn al-Hajjaj al-Baghdadi (d. 391/1001) was much respected by al-Radi, who compiled two selections of his poetry, viz., 'al-Hasan min shi'r al-Husayn' and 'al-Ziyadat fishi'r Ibn al-Hajjaj, and also wrote an elegy on his death. Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn Hilal al-Harrani al-Sabi (d. 384/ 994), a Sabaeen by faith and a confidant of the Buwayhids, was so close to al-Radi that once he wrote in a poem addressed to al-Radi: When you get the caliphate, do not forget my wife, son and family...

Al-Radi wrote a moving, emotionally charged elegy on his death, the first couplet of which became very famous: Do you know whose coffin people are carrying? Do you know how was the light of our company extinguished? People, particularly the Sunnis, admonished al-Radi saying how could a man like him, belonging to the family of the Prophet (saw), praise a non-believer. Al-Radi said in reply that he paid tribute to his learning and art, not to his faith. Whenever he passed by the side of the grave-yard where al-Sabi was buried, he used to get down from the horse as a mark of respect for the departed soul of the friend and the poet.

Nine years after al-Sabi's death al-Radi happened to visit the grave-yard and saw his friend's grave, he composed another qasidah addressing himself to the departed soul in the following words: Had my companions not been angry with me for stopping near you, I would have saluted your grave O Abu Ishaq!

Al-Radi compiled a selection of al-Sabi's poetry *Mukhtar Shir Ibn Ishaq al-Sabi*. Among al-Radi's close friends were two other scholarly persons. Shapur Ibn Ardshir (d. 416/1025), who served as the vizier of the Buwayhids till their fall at the hands of the Saljuqis, and who had placed his huge library of rare value at the disposal of al Radi; and Fakhr al Mulk, the vizier of Baha al Dawlah, who led al Radi's funeral congregation, and was himself murdered by Sultan Dawlah in one year after al Radi's death, that is in 407/1016.

SERMONS

Sermon 1: Praise is due to Allah whose worth cannot be described...

In this sermon he recalls the creation of Earth and Sky and the creation of Adam and in it he mentions the Hajj

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام) يذكر فيها ابتداء خلق السماء والأرض، وخلق آدم عليه الصلاة والسلام
(فيها ذكر الحج)
وتحتوي على حمد الله، وخلق العالم، وخلق الملائكة، واختيار الانبياء، ومبعث النبي،
والقرآن، والاحكام الشرعية)

Praise is due to Allah whose worth cannot be described by speakers, whose bounties cannot be counted by calculators and whose claim (to obedience) cannot be satisfied by those who attempt to do so, whom the height of intellectual courage cannot appreciate, and the divings of understanding cannot reach; He for whose description no limit has been laid down, no eulogy exists, no time is ordained and no duration is fixed. He brought forth creation through His Omnipotence, dispersed winds through His Compassion, and made firm the shaking earth with rocks.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَبْلُغُ مَدْحَتَهُ الْقَائِلُونَ، وَلَا يُحْصِي نِعْمَاءَهُ الْعَادُّونَ، وَلَا يُؤَدِّي حَقَّهُ الْمُجْتَهِدُونَ، الَّذِي لَا يُدْرِكُهُ بُعْدُ الْهَيْمِ، وَلَا يَنَالُهُ غَوْصُ الْفِطَنِ، الَّذِي لَيْسَ لِصِفَتِهِ حَدٌّ مَحْدُودٌ، وَلَا نَعْتٌ مَوْجُودٌ، وَلَا وَقْتُ مَعْدُودٌ، وَلَا أَجَلٌ مَمْدُودٌ. فَطَرَ الْخَلَائِقَ بِقُدْرَتِهِ، وَنَشَرَ الرِّيَّاحَ بِرَحْمَتِهِ، وَوَتَدَّ بِالصُّحُورِ مَيْدَانَ أَرْضِهِ.

The foremost in religion is the acknowledgement of Him, the perfection of acknowledging Him is to testify Him, the perfection of testifying Him is to believe in His Oneness, the perfection of believing in His Oneness is to regard Him Pure, and the perfection of His purity is to deny Him attributes, because every attribute is a proof that it is different from that to which it is attributed and everything to which something is attributed is different from the attribute.

Thus whoever attaches attributes to Allah recognises His like, and whoever recognises His like regards Him two; and whoever regards Him as two recognises parts for Him; and whoever recognises parts for Him mistook Him; and whoever mistook Him pointed at Him; and whoever pointed at Him admitted limitations for Him; and whoever admitted limitations for Him numbered Him. Whoever said: 'In what is He?', held that He is contained; and whoever said: 'On what is He?', held He is not on something else.

أَوَّلُ الدِّينِ مَعْرِفَتُهُ، وَكَمَالُ مَعْرِفَتِهِ التَّصَدِيقُ بِهِ، وَكَمَالُ التَّصَدِيقِ بِهِ تَوْحِيدُهُ، وَكَمَالُ تَوْحِيدِهِ الإِخْلَاصُ لَهُ، وَكَمَالُ الإِخْلَاصِ لَهُ نَفْيُ الصِّفَاتِ عَنْهُ، لِشَهَادَةِ كُلِّ صِفَةٍ أَنَّهَا غَيْرُ الْمُوصُوفِ، وَشَهَادَةِ كُلِّ مَوْصُوفٍ أَنَّهُ غَيْرُ الصِّفَةِ، فَمَنْ وَصَفَ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ فَقَدْ قَرَنَهُ، وَمَنْ قَرَنَهُ فَقَدْ تَنَاهَى، وَمَنْ تَنَاهَى فَقَدْ جَزَّأَهُ، وَمَنْ جَزَّأَهُ فَقَدْ جَهَّلَهُ، وَمَنْ جَهَّلَهُ فَقَدْ أَشَارَ إِلَيْهِ، وَمَنْ أَشَارَ إِلَيْهِ فَقَدْ حَدَّهُ، وَمَنْ حَدَّهُ فَقَدْ عَدَّهُ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: «فِيمَ» فَقَدْ ضَمَّنَهُ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: «عَلَامٌ؟» فَقَدْ أَحْلَى مِنْهُ.

He is a Being, but not through phenomenon of coming into being. He exists but not from non-existence. He is with everything but not in physical nearness. He is different from everything but not in physical separation. He acts but without connotation of movements and instruments. He sees even when there is none to be looked at from among His creation. He is only One, such that there is none with whom He may keep company or whom He may miss in his absence.

كَائِنٌ لَا عَنْ حَدَثٍ، مَوْجُودٌ لَا عَنْ عَدَمٍ، مَعَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَا بِمُقَارَنَةٍ، وَعَظِيمٌ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَا بِمُقَابَلَةٍ، فَاعِلٌ لَا بِمَعْنَى الْحَرَكَاتِ وَالْأَلَةِ، بَصِيرٌ إِذْ لَا مَنْظُورَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ، مُتَوَحِّدٌ إِذْ لَا سَكَنَ يَسْتَأْنِسُ بِهِ وَلَا يَسْتَوْحِشُ لِفَقْدِهِ.

The Creation of the Universe

خلق العالم

He initiated creation most initially and commenced it originally, without undergoing reflection, without making use of any experiment, without innovating any movement, and without experiencing any aspiration of mind. He allotted all things their times, put together their variations gave them their properties, and determined their features knowing them before creating them, realising fully their limits and confines and appreciating their propensities and intricacies.

أَنْشَأَ الخَلْقَ إِتْشَاءً، وَابْتَدَأَهُ ابْتِدَاءً، بِإِلَاقَةِ رُؤْيَا أَجَالِهَا، وَلَا بِتَجْرِبَةِ اسْتِفَادَتِهَا، وَلَا حَرَكَةَ أَحَدِثَتِهَا، وَلَا هَمَامَةَ نَفْسٍ اضْطَرَبَ فِيهَا. أَحَالَ الأَشْيَاءَ لِأَوْقَاتِهَا، وَلَا مَ بَيْنَ مُحْتَلِفَاتِهَا، وَعَزَّرَ عَرَائِزَهَا، وَالزَمَّهَا أَشْبَاحَهَا، عَالِمًا بِمَا قَبْلَ ابْتِدَائِهَا، مُحِيطًا بِحُدُودِهَا وَانْتِهَائِهَا، عَارِفًا بِمَرَائِبِهَا وَأَخْنَائِهَا.

When Almighty created the openings of atmosphere, expanse of firmament and strata of winds, He flowed into it water whose waves were stormy and whose surges leapt one over the other. He loaded it on dashing wind and breaking typhoons, ordered them to shed it back (as rain), gave the wind control over the vigour of the rain, and acquainted it with its limitations. The wind blew under it while water flowed furiously over it.

ثُمَّ أَنْشَأَ . سُبْحَانَهُ . فَتَقَّ الْأَجْوَاءَ، وَشَقَّ الْأَرْجَاءَ، وَسَكَّاتِكَ الْهُوَاءَ، فَأَجَازَ فِيهَا مَاءً
مُتَلَاظِمًا تَيَّارُهُ، مُتْرَاكِمًا زَحَّارُهُ، حَمَلَهُ عَلَى مَتْنٍ . الرِّيحَ الْعَاصِفَةَ، وَالرَّعْرَعَ الْقَاصِفَةَ، فَأَمَرَهَا
بِرِدِّهِ، وَسَلَطَهَا عَلَى شِدِّهِ، وَفَرَنَهَا إِلَى حَلِّهِ، الْهُوَاءَ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا فَيَتَّقِ، وَالْمَاءَ مِنْ فَوْقِهَا دَفِيقًا .

Then Almighty created forth wind and made its movement sterile, perpetuated its position, intensified its motion and spread it far and wide. Then He ordered the wind to raise up deep waters and to intensify the waves of the oceans. So the wind churned it like the churning of curd and pushed it fiercely into the firmament throwing its front position on the rear and the stationary on the flowing till its level was raised and the surface was full of foam.

Then Almighty raised the foam on to the open wind and vast firmament and made there-from the seven skies and made the lower one as a stationary surge and the upper one as protective ceiling and a high edifice without any pole to support it or nail to hold it together.

Then He decorated them with stars and the light of meteors and hung in it the shining sun and effulgent moon under the revolving sky, moving ceiling and rotating firmament.

ثُمَّ أَنْشَأَ سُبْحَانَهُ رِيحًا اعْتَقَمَ مَهَبُّهَا، وَأَدَامَ مُرَبَّهَا، وَأَعْصَفَ مَجْرَاهَا، وَأَبْعَدَ مَشَاهَا، فَأَمَرَهَا
بِتَصْفِيْقِ الْمَاءِ الرَّخَّارِ، وَإِنَازَةِ مَوْجِ الْبِحَارِ، فَمَخَصَّصَتْهُ مَخْضَ السَّمَاءِ، وَعَصَفَتْ بِهِ عَصْفَهَا
بِالْفَضَاءِ، تَرُدُّ أَوْلَهُ عَلَى آخِرِهِ، وَسَاجِيَهُ عَلَى مَائِهِ، حَتَّى عَبَّ عُبَابُهُ، وَرَمَى بِالزَّبْدِ زَكَامُهُ،
فَرَفَعَهُ فِي هَوَاءٍ مُنْفَتِقٍ، وَجَوٍّ مُنْفَهَقٍ، فَسَوَّى مِنْهُ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ، جَعَلَ سُفْلَاهُنَّ مَوْجًا مَكْفُوفًا،
وَعُلْيَاهُنَّ سَقْفًا مَحْفُوظًا، وَسَمَكًا مَرْفُوعًا، بَعِيرَ عَمَدٍ يَدْعُمُهَا، وَلَا دِسَارَ يَنْظُمُهَا.

ثُمَّ زَيَّنَهَا بِزِينَةِ الْكَوَاكِبِ، وَضِيَاءِ الثَّوَاقِبِ، وَأَجْرَى فِيهَا سِرَاجًا مُسْتَطِيرًا، وَقَمَرًا مُنِيرًا: فِي
فَلَكَ دَائِرٍ، وَسَقْفٍ سَائِرٍ، وَرَقِيمٍ مَائِرٍ.

The Creation of the Angels

خلق الملائكة

Then He created the openings between high skies and filled them with all classes of His angels. Some of them are in prostration and do not kneel up. Others in kneeling position and do not stand up. Some of them are in array and do not leave their position. Others are extolling Allah and do not get tired. The sleep of the eye or the slip of wit, or languor of the body or the effect of forgetfulness does not effect them.

Among them are those who work as trusted bearers of His message, those who serve as speaking tongues for His prophets and those who carry to and fro His orders and injunctions. Among them are the protectors of His creatures and guards of the doors of the gardens of Paradise.

Among them are those also whose steps are fixed on earth but their necks are protruding into the skies, their limbs are getting out on all sides, their shoulders are in accord with the columns of the Divine Throne, their eyes are downcast before it, they have spread down their wings under it and they

have rendered between themselves and all else curtains of honour and screens of power.

They do not think of their Creator through image, do not impute to Him attributes of the created, do not confine Him within abodes and do not point at Him through illustrations.

ثُمَّ فَتَقَّ مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَوَاتِ الْعُلَا، فَمَلَأَهُنَّ أَطْوَاراً مِنْ مَلَائِكِيهِ:
 مِنْهُمْ سُجُودٌ لَا يَزْكَعُونَ، وَرُكُوعٌ لَا يَنْتَصِبُونَ، وَصَافُونَ لَا يَنْزَائِلُونَ، وَمُسَبِّحُونَ لَا يَسْأَمُونَ،
 لَا يَعْشَاهُمْ نَوْمُ الْعِيُونَ، وَلَا سَهُوَ الْعُقُولِ، وَلَا فَتْرَةُ الْإِبْدَانِ، وَلَا عَفْلَةُ النَّسْيَانِ.
 وَمِنْهُمْ أَمْنَاءٌ عَلَى وَحْيِهِ، وَالسِّنَّةُ إِلَى رُسُلِهِ، وَمُخْتَلِفُونَ بِقَضَائِهِ وَأَمْرِهِ.
 وَمِنْهُمْ الْحَفَظَةُ لِعِبَادِهِ، وَالسَّنَدَةُ لِأَبْوَابِ جَنَانِهِ.
 وَمِنْهُمْ الثَّابِتَةُ فِي الْأَرْضِينَ السُّفْلَى أَقْدَامُهُمْ، وَالْمَارِقَةُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ الْعُلْيَا أَعْنَاقُهُمْ، وَالخَارِجَةُ
 مِنَ الْأَقْطَارِ أَرْكَانُهُمْ، وَالْمُنَاسِبَةُ لِقَوَائِمِ الْعَرْشِ أَكْتَافُهُمْ، نَاكِسَةٌ دُونَهُ أَبْصَارُهُمْ، مُتَلَفِّعُونَ تَحْتَهُ
 بِأَجْنِحَتِهِمْ، مَضْرُوبَةٌ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَنْ دُونَهُمْ حُجُبُ الْعِرَّةِ، وَأَسْتَارُ الْقُدْرَةِ، لَا يَتَوَهَّمُونَ رَبَّهُمْ
 بِالتَّصْوِيرِ، وَلَا يُجْرُونَ عَلَيْهِ صِفَاتِ المِصْنُوعِينَ، وَلَا يُحْدُونَهُ بِالْأَمَاكِينِ، وَلَا يُشِيرُونَ إِلَيْهِ
 بِالتَّنَاطُرِ .

Description of the Creation of Adam

منها: في صفة خلق آدم (عليه السلام)

Allah collected from hard, soft, sweet and sour earth, clay which He dripped in water till it got pure, and kneaded it with moisture till it became gluey. From it He carved an image with curves, joints, limbs and segments. He solidified it till it dried up for a fixed time and a known duration. Then He blew into it out of His Spirit whereupon it took the pattern of a human being with mind that governs him, intelligence which he makes use of, limbs that serve him, organs that change his position, sagacity that differentiates between truth and untruth, tastes and smells, colours and species. He is a mixture of clays of different colours, cohesive materials, divergent contradictories and differing properties like heat, cold, softness and hardness, grief and joy.

ثُمَّ جَمَعَ سُبْحَانَهُ مِنْ حَزْنِ الْأَرْضِ وَسَهْلَيْهَا، وَعَذْبِهَا وَسَبَبِهَا، تُرْبَةً سَنَهَا بِالمَاءِ حَتَّى
 خَلَصَتْ، وَلَاطَهَا بِالْبَلَّةِ حَتَّى لَزِبَتْ، فَجَبَلَ مِنْهَا صُورَةً ذَاتَ أَحْنَاءٍ وَوُضُولٍ، وَأَعْضَاءٍ
 وَوُضُولٍ: أَجْمَدَهَا حَتَّى اسْتَمْسَكَتْ، وَأَصْلَدَهَا حَتَّى صَلَصَلَتْ، لَوْقَتْ مَعْدُودٍ، وَأَجَلَ مَعْلُومٍ،
 ثُمَّ نَفَخَ فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِهِ فَمَثَلَتْ إِنْسَاناً ذَا أَدْهَانَ يُجِيلُهَا، وَفَكَرَ يَتَصَرَّفُ بِهَا، وَجَوَارِحَ يَخْتَدِمُهَا،
 وَأَدْوَاتَ يُقَلِّبُهَا، وَمَعْرِفَةَ يَفْرُقُ بِهَا بَيْنَ الْحَقِّ وَالْبَاطِلِ، وَالْأَذْوَاقِ وَالْمَشَامِ، وَالْأَلْوَانِ وَالْأَجْنَاسِ،
 مَعْجُوناً بِطِينَةِ الْأَلْوَانِ الْمُخْتَلِفَةِ، وَالْأَشْبَاهِ الْمُؤْتَلِفَةِ، وَالْأَضْدَادِ الْمُتَعَادِيَةِ، وَالْأَخْلَاطِ الْمُتَبَايِنَةِ،
 مِنَ الْحَرِّ وَالْبَرْدِ، وَالْبَلَّةِ وَالْجُمُودِ، وَالْمَسَاءَةِ وَالسُّرُورِ،

Then Allah asked the angels to fulfil His promise with them and to accomplish the pledge of His injunction to them by acknowledging Him through prostration to Him and submission to His honoured position. So Allah said:

“Be prostrate towards Adam and they prostrated except Iblis (Satan).”
(*Qur’an, 2:34; 7:11; 17:61; 18:50; 20:116*)

Self-importance withheld him and vice overcame him. So that he took pride in his own creation with fire and treated contemptuously the creation of clay. So Allah allowed him time in order to let him fully deserve His wrath, and to complete (man’s) test and to fulfil the promise (He had made to Satan). Thus, He said:

“Verily you have been allowed time till the known Day.” (*Qur’an, 15:38; 38:81*)

وَاسْتَأْذَى اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَدِيعَتَهُ لَدَيْهِمْ، وَعَهْدَ وَصِيَّتِهِ إِلَيْهِمْ، فِي الْأَدْعَانِ بِالسُّجُودِ لَهُ، وَالْحُتُوعِ لِتَكْرِمَتِهِ، فَقَالَ عَزَّمَن قَائِلٌ: (اسْجُدُوا لِأَدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ)، اعْتَرَتْهُ الْحَمِيَّةُ، وَعَلَبَتْ عَلَيْهِ الشَّقْوَةُ، وَتَعَزَّزَ بِخَلْقِهِ النَّارِ، وَاسْتَوْهَنَ خَلْقَ الصَّلْصَالِ، فَأَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى النَّظْرَةَ اسْتِحْقَاقًا لِلْسُّخْطَةِ، وَاسْتِثْمَامًا لِلْبَلِيَّةِ، وَإِنِّجَارًا لِلْعِدَّةِ، فَقَالَ: (إِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنظَرِينَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُومِ)

Thereafter, Allah inhabited Adam (p.b.u.h.) in a house where He made his life pleasant and his stay safe, and He cautioned him of Iblis and his enmity. Then his enemy (Iblis) envied his abiding in Paradise and his contacts with the virtuous. So he changed his conviction into wavering and determination into weakness. He thus converted his happiness into fear and his prestige into shame. Then Allah offered to Adam (p.b.u.h.) the chance to repent, taught him words of His Mercy, promised him return to His Paradise and sent him down to the place of trial and procreation of progeny.

ثُمَّ أَسْكَنَ سُبْحَانَهُ آدَمَ دَارًا أَرْعَدَ فِيهَا عَيْشَتَهُ، وَأَمَرَ فِيهَا مَحَلَّتَهُ، وَحَدَّرَهُ إِبْلِيسَ وَعَدَاوَتَهُ، فَأَعْتَرَتْهُ عَدُوُّهُ نَفَاسَةً عَلَيْهِ بِدَارِ الْمَقَامِ، وَمُرَافَقَةِ الْأَبْرَارِ، فَبَاعَ الْيَقِينَ بِشَكِّهِ، وَالْعَرِيْمَةَ بِوَهْنِهِ، وَاسْتَبَدَلَ بِالْجَدَلِ وَجَلًّا، وَبِالْأَغْتِرَارِ نَدْمًا.

ثُمَّ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ لَهُ فِي تَوْبَتِهِ، وَلَقَّاهُ كَلِمَةَ رَحْمَتِهِ، وَوَعَدَهُ الْمَرَدَّ إِلَى جَنَّتِهِ، فَأَهْبَطَهُ إِلَى دَارِ الْبَلِيَّةِ، وَتَنَاسَلَ الدُّرِّيَّةَ.

Allah chooses His Prophets

اختيار الانبياء

From his (Adam’s) progeny Allah chose prophets and took their pledge for his revelation and for carrying His message as their trust. In course of time many people perverted Allah’s trust with them and ignored His position and took compeers along with Him. Satan turned them away from knowing Him and kept them aloof from His worship. Then Allah sent His Messengers and series of His prophets towards them to get them to fulfil the pledges of His creation, to recall to them His bounties, to exhort them by

preaching, to unveil before them the hidden virtues of wisdom and show them the signs of His Omnipotence namely the sky which is raised over them, the earth that is placed beneath them, means of living that sustain them, deaths that make them die, ailments that turn them old and incidents that successively betake them.

وَاصْطَفَىٰ سُبْحَانَهُ مِنْ وَلَدِهِ أَنْبِيَاءَ أَحَدَ عَلَى الْوَحْيِ مِيثَاقَهُمْ، وَعَلَى تَبْلِيغِ الرِّسَالَةِ أَمَانَتَهُمْ، لَمَّا بَدَّلَ أَكْثَرَ خَلْقِهِ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ إِلَيْهِمْ، فَجَهَلُوا حَقَّهُ، وَاتَّخَذُوا الْأَنْدَادَ مَعَهُ، وَاجْتَنَلَتْهُمُ الشَّيَاطِينُ عَنْ مَعْرِفَتِهِ، وَاقْتَطَعَتْهُمُ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ، فَبَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رُسُلَهُ، وَوَاتَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ أَنْبِيَاءَهُ، لِيَسْتَأْذِنُوهُمْ مِيثَاقَ فِطْرَتِهِ، وَيُذَكِّرُوهُمْ مَنْسِي نِعْمَتِهِ، وَيَحْتَجُّوا عَلَيْهِمْ بِالتَّبْلِيغِ، وَيُتَبِّرُوا لَهُمْ دَفَائِنَ الْعُقُولِ، وَيُرُوهُمْ آيَاتِ الْمَقْدِرَةِ: مِنْ سَفْفِ فَوْقَهُمْ مَرْفُوعٍ، وَمِهَادِ تَحْتَهُمْ مَوْضُوعٍ، وَمَعَايِشَ تُحْيِيهِمْ، وَأَجَالَ تُغْنِيهِمْ، وَأَوْصَابَ (5) تُهْرِمُهُمْ، وَأَحْدَاثَ تَتَابَعُ عَلَيْهِمْ،

Allah never allowed His creation to remain without a Prophet deputised by Him, or a book sent down from Him or a binding argument or a standing plea. These Messengers were such that they did not feel little because of smallness of their number or of largeness of the number of their falsifiers. Among them was either a predecessor who would name the one to follow or the follower who had been introduced by the predecessor.

لَمْ يُخْلِ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ خَلْفَهُ مِنْ نَبِيِّ مُرْسَلٍ، أَوْ كِتَابٍ مُنْزَلٍ، أَوْ حُجَّةٍ لَازِمَةٍ، أَوْ حُجَّةٍ قَائِمَةٍ، رُسُلًا لَا تُقْصِرُ بِهِمْ قَلَّةُ عَدَدِهِمْ، وَلَا كَثْرَةُ الْمَكْدِبِينَ لَهُمْ: مِنْ سَابِقِ سُمِّيَ لَهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ، أَوْ غَايِرِ عَرَفَهُ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ.

The Prophethood of Muhammad

مبعث النبي (ﷺ)

In this way ages passed by and times rolled on, fathers passed away while sons took their places till Allah deputised Muhammad (peace be upon him and his progeny) as His Prophet, in fulfilment of His promise and in completion of His Prophethood. His pledge had been taken from the Prophets, his traits of character were well reputed and his birth was honourable. The people of the earth at this time were divided in different parties, their aims were separate and ways were diverse. They either likened Allah with His creation or twisted His Names or turned to else than Him. Through Muhammad (S) Allah guided them out of wrong and with his efforts took them out of ignorance.

عَلَى ذَلِكَ نَسَلَتِ الْقُرُونُ، وَمَضَتِ الدُّهُورُ، وَسَلَفَتِ الْأَبَاءُ، وَخَلَفَتِ الْأَبْنَاؤُ. إِلَى أَنْ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ مُحَمَّدًا (صلى الله عليه وآله) لِإِنْجَازِ عِدَّتِهِ وَتَمَامِ نُبُوتِهِ، مَأْخُودًا عَلَى النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقُهُ، مَشْهُورَةً سِمَاتُهُ، كَرِيمًا مِيلَادُهُ. وَأَهْلُ الْأَرْضِ يَوْمئِذٍ مَلَأَتْ مُتَفَرِّقَةً، وَأَهْوَاءَ مُنْتَشِرَةً، وَطَرَائِقَ مُتَشَتِّتَةً، بَيْنَ مُشَبِّهِ اللَّهِ بِخَلْقِهِ، أَوْ مُلْحِدِ فِي اسْمِهِ، أَوْ مُشِيرِ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ، فَهَدَاهُمْ بِهِ مِنَ الضَّلَالَةِ، وَأَنْقَذَهُمْ بِمَكَانِهِ مِنَ الْجَهَالَةِ.

Then Allah chose for Muhammad, peace be upon him and on his progeny, to meet Him, selected him for His own nearness, regarded him too dignified to remain in this world and decided to remove him from this place of trial. So He drew him towards Himself with honour. Allah may shower His blessing on him, and his progeny.

ثُمَّ اخْتَارَ سُبْحَانَهُ لِمُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ لِقَاءَهُ، وَرَضِيَ لَهُ مَا عِنْدَهُ، فَأَكْرَمَهُ عَنْ دَارِ الدُّنْيَا،
وَرَغِبَ بِهِ عَنْ مُقَارَنَةِ الْبَلْوَى، فَغَبِضَهُ إِلَيْهِ كَرِيماً صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ،

The Holy Qur'an and Sunnah

But the Prophet left among you the same which other Prophets left among their peoples, because Prophets do not leave them untended (in dark) without a clear path and a standing ensign, namely the Book of your Creator clarifying its permission and prohibitions, its obligations and discretion, its repealing injunctions and the repealed ones, its permissible matters and compulsory ones, its particulars and the general ones, its lessons and illustrations, its long and the short ones, its clear and obscure ones, detailing its abbreviations and clarifying its obscurities.

وَخَلَّفَ فِيكُمْ مَا خَلَفَتِ الْأَنْبِيَاءُ فِي أُمَّمِهَا، إِذْ لَمْ يَتْرُكُوهُمْ هَمَلًا، بَعِيرَ طَرِيقٍ وَاضِحٍ، وَلَا عَلَمٍ
قَائِمٍ.

كِتَابَ رَبِّكُمْ [فِيكُمْ:] مُبَيِّنًا حَلَالَهُ وَحَرَامَهُ، وَفَرَائِضَهُ وَفَضَائِلَهُ، وَنَاسِخَهُ وَمَنْسُوخَهُ،
وَرُخْصَهُ وَعَزَائِمَهُ، وَخَاصَّهُ وَعَامَّهُ، وَعَبْرَهُ وَأَمثَالَهُ، وَمُرْسَلَهُ وَمُحْدُودَهُ، وَمُحْكَمَهُ وَمُتَشَابِهَهُ، مُفَسِّرًا
جُمْلَهُ، وَمُبَيِّنًا عَوَامِضَهُ.

In it there are some verses whose knowledge¹ is obligatory and others whose ignorance by the people is permissible. It also contains what appears to be obligatory according to the Book² but its repeal is signified by the Prophet's action (sunnah) or that which appears compulsory according to the Prophet's action but the Book allows not following it.

Or there are those which are obligatory in a given time but not so after that time. Its prohibitions also differ. Some are major regarding which there exists the threat of fire (Hell), and others are minor for which there are prospects of forgiveness. There are also those of which a small portion is also acceptable (to Allah) but they are capable of being expanded.

بَيْنَ مَا أُخِذَ مِيثَاقَ عِلْمِهِ، وَمُوسِعَ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ فِي جَهْلِهِ، وَبَيْنَ مُثَبَّتٍ فِي الْكِتَابِ فَرَضُهُ،
وَمَعْلُومٍ فِي السُّنَّةِ نَسَخُهُ، وَوَاجِبٍ فِي السُّنَّةِ أَخَذُهُ، وَمُرَحَّصٍ فِي الْكِتَابِ تَرْكُهُ، وَبَيْنَ وَاجِبٍ
بِوَقْتِهِ، وَزَائِلٍ فِي مُسْتَقْبَلِهِ، وَمُبَايِنٍ بَيْنَ مُحَارِمِهِ، مِنْ كَبِيرٍ أَوْعَدَ عَلَيْهِ نِيرَانَهُ، أَوْ صَغِيرٍ أَرْضَدَ لَهُ
عُقْرَانَهُ، وَبَيْنَ مَقْبُولٍ فِي أَدْنَاهُ، وَمُوسِعٍ فِي أَقْصَاهُ.

In this very sermon he spoke about Hajj

و[منها:] في ذكر الحج

Allah has made obligatory upon you the pilgrimage (Hajj) to His sacred House which is the turning point for the people who go to it as beasts or

pigeons go towards spring water. Allah the glorified made it a sign of their supplication before His Greatness and their acknowledgement of His Dignity. He selected from among His creation those who on listening to His call responded to it and testified His word.

They stood in the position of His Prophets and resembled His angels who surround the Divine Throne securing all the benefits of performing His worship and hastening towards His promised forgiveness. Allah the glorified made it (His sacred House) an emblem for Islam and an object of respect for those who turn to it. He made obligatory its pilgrimage and laid down its claim for which He held you responsible to discharge it. Thus, Allah, the Glorified, said:

“. . . *And (purely) for Allah, is incumbent upon mankind, the pilgrimage to the House, for those who can afford to journey thither. And whoever denieth then verily, Allah is Self-sufficiently independent of the worlds*” (Qur'an, 3:96).

وَفَرَضَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَجَّ بَيْتِهِ الْحَرَامِ، الَّذِي جَعَلَهُ قِبْلَةً لِلْأَنَامِ، يَرِدُونَهُ وُزُودَ الْأَنْعَامِ، وَيَأْهُونَ إِلَيْهِ
وَأُلُوهَ الْحَمَامِ.

جَعَلَهُ سُبْحَانَهُ عِلْمَةً لَتَوَاضِعِهِمْ لِعَظَمَتِهِ، وَإِدْعَائِهِمْ لِعِزَّتِهِ، وَاحْتَارَ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ سَمَاعاً أَجَابُوا
إِلَيْهِ دَعْوَتَهُ، وَصَدَّقُوا كَلِمَتَهُ، وَوَقَفُوا مَوَاقِفَ أَنْبِيَائِهِ، وَتَشَبَّهُوا بِمَلَائِكَتِهِ الْمُطِيفِينَ بِعَرْشِهِ، يُحْرِرُونَ
الْأَرْبَابَ فِي مَشَجَرِ عِبَادَتِهِ، وَيَتَبَادَرُونَ عِنْدَهُ مَوْعِدَ مَغْفِرَتِهِ.

جَعَلَهُ سُبْحَانَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ عِلْمًا، وَلِلْعَائِدِينَ حَرَمًا، فَرَضَ حَجَّهُ، وَأَوْجَبَ حَقَّهُ، وَكَتَبَ
عَلَيْكُمْ وَفَادَتَهُ، فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ: (وَلِلَّهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ
فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَنِّي عَنِّي عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ).

Alternative Sources for Sermon 1

- (1) Al-Harrani, Tuhaaf, 57;
- (2) al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, I, 140;
- (3) al-Qadi al-Quda'i, Dustur, 153;
- (4) al-Razi, Tafsir, II, 164;
- (5) Ibn Talhah, Matalib;
- (6) al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, bab al-sama' wa al-kawakib;
- (7) al-Wasiti, `Uyun, see al-Majlisi, Bihar, vol.77, 300, 423;
- (8) al-Rawandi, Sharh, see Kashif al-Ghita', Madarik, 69;
- (9) al-Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj, I, 150

Notes

1. "The foremost in religion (din) is His knowledge." The literal meaning of din is obedience, and its popular sense is code, whether literal sense is taken or the popular one, in either case, if the mind is devoid of any conception of Divinity, there would be no question of obedience, nor of following any code; because when there is no aim there is no point in advancing towards it; where there is no object in view there is no sense in making efforts to achieve it. Nevertheless, when the nature and guiding faculty of man bring him in contact with a superior Authority and his taste for obedience and impulse of submission subjugates him before a Deity, he finds himself bound by certain limitations as against abject freedom

of activity. These very limitations are din (Religion) whose point of commencement is knowledge of Allah and acknowledgement of His Being.

After pointing out the essentials of Divine knowledge Amir al-mu'minin has described its important constituents and conditions. He has held those stages of such knowledge which people generally regard as the point of highest approach to be insufficient. He says that its first stage is that with the natural sense of search for the unknown and the guidance of conscience or on hearing from the followers of religions an image of the Unseen Being known as Allah is formed in the mind. This image in fact is the forerunner of the obligation to thinking and reflection and to seeking His knowledge. But those who love idleness, or are under pressure of environment, do not undertake this search despite creation of such image and the image fails to get testified. In this case they remain deprived of Divine knowledge, and since their inaccess to the stage of testifying after the formation of image is by volition they deserve to be questioned about it.

But one who is moved by the power of this image goes further and considers thinking and reflection necessary. In this way one reaches the next stage in the attainment of Divine knowledge, namely to search for the Creator through diversification of creation and species of creatures, because every picture is a solid and inflexible guide to the existence of its painter and every effect to the action of its cause.

When he casts his glance around himself he does not find a single thing which might have come into existence without the act of a maker so much so that he does not find the sign of a footstep without a walker nor a construction without a builder. How can he comprehend that this blue sky with the sun and the moon in its expanse and the earth with the exuberance of its grass and flowers could have come into existence without the action of a Creator. Therefore, after observing all that exists in the world and the regulated system of the entire creation no one can help concluding that there is a Creator for this world of diversities because existence cannot come out of non-existence, nor can existence sprout forth from nothingness.

The Holy Qur'an has pointed to this reasoning thus:

". . . What! about Allah is there any doubt, the Originator of the heavens and the earth ?
.. ." (14:10).

But this stage would also be insufficient if this testimony in favour of Allah is tarnished by belief in the divinity of some other deity.

The third stage is that His existence should be acknowledged along with belief in Unity and Oneness. Without this the testimony to Allah's existence cannot be complete because if more gods are believed in He would not be One whereas it is necessary that He should be One. The reason is that in case of more than one god the question would arise whether one of them created all this creation or all of them together. If one of them created it there should be some differential to distinguish him otherwise he would be accorded preferential position without reason, which is unacceptable to the mind. If all have created it collectively then the position has only two forms; either he cannot perform his functions without the assistance of others or he is above the need for their assistance.

The first case means his incapability and being in need of others while the other case means that they are several regular performers of a single act and the fallacy of both has already been shown. If we assume that all the gods performed the act of creation by dividing among themselves then, in this case all the creation will, not bear the same relationship towards the creator since each creature will bear relationship only to its own creator whereas every creature should have one and the same relationship to all creators.

This is because all the creation should have one and the same relationship to all the creators as all the created in their capacity to accept effect and all the creators in their capacity to produce effect should be similar. In short there is no way but to acknowledge Him as One because in believing in numerous creators there remains no possibility of the existence of any other thing, and destruction proves implicit for the earth, the sky and everything in creation. Allah the glorified has expressed this argument in the following words:

"Had there been in (the heavens and the earth [other]) gods except Allah, they both had been in disorder. . ." (Qur'an, 21:22).

The fourth stage is that Allah should be regarded free of all defects and deficiencies, and devoid of body, form, illustration, similarity, position of place or time, motion,

stillness, incapability and ignorance because there can be no deficiency or defect in the perfect Being nor can anyone be deemed like Him because all these attributes bring down a being from the high position of the Creator to the low position of the created. That is why along with Unity, Allah has held purity from deficiency of equal importance.

"Say: 'He (Allah) is One (alone). Allah, the needless. He begetteth not, nor is He begotten. And there is none like unto Him'" (Qur'an, 112:1-4).

"Vision perceiveth Him not, and He perceiveth (all) vision; He is the Subtle, the All-aware" (Qur'an, 6:104).

"So coin ye not any similitudes to Allah; verily Allah knoweth (every thing) and ye know not." (Qur'an, 16:74).

". . . Nothing whatsoever (is there) like the like of Him; and He (alone) is the All-hearing and the All-seeing." (Qur'an, 42:11)

The fifth stage of completing His Knowledge is that attributes should not be put in Him from outside lest there be duality in His Oneness, and deviating from its proper connotation Unity may fall in the labyrinth of one in three and three in one, because His Being is not a combination of essence and form so that attribute may cling to Him like smell in the flowers or brightness in the stars. Rather, He is the fountain head of all attributes and needs no medium for manifestation of His perfect Attributes.

If He is named Omniscient it is because the signs of his knowledge are manifest. If He is called Omnipotent it is because every particle points to His Omnipotence and Activity, and if to Him is attributed the power to listen or to see it is because the cohesion of the entire creation and its administration cannot be done without hearing or seeing but the existence of these attributes in Him cannot be held to be in the same way as in the creation namely that He should be capable to know only after He acquires knowledge or He should be powerful and strong only after energy runs into His limbs because taking attributes as separate from His Being would connote duality and where there is duality unity disappears.

That is how Amir al-mu'minin has rejected the idea of attributes being addition to His Being, presented Unity in its true significance, and did not allow Unity to be tainted with stains of multiplicity. This does not mean that adjectives cannot at all be attributed to Him, as this would be giving support to those who are groping in the dark abyss of negativism, although every nook and corner in the entire existence is brimming with His attributes and every particle of creation stands witness that He has knowledge, He is powerful, He hears, He sees. He nurtures under His care and allows growth under His mercy. The intention is that for Him nothing can be suggested to serve as an adjunct to Him, because His self includes attributes and His attributes connote His Self. Let us learn this very theme in the words of al-Imam Abu `Abdillah Ja`far ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) comparing it with the belief in Unity adopted by other religions and then appreciate who is the exponent of the true concept of Unity.

The Imam says:

"Our Allah the Glorified, the Magnificent has ever had knowledge as His Self even though there was nothing to know, sight as His Self even though there was nothing to know, sight as His Self even though there was nothing to behold, hearing as His Self even though there was nothing to hear, and Potence as His Self even though there was nothing to be under His Potence. When He created the things and the object of knowledge came into existence His knowledge became related to the known, hearing related to the heard, sight related to the seen, and potence related to its object." (at-Tawhid by ash-Shaykh as-Saduq, p.139)

This is the belief over which the Imams of the Prophet's family are unanimous, but the majority group has adopted a different course by creating the idea of differentiation between His Self and Attributes. ash-Shahristani says on page 42 of his book *Kitab al-milal wa'n-nihal*:

According to Abu'l-Hasan al-Ash`ari, Allah knows through (the attribute of) knowledge, is Powerful through activity, speaks through speech, hears through hearing and sees through sight.

If we regard attributes distinct from Self in this manner there would be two alternatives; either the attributes must have existed in Him from ever or they must have occurred later. In the first case we have to recognise as many eternal objects as the attributes which all will share with Him in being eternal, but "Allah is above what the people deem Him to have

equals." In the second case in addition to subjecting Him to the alternations it would also mean that before the acquiring of the attributes He was neither scient, nor powerful, nor hearer nor beholder and this runs counter to the basic tenet of Islam.

". . . Allah hath decreed trade lawful and hath forbidden interest. . ." (Qur'an, 2:275)

"And when you have finished the prayer remember Allah standing, and sitting, and reacting, and when ye are secure (from danger) establish prayer . . ." (Qur'an, 4:103)

"O' ye men! eat of what is in the earth lawful and good and follow not the foot-steps of Satan; for verily he is an open enemy unto you." (Qur'an, 2:168)

"(And) say thou: 'I am only a man like you, it is revealed unto me that your god is but one God, therefore whosoever desireth to meet his Lord, let him do good deeds, and associate not any one in the worship of his Lord'." (Qur'an, 18:110)

"What! enjoin ye upon the people righteousness and ye forget your own selves? Yet ye read the scripture? What: do ye not understand?" (Qur'an, 2:44).

2. About the Qur'an, Amir al-mu'minin says that it contains description of the permitted and the forbidden acts such as "Allah has allowed sale and purchase but prohibited usury." It clarifies obligatory and optional acts such as "when you have finished the prayer (of fear) remember Allah rising, sitting or lying and when you feel safe (from the enemy) then say the prayers (as usual)."

Here prayer is obligatory while other forms of remembering (Allah) are optional. It has repealing and repealed verses such as about the period of seclusion after husband's death "four months and ten days" or the repealed one such as "till one year without going out" which shows that this period of seclusion should be one year. In particular places it permits the forbidden such as "whoever is compelled without being wilfully wrongful or transgressor, commits no sins."

It has positive injunctions such as "One should not add anyone with Allah in worship." It has particular and general injunctions. Particular is the one where the word shows generality but the sense is limited such as "I have made you superior over worlds, O' Bani Isra'il." Here the sense of "Worlds," is confined to that particular time, although the word is general in its literal meaning. The general injunction is one which is extensive in meaning such as "Allah has knowledge of everything." It has lessons and illustrations lessons such as "Allah caught him in the punishment of this world and the next and there is lesson in it."

"So seized him Allah, with the chastisement in the hereafter, and the life before (it)." (Qur'an, 79:25)

"Verily in this there is a lesson unto him who feareth (Allah)." (Qur'an, 79:26)

"A kind word and pardon is better than charity that is followed by injury, and verily Allah is Self-sufficient, the Most forbearing." (Qur'an, 2:263)

"And remember when We made a covenant with you and raised the 'tur' (the Mountain) above you (saying), 'Hold ye fast that which We have bestowed upon you with the strength (of determination) and remember that which is therein so that you may guard (yourself) against evil'." (Qur'an, 2:63)

"So we made it a lesson for (those of) their own times and for those (of their posterity) who came after them and an exhortation unto those who guard (themselves) against evil." (Qur'an, 2:66)

"He it is Who fashioneth you in the wombs (of your mothers) as He liketh; There is no god but He, the All-mighty, the All-wise." (Qur'an, 3:5)

"Obedience and a fair word; but when the affair is determined then if they be true to Allah, it would certainly be better for them." (Qur'an, 47:21)

"O' those who believe! It is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will; and do not straiten them in order that ye may take a part of what ye have given, unless they are guilty of manifest lewdness; but deal kindly with them, and if ye hate them, it may be that ye hate a thing while Allah hath placed in it abundant good." (Qur'an, 4:19)

"Say thou (unto the people of the Book), 'Dispute ye with us about Allah; whereas He is our Lord and your Lord, and for us are our deeds and for you are your deeds; to Him (alone) we are (exclusively) loyal?'" (Qur'an, 2:139)

"There is a lesson in it for him who fears Allah," and illustration as "The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a grain which grows seven ears each one of which bears hundred grains." It has unspecific and specific verses. Unspecific is one which has no limitation on specification such as "Recall when Moses told his people

'Allah commands you to sacrifice a cow.'" Specific is one where denotation is limited such as Allah says that "the cow should be such that it has neither been used for ploughing nor for irrigation fields." There is clear and obscure in it.

Clear is that which has no intricacy such as "Verily Allah has sway over everything," while obscure is that whose meaning has complication such as "the Merciful (Allah) occupies the throne," whose apparent meaning gives the impression as if Allah is bodily sitting on the Throne although the intention is to press His authority and control. In it there are brief injunctions such as "establish prayer" and those of deep meanings such as the verses about which says:

"That the sense is not known except to Allah and those immersed in knowledge." Then Amir al-mu'minin dilates upon this theme in a different style, he says that there are some things in it which are necessary to know, such as "So know that there is no god but Allah" and there are others which are not necessary to know such as "alif lam mim" etc. It has also injunctions which have been repealed by the Prophet's action such as "As for your women who commit adultery get four male witnesses and if four witnesses do appear shut such women in the house till death ends their life."

This punishment was current in early Islam but was later replaced by stoning in the case of married women. In it there are some injunctions which repealed the Prophet's action such as "Turn your face towards Masjid al-haram" by which the injunction for facing Bayt al-maqdis was repealed. It also contains injunctions which are obligatory only at a particular time after which their obligation ends, such as "when the call for prayer is made on Friday then hasten towards remembrance of Allah." It has also indicated grades of prohibitions as the division of sins into light and serious ones - light such as "Tell the believers to lower their eyes" and serious ones such as "whoever kills a Believer wilfully his award is to remain in Hell for ever." It also contains injunctions where a little performance is enough but there is scope for further performance such as "Read the Qur'an as much as you easily can."

"Verily your Lord, certainly is He the All-mighty, the All-merciful." (Qur'an, 26:9)

"Say thou (O' Our Prophet Muhammad) unto the believer men that they cast down their gaze and guard their private parts; that is purer for them; verily Allah is All-aware of what (all) ye do." (Qur'an, 24:30)

"Not equal are those of the believers who sit (holding back) other than those hurt, and those who strive in the way of Allah with their wealth and their selves (lives). Allah hath raised the strivers with their wealth and selves (lives), in rank above those sitting (holding back); Unto all (in faith) Allah hath promised good; but those who strive, He hath distinguished above those who sit (holding [by]) a great recompense." (Qur'an, 4:95)

"Verily, thy Lord knowest that thou standest up (in the Night Prayer) night two-third of the night, and (sometimes) half of it, and (sometimes) a third of it, and a group of those with thee; and Allah measureth (well) the night and the day; Knoweth He that never can ye take (correct) account of it, so turneth He unto you (mercifully) so recite ye whatever be easy (in the prayers) to be read of the Qur'an; Knoweth He that there may be among you sick, and others travelling in the earth seeking of the grace of Allah, and others fighting in the way of Allah, so recite ye as much as it can easily be done of it, and establish ye the (regular) prayers, and pay ye the (prescribed) poor-rate, and offer ye unto Allah a goodly loan; and whatsoever of good ye send on before hand for yourselves, ye will (surely) find it with Allah, that is the best and the greatest recompense; and seek ye the forgiveness of Allah; Verily, Allah is Oft-forgiving, the Most Merciful." (Qur'an, 73:20)

Sermon 2: I praise Allah seeking completion of His Blessing...

Delivered on return from Siffin

Arabia before proclamation of Prophethood

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام) بعد انصرافه من صفين

وفيها حال الناس قبل البعثة وصفة آل النبي ثم صفة قوم آخرين:

I praise Allah seeking completion of His Blessing, submitting to His Glory and expecting safety from committing His sins. I invoke His help being in need of His Sufficiency (of protection). He whom He guides does not go astray, He with whom He is hostile gets no protection. He whom He supports does not remain needy. Praise is most weighty of all that is weighed and the most valuable of all that is treasured.

أَحْمَدُهُ اسْتِثْمَامًا لِنِعْمَتِهِ، وَاسْتِسْنَاءً لِعِزَّتِهِ، وَاسْتِعْصَامًا مِنْ مَعْصِيَتِهِ، وَأَسْتَعِينُهُ فَاقَةً إِلَى كِفَايَتِهِ، إِنَّهُ لَا يَضِلُّ مَنْ هَدَاهُ، وَلَا يَبُلُّ مَنْ عَادَاهُ، وَلَا يَفْتَقِرُ مَنْ كَفَاهُ؛ فَإِنَّهُ أَرْجَحُ مَا أُوزِنَ، وَأَفْضَلُ مَا حُزِنَ.

I stand witness that there is no god but Allah the One. He has no like. My testimony has been tested in its frankness, and its essence is our belief. We shall cling to it for ever till we live and shall store it for facing the tribulations that overtake us because it is the foundation stone of Belief (iman) and the first step towards good actions and Divine pleasure. It is the means to keep Satan away.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، شَهَادَةً مُتَّخِذًا إِخْلَاصُهَا، مُعْتَقِدًا مُصَاصُهَا، نَتَمَسَّكُ بِهَا أَبَدًا مَا أَبْقَانَا، وَنَدَّخِرُهَا لِأَهَاوِيلِ مَا يَلْفَانَا، فَإِنَّهَا عَزِيمَةُ الْإِيمَانِ، وَفَاتِحَةُ الْأَحْسَانِ، وَمَرْصَاةُ الرَّحْمَنِ، وَمُدْحَرَةُ الشَّيْطَانِ.

I also stand witness that Muhammad (S) is His slave and His Prophet. Allah sent him with the illustrious religion, effective emblem, written Book,¹ effulgent light, sparkling gleam and decisive injunction in order to dispel doubts, present clear proofs, administer warning through signs and to warn of punishments. At that time people had fallen in vices whereby the rope of religion had been broken, the pillars of belief had been shaken, principles had been sacrilegied, system had become topsy turvy, openings were narrow, passage was dark, guidance was unknown and darkness prevailed.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، أُرْسِلَهُ بِالذِّينِ الْمَشْهُورِ، وَالْعِلْمِ الْمَأْتُورِ، وَالْكِتَابِ الْمَسْطُورِ، وَالنُّورِ السَّاطِعِ، وَالضُّبْيَاءِ اللَّامِعِ، وَالْأَمْرِ الصَّادِعِ، إِزَاحَةً لِلشُّبُهَاتِ، وَاحْتِجَاجًا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ، وَتَحْذِيرًا بِالْآيَاتِ، وَتَخْوِيفًا بِالْمَثَلَاتِ، وَالنَّاسِ فِي فِتْنِ الْجَدَمِ فِيهَا حَبْلُ الدِّينِ، وَتَرْعُزَةً سَوَارِي

الْيَقِينِ، وَاحْتَلَفَ النَّجْرُ، وَتَشَتَّتَ الْأَمْرُ، وَصَاقَ الْمَحْرَجُ، وَعَمِيَ الْمَصْدَرُ، فَاهْتَدَى حَامِلٌ،
وَالْعَمَى شَامِلٌ.

Allah was being disobeyed, Satan was given support and Belief had been forsaken. As a result the pillars of religion fell down, its traces could not be discerned, its passages had been destroyed and its streets had fallen into decay. People obeyed Satan and treaded his paths. They sought water from his watering places. Through them Satan's emblems got flying and his standard was raised in vices which trampled the people under their hoofs, and treaded upon them with their feet. The vices stood on their toes (in full stature) and the people immersed in them were strayed, perplexed, ignorant and seduced as though in a good house² with bad neighbours. Instead of sleep they had wakefulness and for antimony they had tears in the eyes. They were in a land where the learned were in bridle (keeping their mouths shut) while the ignorant were honoured.

عُصِيَ الرَّحْمَنُ، وَنُصِرَ الشَّيْطَانُ، وَخُذِلَ الْإِيمَانُ، فَانْتَهَارَتْ دَعَائِمُهُ، وَتَنَكَّرَتْ مَعَالِمُهُ،
وَدَرَسَتْ سُبُلُهُ، وَعَفَّتْ شُرُكُهُ.

أَطَاعُوا الشَّيْطَانَ فَسَلَكُوا مَسَالِكَهُ، وَوَرَدُوا مَنَاهِلَهُ، بِهِمْ سَارَتْ أَعْلَامُهُ، وَقَامَ لِيَاوُؤُهُ، فِي فِتْنٍ
دَاسَتْهُمْ بِأَحْقَافِهَا، وَوَطِنَتْهُمْ بِأَطْلَافِهَا وَقَامَتْ عَلَى سَنَابِكِهَا، فَهُمْ فِيهَا تَائِهُونَ حَائِرُونَ
جَاهِلُونَ مَفْتُونُونَ، فِي حَبِيرِ دَارٍ، وَشَرِّ جِيرَانٍ، نَوْمُهُمْ سُهْوٌ، وَكُحْلُهُمْ دُمُوعٌ، بَارِضٌ عَالِمُهَا
مُلْجِمٌ، وَجَاهِلُهَا مُكْرَمٌ.

In the same sermon Amir al-mu'minin referred to Al an-Nabi (the Household of the Holy Prophet) as under

ومنها: ويعني آل النبي (ﷺ)

They are the trustees of His secrets, shelter for His affairs, source of knowledge about Him, centre of His wisdom, valleys for His books and mountains of His religion. With them Allah straightened the bend of religion's back and removed the trembling of its limbs.

هُمْ مَوْضِعُ سِرِّهِ، وَجَلَاءُ أَمْرِهِ، وَعَيْبَةُ عِلْمِهِ، وَمَوْئِلُ حُكْمِهِ، وَكُھُوفُ كُتُبِهِ، وَجِبَالُ دِينِهِ، بِهِمْ
أَقَامَ الْحِنَاءَ ظَهْرَهُ، وَأَذْهَبَ ارْتِعَادَ فَرَائِصِهِ.

In the same Sermon he spoke about the hypocrites

منها: يعني بما قوماً آخرين

They sowed vices, watered them with deception and harvested destruction.

زَرَعُوا الْفُجُورَ، وَسَقَوْهُ الْعُرُورَ، وَحَصَدُوا التُّبُورَ،

Ali Muhammad

آل مُحَمَّد (عليه السلام)

None in the Islamic community can be taken at par with the Progeny³ of the Prophet (Ali Muhammad). One who was under their obligation cannot be matched with them. They are the foundation of religion and pillar of Belief. The forward runner has to turn back to them while the follower has to overtake them. They possess the chief characteristics for vicegerency. In their favour exists the will and succession (of the Prophet). This is the time when right has returned to its owner and diverted to its centre of return.

لَا يُقَاسُ بِآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ (عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ) مِنْ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ أَحَدٌ، وَلَا يُسَوَّى بِهِمْ مَنْ جَرَتْ
نِعْمَتُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَبَدًا.

هُمُ أَسَاسُ الدِّينِ، وَعِمَادُ الْبَيْتِ، إِلَيْهِمْ يَفِيءُ الْعَالِي، وَبِهِمْ يَلْحَقُ النَّالِي، وَهُمْ حَصَائِصُ
حَقِّ الْوِلَايَةِ، وَفِيهِمُ الْوَصِيَّةُ وَالْوَرَاثَةُ، الْآنَ إِذْ رَجَعَ الْحَقُّ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ، وَنُقِلَ إِلَى مُتَتَقِلِهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 2

- (1) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, I, 326;*
- (2) *al-Tabari, al-Mustarshid, p. 73;*
- (3) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, III, 112;*
- (4) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 331, 354;*
- (5) *Ibn Talhah, Matalib, I.*

Notes

1. The Preserved Record.
2. Good House means 'Mecca' while the bad neighbours mean the 'Unbelievers of Quraysh.'
3. About the Progeny of the Prophet Amir al-mu'minin has said that no person in the world can be brought at par with them, nor can any one be deemed their equal in sublimity, because the world is overladen with their obligations and has been able to secure eternal blessings only through their guidance. They are the corner stone and foundation of religion and the sustenance for its life and survival. They are such strong pillars of knowledge and belief that they can turn away the stormy flow of doubt and suspicion.

They are such middle course among the paths of excess and backwardness that if some one goes far towards excess and exaggeration or falls behind then unless he comes back or steps forward to that middle course he cannot be on the path of Islam. They possess all the characteristics which give the superiority in the right for vicegerency and leadership. Consequently, no one else in the ummah enjoys the right of patronage and guardianship. That is why the Prophet declared them his vicegerents and successors. About will and succession the commentator Ibn Abi'l-Hadid Mu'tazili writes that there can be no doubt about the vicegerency of Amir al-mu'minin but succession cannot imply succession in position although the Shi'ite sect has so interpreted it. It rather implies succession of learning.

Now, if according to him succession is taken to imply succession in learning even he does not seem to succeed in achieving his object, because even by this interpretation the right of succeeding the Prophet does not devolve on any other person. When it is agreed that learning is the most essential requirement of khilafah (caliphate) because the most important functions of the Prophet's Caliph consist of dispensation of justice, solving problems of religious laws, clarifying intricacies and administration of religious penalties. If these functions are taken away from the Prophet's deputy his position will come down to that of a worldly ruler. He cannot be regarded as the pivot of religious authority. Therefore either we should keep governmental authority separate from Prophet's vicegerency or accept the successor of Prophet's knowledge to suit that position.

The interpretation of Ibn Abi'l-Hadid could be acceptable if Amir al-mu'minin had uttered this sentence alone, but observing that it was uttered soon after `Ali's (p.b.u.h.) recognition as Caliph and just after it the sentence "Right has returned to its owner" exists,

this interpretation of his seems baseless. Rather, the Prophet's will cannot imply any other will except that for vicegerency and caliphate, and succession would imply not succession in property nor in knowledge because this was not an occasion to mention it here but it must mean the succession in the right leadership which stood proved as from Allah not only on the ground of kinship but on the ground of qualities of perfection.

Sermon 3: By Allah, the son of Abu Quhafah...

Known as the Sermon of ash-Shiqshiqiyah

1

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام) المعروفة بالشيقيسية

وتشتمل على الشكوى من أمر الخلافة ثم ترجيح صبره عنها ثم مبايعة الناس له

Beware! By Allah, the son of Abu Quhafah (Abu Bakr)² dressed himself with it (the caliphate) and he certainly knew that my position in relation to it was the same as the position of the axis in relation to the hand-mill. The flood water flows down from me and the bird cannot fly upto me. I put a curtain against the caliphate and kept myself detached from it.

Then I began to think whether I should assault or endure calmly the blinding darkness of tribulations wherein the grown up are made feeble and the young grow old and the true believer acts under strain till he meets Allah (on his death).

أَمَا وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ تَقَمَّصَهَا ابْنُ أَبِي قُحَافَةَ، وَإِنَّهُ لَيَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مَحَلِّي مِنْهَا مَحَلُّ الْقُطْبِ مِنَ الرَّحَى،
يُنْحَدِرُ عَنِّي السَّيْلُ، وَلَا يَرْقَى إِلَيَّ الطَّيْرُ، فَسَدَلْتُ دُونَهَا ثَوْبًا، وَطَوَيْتُ عَنْهَا كَشْحًا،
وَوَطَفَيْتُ أَرْتِي بَيْنَ أَنْ أَضُولَ بِيَدِ جَدَّاءَ، أَوْ أَصْبِرَ عَلَى طَحِيَّةِ عَمِيَاءَ، يَهْرَمُ فِيهَا الْكَبِيرُ،
وَيَشِيبُ فِيهَا الصَّغِيرُ، وَيَكْدَحُ فِيهَا مُؤْمِنٌ حَتَّى يَلْقَى رَبَّهُ.

Proposes Patience in Absence of Supporters

ترجیح الصبر على فقد الاعوان

I found that endurance thereon was wiser. So I adopted patience although there was pricking in the eye and suffocation (of mortification) in the throat. I watched the plundering of my inheritance till the first one went his way but handed over the Caliphate to Ibn al-Khattab after himself.

(Then he quoted al-A`sha's verse):

My days are now passed on the camel's back (in difficulty) while there were days (of ease) when I enjoyed the company of Jabir's brother Hayyan.³

فَرَأَيْتُ أَنَّ الصَّبْرَ عَلَى هَاتَا أَحْجَى، فَصَبَرْتُ وَفِي الْعَيْنِ قَدَى، وَفِي الْحَلْقِ شَجَا، أَرَى تُرَاثِي
نَهْبًا، حَتَّى مَضَى الْأَوَّلُ لِسَبِيلِهِ، فَأَذَلِّي بِهَا إِلَى ابْنِ الْخُطَّابِ بَعْدَهُ. (ثم تمثل بقول الاعشى):

سَتَانَ مَا يَوْمِي عَاى كُورِهَا * وَ يَوْمَ حَيَانَ أَخِي جَابِرِ

It is strange that during his lifetime he wished to be released from the caliphate but he confirmed it for the other one after his death. No doubt these two shared its udders strictly among themselves. This one put the Caliphate in a tough enclosure where the utterance was haughty and the touch was rough. Mistakes were in plenty and so also the excuses therefore. One in contact with it was like the rider of an unruly camel. If he pulled up its rein the very nostril would be slit, but if he let it loose he would be

thrown. Consequently, by Allah people got involved in recklessness, wickedness, unsteadiness and deviation.

فَيَا عَجَبًا!! بَيْنَا هُوَ يَسْتَقِيلُهَا فِي حَيَاتِهِ إِذْ عَقَدَهَا لِأَخْرَجَ بَعْدَ وَقَاتِهِ . لَشَدَّ مَا تَشَطَّرًا
ضُرْعَيْهَا ! . فَصَيَّرَهَا فِي حُوزَةِ حَسَنَاءَ، يَغْلُظُ كَلْمَهَا، وَيَحْشُنُ مَسْئَهَا، وَيَكْثُرُ الْعِنَاؤُ فِيهَا
وَالْأَعْتَادُ مِنْهَا، فَصَاحِبُهَا كَرَائِبِ الصَّعْبَةِ، إِنَّ أَشْنَقَ لَهَا حَرَمَ، وَإِنْ أَسْلَسَ لَهَا تَفَحَّمًا، فَمُنِّي
النَّاسُ . لَعَمْرُ اللَّهِ . بِحَبِطِ وَشِمَاسِ، وَتَلْؤُنِ وَاعْتِرَاضِ.

Nevertheless, I remained patient despite length of period and stiffness of trial, till when he went his way (of death) he put the matter (of Caliphate) in a group⁴ and regarded me to be one of them. But good Heavens! What had I to do with this “consultation”? Where was any doubt about me with regard to the first of them that I was now considered akin to these ones? But I remained low when they were low and flew high when they flew high.

One of them turned against me because of his hatred and the other got inclined the other way due to his in-law relationship and this thing and that thing, till the third man of these people stood up with heaving breasts between his dung and fodder. With him his children of his grand-father, (Umayyah) also stood up swallowing up Allah’s wealth⁵ like a camel devouring the foliage of spring, till his rope broke down, his actions finished him and his gluttony brought him down prostrate.

فَصَبَّرْتُ عَلَى طُولِ الْمُدَّةِ، وَشِدَّةِ الْمُحَنَةِ، حَتَّى إِذَا مَضَى لِسَبِيلِهِ جَعَلَهَا فِي جَمَاعَةِ زَعَمَ
أَنِّي أَحَدُهُمْ. فَيَا لِلَّهِ وَلِلشُّورَى! مَتَى اعْتَرَضَ الرَّبِّ فِيَّ مَعَ الْأَوَّلِ مِنْهُمْ، حَتَّى صِرْتُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَى
هَذِهِ النَّظَائِرِ! لِكَيْتِي أَسْقَمْتُ إِذْ أَسْقَمُوا، وَطَرْتُ إِذْ طَارُوا، فَصَعَا رَجُلٌ مِنْهُمْ لَضِعْنِهِ، وَمَالَ
الْأَخْرُ لَصَبْرِهِ، مَعَ هُنَّ وَهْنِ. إِلَى أَنْ قَامَ ثَالِثُ الْقَوْمِ، نَافِجًا حِضْنَيْهِ بَيْنَ نَثِيلِهِ وَمُغْتَلَفِهِ، وَقَامَ
مَعَهُ بَنُو أَبِيهِ يَحْضَمُونَ مَالَ اللَّهِ حِضْمَ الْأَيْلِ نَبْتَةَ الرَّبِّيعِ، إِلَى أَنْ انْتَكَتْ عَلَيْهِ فُتْلُهُ، وَأَجْهَرَ
عَلَيْهِ عَمَلُهُ، وَكَبَّتْ بِهِ بِطْنَتُهُ.

Allegiance paid to ‘Ali

مبايعة علي (عليه السلام)

At that moment, nothing took me by surprise, but the crowd of people rushing to me. It advanced towards me from every side like the mane of the hyena so much so that Hasan and Husayn were getting crushed and both the ends of my shoulder garment were torn. They collected around me like a herd of sheep and goats. When I took up the reins of government one party broke away and another turned disobedient while the rest began acting wrongfully as if they had not heard the word of Allah saying:

That abode in the hereafter, We assign it for those who intend not to exult themselves in the earth, nor (to make) mischief (therein); and the end is (best) for the pious ones. (Qur’an, 28:83)

فَمَا رَاعَنِي إِلَّا وَالنَّاسُ إِلَيَّ كَعُزْفِ الضَّبْعِ، يَنْتَالُونَ عَلَيَّ مِنْ كُلِّ جَانِبٍ، حَتَّى لَقَدْ وُطِيَءَ الْحَسَنَانَ، وَشَقَّ عِطْفَائِي، مُجْتَمِعِينَ حَوْلِي كَرَبِيضَةِ الْعَنَمِ. فَلَمَّا نَهَضْتُ بِالْأَمْرِ نَكَّتْ طَائِفَةٌ، وَمَرَقَتْ أُخْرَى، وَفَسَقَ [وَقَسَطَ] آخَرُونَ كَأَنَّهُمْ لَمْ يَسْمَعُوا اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ يَقُولُ: (تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ)،

Yes, by Allah, they had heard it and understood it but the world appeared glittering in their eyes and its embellishments seduced them. Behold, by Him who split the grain (to grow) and created living beings, if people had not come to me and supporters had not exhausted the argument and if there had been no pledge of Allah with the learned to the effect that they should not acquiesce in the gluttony of the oppressor and the hunger of the oppressed I would have cast the rope of Caliphate on its own shoulders, and would have given the last one the same treatment as to the first one. Then you would have seen that in my view this world of yours is no better than the sneezing of a goat.

بَلَى! وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ سَمِعُوهَا وَوَعَوْهَا، وَلَكِنَّهُمْ حَلَيْتِ الدُّنْيَا فِي أَعْيُنِهِمْ، وَرَاقَهُمْ زَبْرُجُهَا! أَمَّا وَالَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ، وَبَرَأَ النَّسَمَةَ، لَوْلَا حُضُورُ الْحَاضِرِ، وَقِيَامُ الْحُجَّةِ بِوُجُودِ النَّاصِرِ، وَمَا أَخَذَ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْعُلَمَاءِ إِلَّا يُفَارُوا عَلَى كِطَّةِ ظَالِمٍ، وَلَا سَعَبٍ مَظْلُومٍ، لَأَلْقَيْتُ حَبْلَهَا عَلَى غَارِبِهَا، وَلَسَقَيْتُ آخِرَهَا بِكَأْسٍ أَوْهَا، وَلَا لَقَيْتُمْ دُنْيَاكُمْ هَذِهِ أَرْهَدَ عِنْدِي مِنْ عَفْطَةِ عَنزٍ!

(It is said that when Amir al-mu'minin reached here in his sermon a man of Iraq stood up and handed him over a writing. Amir al-mu'minin began looking at it, when Ibn `Abbas said, "O' Amir al-mu'minin, I wish you resumed your Sermon from where you broke it." Thereupon he replied, "O' Ibn `Abbas it was like the foam of a Camel which gushed out but subsided." Ibn `Abbas says that he never grieved over any utterance as he did over this one because Amir al-mu'minin could not finish it as he wished to.)

قالوا: وقام إليه رجل من أهل السواد عند بلوغه إلى هذا الموضع من خطبته، فنأوله كتاباً، فأقبل ينظر فيه، فلما فرغ من قراءته قال له ابن عباس: يا أمير المؤمنين، لو أطردت مقاتلك من حيث أفضيت! فقال (عليه السلام): هيهات يابن عباس! تلك شفشقة هدرت ثم قررت! قال ابن عباس: فوالله ما أسفت على كلام قط كأسفي على ذلك الكلام إلا يكون أمير المؤمنين (عليه السلام) بلغ منه حيث أراد.

Al-Sharif al-Radi says: The words in this sermon "like the rider of a camel" mean to convey that when a camel rider is stiff in drawing up the rein then in this scuffle the nostril gets bruised, but if he lets it loose in spite of the camel's unruliness, it would throw him somewhere and would get out of control. "ashnaq an-naqah" is used when the rider holds up the rein and raises the camel's head upwards. In the same sense the word "shanaqa an-naqah" is used. Ibn as-Sikkit has mentioned this in Islah al-Mantiq.

Amir al-mu'minin has said "ashnaqa laha" instead of "ashnaqaha", this is because he has used this word in harmony with "aslaha laha" and harmony

could be retained only by using both in the same form. Thus, Amir al-mu'minin has used "ashnaqa laha" as though in place of "in rafa'a laha ra'saha", that is, "if he stops it by holding up the reins."

قال الشريف الرضي: قوله (عليه السلام) في هذه الخطبة: «كراكب الصعبة إن أشنق لها خرم، وإن أسلس لها تقحم» يريد: أنه إذا شدد عليها في جذب الزمام وهي تنازعه رأسها خرم أنفها، وإن أرخى لها شيئاً مع صعوبتها تقحمت به فلم يملكها، يقال: أشنق الناقة، إذا جذب رأسها بالزمام فرفعه، وشنقها أيضاً: ذكر ذلك ابن السكيت في «إصلاح المنطق». وإنما قال (عليه السلام): «أشنق لها» ولم يقل: «أشنقها»، لأنه جعله في مقابلة قوله: «أسلس لها»، فكأنه (عليه السلام) قال: إن رفع لها رأسها يعني أمسكه عليها بالزمام.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 3

- (1) *Al-Mufid, al-Jamal*, 62;
- (2) *Ibn Qubbah, al-'Insaf*, see *Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh*, I, 69, see also '*Abd al-Zahra*', I, 309-310;
- (3) *al-Saduq, Ma'ani*, 344;
- (4) *al-Hasan ibn 'Abd Allah al-'Askari*, from him *al-Saduq in Ma'ani*;
- (5) *Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, al-'Iqd*, IV, see '*Abd al-Zahra*', I, 311-312 and *al-Majlisi, Bihar*, vol.8, 160;
- (6) *al-Ka'bi (d.319/931)* - see *Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh*, I, 69;
- (7) *Ibn al-Jawzi, al-Manaqib*, see *Bihar*, vol.8, 160; and '*Abd al-Zahra*', I, 310-11;
- (8) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad*, 135;
- (9) *al-Qadi 'Abd al-Jabbar, al-Mughni*, see *al-Ghadir*, VII, 83;
- (10) *al-Saduq, 'Ilal*, bab al-'illat allati min ajliha taraka Amir al-Mu'minin (A) mujahadat ahl al-khilaf;
- (11) *Abu Sa'id al-'Abi, Nathr al-durar and Nuzhat al-'adib*, see '*Abd al-Zahra*', I, 313;
- (12) *al-Murtada, al-Shafi*, 203, 204;
- (13) *al-Haffar, al-'Insaf* from him *al-Tusi in al-'Amali*;
- (14) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali*, I, 392;
- (15) *Quthb al-Din Rawandi, Sharh*, from *Ibn Mardawayh and al-Tabarani*;
- (16) *Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, Tadhkirah*, 133;
- (17) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf*, 313;
- (18) *al-Murtada, Sharh al-Khutbat al-Shiqshiqiyah*, see *A'yan al-Shi'ah*, vol. 41, p. 195;
- (19) *al-Tabarsi, al-'Ihtijaj*; I, 95; for a detailed discussion of sources, see '*Abd al-Zahra*', I, 309-324.

Notes

1. This sermon is known as the sermon of ash-Shiqshiqiyah, and is counted among the most famous sermons of Amir al-mu'minin. It was delivered at ar-Rahbah. Although some people have denied it to be Amir al-mu'minin's utterance and by attributing it to as-Sayyid ar-Radi (or ash-Sharif ar-Radi) have laid blame on his acknowledged integrity, yet truth-loving scholars have denied its veracity. Nor can there be any ground for this denial because 'Ali's (p.b.u.h.) difference of view in the matter of Caliphate is not a secret matter,

so that such hints should be regarded as something alien. And the events which have been alluded to in this sermon are preserved in the annals of history which testifies them word by word and sentence by sentence.

If the same events which are related by history are recounted by Amir al-mu'minin then what is the ground for denying them? If the memory of discouraging circumstances faced by him soon after the death of the Prophet appeared unpalatable to him it should not be surprising. No doubt this sermon hits at the prestige of certain personalities and gives a set back to the faith and belief in them but this cannot be sustained by denying the sermon to be Amir al-mu'minin's utterance, unless the true events are analysed and truth unveiled; otherwise just denying it to be Amir al-mu'minin's utterance because it contains disparagement of certain individuals carries no weight, when similar criticism has been related by other historians as well. Thus (Abu `Uthman) `Amr ibn Bahr al-Jahiz has recorded the following words of a sermon of Amir al-mu'minin and they are not less weighty than the criticism in the "Sermon of ash-Shiqshiqiyah."

Those two passed away and the third one rose like the crow whose courage is confined to the belly. It would have been better if both his wings had been cut and his head severed.

Consequently, the idea that it is the production of as-Sayyid ar-Radi is far from truth and a result of partisanship and partiality. Or else if it is the result of some research it should be brought out. Otherwise, remaining in such wishful illusion does not alter the truth, nor can the force of decisive arguments be curbed down by mere disagreement and displeasure.

Now we set forth the evidence of those scholars and traditionists who have clearly held it to be Amir al-mu'minin's production, so that its historical importance should become known. Among these scholars some are those before as-Sayyid ar-Radi's period, some are his contemporaries and some are those who came after him but they all related it through their own chain of authority.

1) Ibn Abi'l-Hadid al-Mu` tazili writes that his master Abu'l-Khayr Musaddiq ibn Shabib al-Wasiti (d. 605 A.H.) stated that he heard this sermon from ash-Shaykh Abu Muhammad `Abdullah ibn Ahmad al-Baghdadi (d. 567 A.H.) known as Ibn al-Khashshab and when he reached where Ibn `Abbas expressed sorrow for this sermon having remained incomplete Ibn al-Khashshab said to him that if he had heard the expression of sorrow from Ibn `Abbas he would have certainly asked him if there had remained with his cousin any further unsatisfied desire because excepting the Prophet he had already spared neither the predecessors nor followers and had uttered all that he wished to utter. Why should therefore be any sorrow that he could not say what he wished?

Musaddiq says that Ibn al-Khashshab was a man of jolly heart and decent taste. I inquired from him whether he also regarded the sermon to be a fabrication when he replied "By Allah, I believe it to be Amir al-mu'minin's word as I believe you to be Musaddiq ibn Shabib." I said that some people regard it to be as-Sayyid ar-Radi's production when he replied: "How can ar-Radi have such guts or such style of writing. I have seen as-Sayyid ar-Radi's writings and know his style of composition. Nowhere does his writing match with this one and I have already seen it in books written two hundred years before the birth of as-Sayyid ar-Radi, and I have seen it in familiar writings about which I know by which scholars or men of letters they were compiled. At that time not only ar-Radi but even his father Abu Ahmad an-Naqib has not been born."

2) Thereafter Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes that he saw this sermon in the compilations of his master Abu'l-Qasim (^Abdullah ibn Ahmad) al-Balkhi (d. 317 A.H.). He was the Imam of the Mu'tazilites in the reign of al-Muqtadir Billah while al-Muqtadir's period was far earlier than the birth of as-Sayyid ar-Radi.

3) He further writes that he saw this sermon in Abu Ja`far (Muhammad ibn `Abd ar-Rahman), Ibn Qibah's book al-Insaf. He was the pupil of Abu'l-Qasim al-Balkhi and a theologian of Imamiyyah (Shi`ite) sect. (Sharh of Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.1, pp.205-206)

4) Ibn Maytham al-Bahrani (d. 679 A.H.) writes in his commentary that he had seen one such copy of this sermon which bore writing of al-Muqtadir Billah's minister Abu'l-Hasan `Ali ibn Muhammad ibn al-Furat (d. 312 A.H.). (Sharh al-balaghah, vol.1., pp.252-253)

5) al-`Allamah Muhammad Baqir al-Majlisi has related the following chain of authority about this Sermon from ash-Shaykh Qutbu'd-Din ar-Rawandi's compilation Minhaj al-bara`ah fi Sharh Nahjul Balaghah: Ash-Shaykh Abu Nasr al-Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn

Ibrahim informed me from al-Hajib Abu'l-Wafa' Muhammad ibn Badi', al-Husayn ibn Ahmad ibn Badi' and al-Husayn ibn Ahmad ibn `Abd ar-Rahman and they from al-Hafiz Abu Bakr (Ahmad ibn Musa) ibn Marduwayh al-Isbahani (d. 416 A.H.) and he from al-Hafiz Abu'l-Qasim Sulayman ibn Ahmad at-Tabarani (d. 360 A.H.) and he from Ahmad ibn `Ali al-Abbar and he from Is'haq ibn Sa'id Abu Salamah ad-Dimashqi and he from Khulayd ibn Da'laj and he from `Ata' ibn Abi Rabah and he from Ibn `Abbas. (Bihar al-anwar, 1st ed. vol.8, pp.160-161)

6) In the context al-`Allamah al-Majlisi has written that this sermon is also contained in the compilations of Abu `Ali (Muhammad ibn `Abd al-Wahhab) al-Jubba'i (d. 303 A.H.) .

7) In connection with this very authenticity al-`Allamah al-Majlisi writes: Al-Qadi `Abd al-Jabbar ibn Ahmad al-Asad'abadi (d. 415A.H.) who was a strict Mu`tazilite explains some expressions of this sermon in his book al-Mughni and tries to prove that it does not strike against any preceding caliph but does not deny it to be Amir al-mu'minin's composition. (ibid., p.161)

8) Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn `Ali, Ibn Babawayh (d. 381 A.H.) writes: Muhammad ibn Ibrahim ibn Is'haq at-Talaqani told us that `Abd al-`Aziz ibn Yahya al-Jaludi (d. 332 A.H.) told him that Abu `Abdillah Ahmad ibn `Ammar ibn Khalid told him that Yahya ibn `Abd al-Hamid al-Himmani (d. 228 A.H.) told him that `Isa ibn Rashid related this sermon from `Ali ibn Hudhayfah and he from `Ikrimah and he from Ibn `Abbas. (Ilal ash-shara'i', vol.1, chap. 122, p.144; Ma`ani al-akhbar, chap.22, pp.360-361)

9) Then Ibn Babawayh records the following chain of authorities:- Muhammad ibn `Ali Majilawayh related this sermon to us and he took it from his uncle Muhammad ibn Abi'l-Qasim and he from Ahmad ibn Abi `Abdillah (Muhammad ibn Khalid) al-Barqi and he from his father and he from (Muhammad) Ibn Abi `Umayr and he from Aban ibn `Uthman and he from Aban ibn Taghlib and he from `Ikrimah and he from Ibn `Abbas. (Ilal ash-shara'i', vol.1, chap.122, p.146; Ma`ani al-akhbar, chap.22, p.361)

10) Abu Ahmad al-Hasan ibn `Abdillah ibn Sa'id al-`Askari (d.382 A.H.) who counts among great scholars of the Sunnis has written commentary and explanation of this sermon that has been recorded by Ibn Babawayh in `Ilal ash-shara'i' and Ma`ani al-akhbar.

11) as-Sayyid Ni`matullah al-Jaza'iri writes: The author of Kitab al-gharat Abu Is'haq, Ibrahim ibn Muhammad ath-Thaqafi al-Kufi (d. 283 A.H.) has related this sermon through his own chain of authorities. The date of completion of writing this book is Tuesday the 13th Shawwal 255 A.H. and in the same year, Murtada al-Musawi was born. He was older in age than his brother as-Sayyid ar-Radi. (Anwar an-Nu`maniyyah, p.37)

12) as-Sayyid Radi ad-Din Abu'l-Qasim `Ali ibn Musa, Ibn Tawus al-Husayni al-Hulli (d. 664 A.H.) has related this sermon from Kitab al-gharat with the following chain of authorities:- This sermon was related to us by Muhammad ibn Yusuf who related it from al-Hasan ibn `Ali ibn `Abd al-Karim az-Za`farani and he from Muhammad ibn Zakariyyah al-Ghallabi and he from Ya`qub ibn Ja'far ibn Sulayman and he from his father and he from his grand-father and he from Ibn `Abbas. (Translation of at-Tara'if, p.202)

13) Shaykh at-Ta'ifah, Muhammad ibn al- Hasan at-Tusi (d. 460 A.H.) writes: (Abu'l-Fath Hilal ibn Muhammad ibn Ja'far) al-Haffar related this sermon to us. He related it from Abu'l-Qasim (Isma'il ibn `Ali ibn `Ali) ad-Di`bili and he from his father and he from his brother Di`bil (ibn `Ali al-Kuza'i) and he from Muhammad ibn Salamah ash-Shami and he from Zurarah ibn A`yan and he from Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn `Ali and he from Ibn `Abbas. (al-Amali, p.237)

14) ash-Shaykh al-Mufid (Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn an-Nu`man, d. 413 A.H.) who was the teacher of as-Sayyid ar-Radi writes about the chain of authorities of this sermon: A number of relaters of traditions have related this sermon from Ibn `Abbas through numerous chains. (al-Irshad, p.135)

15) `Alam al-Huda (emblem of guidance) as-Sayyid al-Murtada who was the elder brother of as-Sayyid ar-Radi has recorded it on pp. 203,204 of his book ash-Shafi.

16) Abu Mansur at-Tabarsi writes: A number of relaters have given an account of this sermon from Ibn `Abbas through various chains. Ibn `Abbas said that he was in the audience of Amir al-mu'minin at ar-Rahbah (a place in Kufah) when conversation turned to Caliphate and those who had preceded him as Caliphs, when Amir al-mu'minin breathed a sigh and delivered this sermon. (al-Ihtijaj, p. 101)

17) Abu'l-Muzaffar Yusuf ibn `Abdillah and Sibte ibn al-Jawzi al-Hanafi (d. 654 A.H.) writes: Our ash-Shaykh Abu'l-Qasim an-Nafis al-Anbari related this sermon to us through his chain of authorities that ends with Ibn `Abbas, who said that after allegiance had been paid to Amir al-mu'minin as Caliph he was sitting on the pulpit when a man from the audience enquired why he had remained quiet till then whereupon Amir al-mu'minin delivered this sermon extempore. (Tadhkarat khawass al-ummah, p.73)

18) al-Qadi Ahmad ibn Muhammad, ash-Shihab al-Khafaji (d. 1069 A.H.) writes with regard to its authenticity: It is stated in the utterances of Amir al-mu'minin `Ali (Allah may be pleased with him) that "It is strange during life time he (Abu Bakr) wanted to give up the Caliphate but he strengthened its foundation for the other one after his death." (Sharh durrat al-ghawwas, p.17)

19) ash-Shaykh `Ala ad-Dawlah as-Simnani writes: Amir al-mu'minin Sayyid al-`Arifin `Ali (p.b.u.h.) has stated in one of his brilliant Sermons "this is the Shiqshiqah that burst forth." (al-`Urwah li ahl al-khalwah wa'l-jalwah, p3, manuscript in Nasiriah Library, Lucknow, India)

20) Abu'l-Fadl Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Maydani (d. 518 A.H.) has written in connection with the word Shiqshiqah: One sermon of Amir al-mu'minin `Ali is known as Khutbah ash-Shiqshiqiyah (the sermon of the Camel's Foam). (Majma` al-amthal, vol.1, p.369)

21) In fifteen places in an-Nihayah while explaining the words of this sermon Abu's-Sa`adat Mubarak ibn Muhammad, Ibn al-Athir al-Jazari (d. 606 A.H.) has acknowledged it to be Amir al-mu'minin's utterance.

22) Shaykh Muhammad Tahir Patni while explaining the same words in Majma` bihar al-anwar testifies this sermon to be Amir al-mu'minin's by saying, "'Ali says so."

23) Abu'l-Fadl ibn Manzur (d. 711 A.H.) has acknowledged it as Amir al-mu'minin's utterance in Lisan al-`Arab, vol.12, p.54 by saying, "In the sayings of `Ali in his sermon 'It is the camel's foam that burst forth then subsided.'"

24) Majdu'd-Din al-Firuz'abadi (d. 816/817 A.H.) has recorded under the word "Shiqshiqah" in his lexicon (al-Qamus, vol.3, p.251): Khutbah ash-Shiqshiqiyah is by `Ali so named because when Ibn `Abbas asked him to resume it where he had left it, he said "O' Ibn `Abbas! it was the foam of a camel that burst forth then subsided."

25) The compiler of Muntaha al-adab writes: Khutbah ash-Shiqshiqiyah of `Ali is attributed to `Ali (Allah may honour his face).

26) ash-Shaykh Muhammad `Abduh, Mufti of Egypt, recognising it as Amir al-mu'minin's utterance, has written its explanations.

27) Muhammad Muhyi'd-Din `Abd al-Hamid, Professor in the Faculty of Arabic Language, al-Azhar University has written annotations on Nahjul Balaghah adding a foreword in the beginning wherein he recognises all such sermons which contain disparaging remarks to be the utterances of Amir al-mu'minin.

In the face of these evidences and undeniable proofs is there any scope to hold that it is not Amir al-mu'minin's production and that as-Sayyid ar-Radi prepared it himself?

2. Amir al-mu'minin has referred to Abu Bakr's accession to the Caliphate metaphorically as having dressed himself with it. This was a common metaphor. Thus, when `Uthman was called to give up the Caliphate he replied, "I shall not put off this shirt which Allah has put on me." No doubt Amir al-mu'minin has not attributed this dressing of Caliphate to Allah but to Abu Bakr himself because according to unanimous opinion his Caliphate was not from Allah but his own affair. That is why Amir al-mu'minin said that Abu Bakr dressed himself with the Caliphate.

He knew that this dress had been stitched for his own body and his position with relation to the Caliphate was that of the axis in the hand-mill which cannot retain its central position without it nor be of any use. Similarly, he held "I was the central pivot of the Caliphate, were I not there, its entire system would have gone astray from the pivot. It was I who acted as a guard for its organisation and order and guided it through all difficulties. Currents of learning flowed from my bosom and watered it on all sides. My position was high beyond imagination but lust of world seekers for government became a tumbling stone for me and I had to confine myself to seclusion. Blinding darkness prevailed all round and there was intense gloom everywhere. The young grew old and the old departed for the graves but this patience-breaking period would not end. I kept watching with my eyes the

plundering of my own inheritance and saw the passing of Caliphate from one hand to the other but remained patient as I could not stop their high-handedness for lack of means."

Need For The Prophet's Caliph And The Mode Of His Appointment

After the Prophet of Islam the presence of such a personality was inevitable who could stop the community from disintegration and guard the religious law against change, alteration and interference by those who wanted to twist it to suit their own desires. If this very need is denied then there is no sense in attaching so much importance to the succession of the Prophet that the assemblage in Saqifah of Banu Sa'idah should have been considered more important than the burial of the Prophet.

If the need is recognised, the question is whether or not the Prophet too realised it. If it is held he could not attend to it and appreciate its need or absence of need it would be the biggest proof for regarding the Prophet's mind to be blank for thinking of means to stop the evils of innovations and apostasy in spite of having given warnings about them. If it is said that he did realise it but had to live it unresolved on account of some advantage then instead of keeping it hidden the advantage should be clearly indicated otherwise silence without purpose would constitute delinquency in the discharge of the obligations of Prophethood. If there was some impediment, it should be disclosed otherwise we should agree that just as the Prophet did not leave any item of religion incomplete he did not leave this matter either and did propose such a course of action for it, that if it was acted upon religion would have remained safe against the interference of others.

The question now is what was that course of action. If it is taken to be the consensus of opinion of the community then it cannot truly take place as in such consensus acquiescence of every individual is necessary; but taking into account the difference in human temperaments it seems impossible that they would agree on any single point. Nor is there any example where on such matters there has been no single voice of dissent. How then can such a fundamental need be made dependent on the occurrence of such an impossible event - need on which converges the future of Islam and the good of the Muslims. Therefore, the mind is not prepared to accept this criterion. Nor is tradition in harmony with it, as al-Qadi `Adud ad-Din al-Iji has written in Sharh al-mawaqif: 'You should know that Caliphate cannot depend upon unanimity of election because no logical or traditional argument can be advanced for it'.

In fact when the advocates of unanimous election found that unanimity of all votes is difficult they adopted the agreement of the majority as a substitute for unanimity, ignoring the difference of the minority. In such a case also it often happens that the force of fair and foul or correct and incorrect ways turns the flow of the majority opinion in the direction where there is neither individual distinction nor personal merit as a result of which competent persons remain hidden while incompetent individuals stand forward.

When capabilities remain so curbed and personal ends stand in the way as hurdles, how can there be expectation for the election of correct person. Even if it is assumed that all voters have an independent unbiased view, that none of them has his own objective and that none has any other consideration, it is not necessary that every verdict of the majority should be correct, and that it cannot go astray. Experience shows that after experiment the majority has held its own verdict to be wrong.

If every verdict of the majority is correct then its first verdict should be wrong because the verdict which holds it wrong is also that of the majority. In this circumstances if the election of the Caliph goes wrong who would be responsible for the mistake, and who should face the blame for the ruination of the Islamic polity. Similarly on whom would be the liability for the bloodshed and slaughter following the turmoil and activity of the elections. When it has been seen that even those who sat in the audience of the Holy Prophet could not be free of mutual quarrel and strife how can others avoid it.

If with a view to avoid mischief it is left to the people of authority to choose anyone they like then here too the same friction and conflict would prevail because here again convergence of human temperaments on one point is not necessary nor can they be assumed to rise above personal ends. In fact here the chances of conflict and collision would be stronger because if not all at least most of them would themselves be candidates for that position and would not spare any effort to defeat their opponent, creating impediments in his way as best as possible. Its inevitable consequence would be mutual struggle and mischief-mongering.

Thus, it would not be possible to ward off the mischief for which this device was adopted, and instead of finding a proper individual the community would just become an instrument for the achievement of personal benefits of the others. Again, what would be the criterion for these people in authority? The same as has usually been, namely whoever collects a few supporters and is able to create commotion in any meeting by use of forceful words would count among the people of authority. Or would capabilities also be judged? If the mode of judging the capabilities is again this very common vote then the same complications and conflicts would arise here too, to avoid which this way was adopted.

If there is some other standard, then instead of judging the capabilities of the voters by it why not judge the person who is considered suitable for the position in view. Further, how many persons in authority would be enough to give a verdict? Apparently a verdict once accepted would be precedent for good and the number that would give this verdict would become the criterion for future. al-Qadi `Adud ad-Din al-Iji writes: 'Rather the nomination of one or two individuals by the people in authority is enough because we know that the companions who were strict in religion deemed it enough as the nomination of Abu Bakr by `Umar and of `Uthman by `Abd ar-Rahman'. (Sharh al-mawaqif, p.351)

This is the account of the "unanimous election" in the Hall of Bani Sa`idah and the activity of the consultative assembly: that is, one man's action has been given the name of unanimous election and one individual's deed given the name of consultative assembly. Abu Bakr had well understood this reality that election means the vote of a person or two only which is to be attributed to common simple people.

That is why he ignored the requirements of unanimous election, majority vote or method of choosing through electoral assembly and appointed `Umar by nomination. `A'ishah also considered that leaving the question of caliphate to the vote of a few particular individuals meant inviting mischief and trouble. She sent a word to `Umar on his death saying: Do not leave the Islamic community without a chief. Nominate a Caliph for it and leave it not without an authority as otherwise I apprehend mischief and trouble.

When the election by those in authority proved futile it was given up and only "might is right" became the criteria-namely whoever subdues others and binds them under his sway and control is accepted as the Caliph of the Prophet and his true successor. These are those self-adopted principles in the face of which all the Prophet's sayings uttered in the "Feast of the Relatives," on the night of hijrah, at the battle of Tabuk, on the occasion of conveying the Qur'anic chapter "al-Bara'ah" (at-Tawbah, chap.9) and at Ghadir (the spring of Khumm).

The strange thing is that when each of the first three caliphates is based on one individual's choice how can this very right to choose be denied to the Prophet himself, particularly when this was the only way to end all the dissension, namely that the Prophet should have himself settled it and saved the community from future disturbances and spared it from leaving this decision in the hands of people who were themselves involved in personal aims and objects. This is the correct procedure which stands to reason and which has also the support of the Prophet's definite sayings.

3. Hayyan ibn as-Samin al-Hanafi of Yamamah was the chief of the tribe Banu Hanifah and the master of fort and army. Jabir is the name of his younger brother while al-A`sha whose real name was Maymun ibn Qays ibn Jandal enjoyed the position of being his bosom friend and led a decent happy life through his bounty. In this verse he has compared his current life with the previous one that is the days when he roamed about in search of livelihood and those when he led a happy life in Hayyan's company.

Generally Amir al-mu'minin's quoting of this verse has been taken to compare this troubled period with the peaceful days passed under the care and protection of the Prophet when he was free from all sorts of troubles and enjoyed mental peace. But taking into account the occasion for making this comparison and the subject matter of the verse it would not be far fetched if it is taken to indicate the difference between the unimportant position of those in power during the Prophet's life time and the authority and power enjoyed by them after him, that is, at one time in the days of the Prophet no heed was paid to them because of `Ali's personality but now the time had so changed that the same people were masters of the affairs of the Muslim world.

4. When `Umar was wounded by Abu Lu'lu'ah and he saw that it was difficult for him to survive because of the deep wound, he formed a consultative committee and nominated for

it `Ali ibn Abi Talib, `Uthman ibn `Affan, `Abd ar-Rahman ibn `Awf, az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwam, Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas, and Talhah ibn `Ubaydillah and bound them that after three days of his death they should select one of themselves as the Caliph while for those three days Suhayb should act as Caliph. On receipt of these instructions some members of the committee requested him to indicate what ideas he had about each of them to enable them to proceed further in their light. `Umar therefore disclosed his own view about each individual.

He said that Sa`d was harsh-tempered and hot headed; `Abd ar-Rahman was the Pharaoh of the community; az-Zubayr was, if pleased, a true believer but if displeased an unbeliever; Talhah was the embodiment of pride and haughtiness, if he was made caliph he would put the ring of the caliphate on his wife's finger while `Uthman did not see beyond his kinsmen. As regards `Ali he is enamoured of the Caliphate although I know that he alone can run it on right lines. Nevertheless, despite this admission, he thought it necessary to constitute the consultative Committee and in selecting its members and laying down the working procedure he made sure that the Caliphate would take the direction in which he wished to turn it.

Thus, a man of ordinary prudence can draw the conclusion that all the factors for `Uthman's success were present therein. If we look at its members we see that one of them namely `Abd ar-Rahman ibn `Awf is the husband of `Uthman's sister, next Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas besides bearing malice towards `Ali is a relation and kinsman of `Abd ar-Rahman. Neither of them can be taken to go against `Uthman. The third Talhah ibn `Ubaydillah about whom Prof. Muhammad `Abduh writes in his annotation on Nahjul Balaghah:

Talhah was inclined towards `Uthman and the reason for it was no less than that he was against `Ali, because he himself was at at-Taymi and Abu Bakr's accession to the Caliphate had created bad blood between Bani Taym and Banu Hashim.

As regards az-Zubayr, even if he had voted for `Ali, what could his single vote achieve. According to at-Tabari's statement Talhah was not present in Medina at that time but his absence did not stand in the way of `Uthman's success. Rather even if he were present, as he did actually reach at the meeting (of the Committee), and he is taken to be `Ali's supporter, still there could be no doubt in `Uthman's success because `Umar's sagacious mind had set the working procedure that:

If two agree about one and the other two about another then `Abdullah ibn `Umar should act as the arbitrator. The group whom he orders should choose the Caliph from among themselves. If they do not accept `Abdullah ibn `Umar's verdict, support should be given to the group which includes `Abd ar-Rahman ibn `Awf, but if the others do not agree they should be beheaded for opposing this verdict. (at-Tabari, vol.1, pp.2779-2780; Ibn al-Athir, vol.3, p.67).

Here disagreement with the verdict of `Abdullah ibn `Umar has no meaning since he was directed to support the group which included `Abd ar-Rahman ibn `Awf. He had ordered his son `Abdullah and Suhayb that: 'If the people differ, you should side with the majority, but if three of them are on one side and the other three on the other, you should side with the group including `Abd ar-Rahman ibn `Awf'. (at-Tabari, vol.1, pp.2725,2780; Ibn al-Athir, vol.3, pp.51,67).

In this instruction the agreement with the majority also means support of `Abd ar-Rahman because the majority could not be on any other side since fifty blood-thirsty swords had been put on the heads of the opposition group with orders to fall on their heads on `Abd ar-Rahman's behest. Amir al-mu'minin's eye had fore-read it at that very moment that the Caliphate was going to `Uthman as appears from his following words which he spoke to al-`Abbas ibn `Abd al-Muttalib:

"The Caliphate has been turned away from us." al-`Abbas asked how could he know it. Then he replied, "`Uthman has also been coupled with me and it has been laid down that the majority should be supported; but if two agree on one and two on the other, then support should be given to the group which includes `Abd ar-Rahman ibn `Awf. Now Sa`d will support his cousin `Abd ar-Rahman who is of course the husband of `Uthman's sister." (ibid)

However, after `Umar's death this meeting took place in the room of `A'ishah and on its door stood Abu Talhah al-Ansari with fifty men having drawn swords in their hands. Talhah started the proceedings and inviting all others to be witness said that he gave his

right of vote to `Uthman. This touched az-Zubayr's sense of honour as his mother Safiyyah daughter of `Abd al-Muttalib was the sister of Prophet's father. So he gave his right of vote to `Ali.

Thereafter Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas made his right of vote to `Abd ar-Rahman. This left three members of the consultative committee out of whom `Abd ar-Rahman said that he was willing to give up his own right of vote if `Ali (p.b.u.h.) and `Uthman gave him the right to choose one of them or one of these two should acquire this right by withdrawing. This was a trap in which `Ali had been entangled from all sides namely that either he should abandon his own right or else allow `Abd ar-Rahman to do as he wished. The first case was not possible for him; that is, to give up his own right and elect `Uthman or `Abd ar-Rahman.

So, he clung to his right, while `Abd ar-Rahman separating himself from it assumed this power and said to Amir al-mu'minin, "I pay you allegiance on your following the Book of Allah, the sunnah of the Prophet and the conduct of the two Shaykhs, (Abu Bakr and `Umar). `Ali replied, "Rather on following the Book of Allah, the sunnah of the Prophet and my own findings." When he got the same reply even after repeating the question thrice he turned to `Uthman saying, "Do you accept these conditions." He had no reason to refuse and so he agreed to the conditions and allegiance was paid to him. When Amir al mu'minin saw his rights being thus trampled he said: "This is not the first day when you behaved against us. I have only to keep good patience. Allah is the Helper against whatever you say. By Allah, you have not made `Uthman Caliph but in the hope that he would give back the Caliphate to you."

After recording the events of ash-Shura (consultative committee), Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written that when allegiance had been paid to `Uthman, `Ali addressed `Uthman and `Abd ar-Rahman saying, "May Allah sow the seed of dissension among you," and so it happened that each turned a bitter enemy of the other and `Abd ar-Rahman did not ever after speak to `Uthman till death. Even on death bed he turned his face on seeing him.

On seeing these events the question arises whether ash-Shura (consultative committee) means confining the matter to six persons, thereafter to three and finally to one only. Also whether the condition of following the conduct of the two Shaykhs for Caliphate was put by `Umar or it was just a hurdle put by `Abd ar-Rahman between `Ali (p.b.u.h.) and the Caliphate, although the first Caliph did not put forth this condition at the time of nominating the second Caliph, namely that he should follow the former's footsteps. What then was the occasion for this condition here?

However, Amir al-mu'minin had agreed to participate in it in order to avoid mischief and to put an end to arguing so that others should be silenced and should not be able to claim that they would have voted in his favour and that he himself evaded the consultative committee and did not give them an opportunity of selecting him.

5. About the reign of the third Caliph, Amir al-mu'minin says that soon on `Uthman's coming to power Banu Umayyah got ground and began plundering the Bayt al-mal (public fund), and just as cattle on seeing green grass after drought trample it away, they recklessly fell upon Allah's money and devoured it. At last this self-indulgence and nepotism brought him to the stage when people besieged his house, put him to sword and made him vomit all that he had swallowed.

The maladministration that took place in this period was such that no Muslim can remain unmoved to see that Companions of high position were lying uncared for, they were stricken with poverty and surrounded by pennilessness while control over Bayt al-mal (public fund) was that of Banu Umayyah, government positions were occupied by their young and inexperienced persons, special Muslim properties were owned by them, meadows provided grazing but to their cattle, houses were built but by them, and orchards were but for them. If any compassionate person spoke about these excesses his ribs were broken, and if someone agitated this capitalism he was exterminated from the city. The uses to which zakat and charities which were meant for the poor and the wretched and the public fund which was the common property of the Muslims were put may be observed from the following few illustrations;

1) al-Hakam ibn Abi'l-`As who had been exiled from Medina by the Prophet was allowed back in the city not only against the Prophet's sunnah but also against the conduct

of the first two Caliphs and he was paid three hundred thousand Dirhams from the public fund. (Ansab al-ashraf, vol.5, pp.27, 28, 125)

2) al-Walid ibn `Uqbah who has been named hypocrite in the Qur'an was paid one hundred thousand Dirhams from the Muslim's public fund. (al-`Iqd al-farid, vol.3, p.94)

3) The Caliph married his own daughter Umm Aban to Marwan ibn al-Hakam and paid him one hundred thousand Dirhams from the public fund. (Sharh of Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.1, pp.198-199).

4) He married his daughter `A'ishah to Harith ibn al-Hakam and granted him one hundred thousand Dirhams from the public fund. (ibid.)

5) `Abdullah ibn Khalid was paid four hundred thousand Dirhams. (al-Ma`arif of Ibn Qutaybah, p.84)

6) Allowed the khums (one fifth religious duty) from Africa (amounting to five hundred thousand Dinars) to Marwan ibn al-Hakam. (ibid)

7) Fadak which was withheld from the angelic daughter of the Prophet on the ground of being general charity was given as a royal favour to Marwan ibn al-Hakam. (ibid.)

8) Mahzur a place in the commercial area of Medina which had been declared a public trust by the Prophet was gifted to Harith ibn al-Hakam. (ibid.)

9) In the meadows around Medina no camel except those of Banu Umayyah were allowed to graze. (Sharh of Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.1, p.199)

10) After his death (`Uthman's) one hundred and fifty thousand Dinars (gold coins) and one million Dirhams (silver coins) were found in his house. There was no limit to tax free lands; and the total value of the landed estate he owned in Wadi al-Qura and Hunayn was one hundred thousand Dinars. There were countless camels and horses. (Muruj adh-dhahab, vol.1, p.435)

11) The Caliph's relations ruled all the principal cities. Thus, at Kufah, al-Walid ibn `Uqbah was the governor but when in the state of intoxication of wine he led the morning prayer in four instead of two rak`ah and people agitated he was removed, but the Caliph put in his place a hypocrite like Sa`id ibn al-`As. In Egypt `Abdullah ibn Sa`d ibn Abi Sarh, in Syria Muawiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, and in Basrah, `Abdullah ibn `Amir were the governors appointed by him (ibid.)

Sermon 4: Through us you got guidance in the darkness...

Amir al-mu'minin's far-sightedness and his staunch conviction in Belief

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وهي من أفصح كلامه (عليه السلام)، وفيها يعظ الناس ويهديهم من ضلالتهم،

ويقال: إنه خطبها بعد قتل طلحة والزبير

Through us you got guidance in the darkness and secured high position, and through us you got out of the gloomy night. The ears which do not listen to the cries may become deaf. How can one who remained deaf to the loud cries (of the Qur'an and the Prophet) listen to (my) feeble voice? The heart that has ever palpitated (with fear of Allah) may get peace.

بِنَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ فِي الظُّلُمَاءِ، وَتَسَنَّمْتُمْ العُلْيَاءَ، وَبِنَا انْفَجَرْتُمْ عَنِ السِّرَارِ، وَفِرَّ سَمْعٌ لَمْ يَفْقَهُ الوَاعِيَةَ، كَيْفَ يُرَاعِي النَّبَأَ مَنْ أَصَمَّتْهُ الصَّيْحَةُ؟ رُيِّطَ جَنَانٌ لَمْ يُفَارِقْهُ الحَقَّقَانُ .

I always apprehended from you consequences of treachery and I had seen you through in the garb of the deceitful. The curtain of religion had kept me hidden from you but the truth of my intentions disclosed you to me. I stood for you on the path of truth among misleading tracks where you met each other but there was no leader and you dug but got no water.

مَا زِلْتُ أَنْتَظِرُ بِكُمْ عَوَاقِبَ العَدْرِ، وَأَتَوَسَّمُكُمْ بِجَلِيَةِ الْمُعْتَرِينَ، سَتَرَنِي عَنْكُمْ جِلْبَابُ الدِّينِ، وَبَصَّرَنِيكُمْ صِدْقَ النَّبِيِّ، أَقَمْتُ لَكُمْ عَلَى سَنَنِ الحَقِّ فِي جَوَادِّ المَضَلَّةِ، حَيْثُ تَلْتَفُونَ وَلَا دَلِيلَ، وَتَحْتَفِرُونَ وَلَا تُمِيهُونَ.

Today I am making these dumb things speak to you (i.e. my suggestive ideas and deep musings etc.) which are full of descriptive power. The opinion of the person who abandons me may get astray. I have never doubted in the truth since it has been shown to me. Musa (Moses)¹ did not entertain fear for his own self. Rather he apprehended mastery of the ignorant and away of deviation. Today we stand on the cross-roads of truth and untruth. The one who is sure of getting water feels no thirst.

اليَوْمَ أُنطِقُ لَكُمْ العَجَمَاءَ ذَاتَ البَيَانِ! عَزَبَ رَأْيِي امْرِئًا تَخَلَّفَ عَنِّي، مَا شَكَّكَتْ فِي الحَقِّ مُذْ أُرِيئُهُ! لَمْ يُوجِسْ مُوسَى خَيْفَةً عَلَى نَفْسِهِ، أَشَفَقَ مِنْ غَلْبَةِ الجُهَّالِ وَدَوَلِ الضَّلَالِ! اليَوْمَ تَوَاقَفْنَا عَلَى سَبِيلِ الحَقِّ وَالبَاطِلِ، مَنْ وَثِقَ بِمَاءٍ لَمْ يَظْمَأْ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 4

(1) *Al-Mufid, al-Irshad, 147;*

(2) *al-Tabari, al-Mustarshid, 95.*

Notes

1. The reference is to that event of Moses when sorcerers were sent for to confront him and they showed their sorcery by throwing ropes and sticks on the ground and Moses felt afraid. Thus, the Qur'an records: .

. it seemed to him (Moses), by their sorcery as if they were running. Then Moses felt in himself a fear. We said: Fear not! Verily thou art the uppermost. (20:66-68)

Amir al-mu'minin says that the ground for Moses' fear was not that since he saw ropes and sticks moving he might have entertained fear for his life but the cause of his fear was lest people be impressed with this sorcery and get astray, and untruth might prevail on account of this craft. That is why Moses was not consoled by saying that his life was safe but by saying that he would prove superior, and his claim would be upheld.

Since his fear was for the defeat of the truth and victory of the untruth, not for his own life, the consideration was given to him for the victory of truth and not for the protection of his life. Amir al-mu'minin also means that he too had the same fear viz. that the people should not be caught in the trap of these (Talhah, az-Zubayr, etc.) and fail into misguidance by getting astray from the true faith. Otherwise, he himself never feared for his own life.

Sermon 5: O people, steer clear through the waves of mischief...

Delivered when the Holy Prophet died and `Abbas ibn `Abd al-Muttalib and Abu Sufyan ibn Harb offered to pay allegiance to Amir al-mu'minin for the Caliphate

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام) لما قبض رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وآله)

وخاطبه العباس وأبوسفيان في أن يبايعا له بالخلافة

(وذلك بعد أن تمت البيعة لابي بكر في السقيفة، وفيها ينهى عن الفتنة ويبين عن خلقه

وعلمه):

O People!¹

Steer clear through the waves of mischief by boats of deliverance, turn away from the path of dissension and put off the crowns of pride. Prosperous is one who rises with wings (i.e. when he has power) or else he remains peaceful and others enjoy ease. It (i.e. the aspiration for Caliphate) is like turbid water or like a morsel that would suffocate the person who swallows it. One who plucks fruits before ripening is like one who cultivated in another's field.

النهي عن الفتنة

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، شُقُّوا أَمْوَاجَ الْفِتَنِ بِسُفُنِ النَّجَاةِ، وَعَرِّجُوا عَنْ طَرِيقِ الْمُنَافَرَةِ، وَضَعُوا تِيَجَانَ الْمُفَاخِرَةِ. أَفْلَحَ مَنْ نَهَضَ بِجَنَاحٍ، أَوْ اسْتَسَلَّمَ فَأَرَاخَ، مَاءً آجِنًا، وَلُقْمَةً يَعْصُ بِهَا أَكْلَهَا، وَجُنَّتِي الثَّمَرَةَ لِعَبْرٍ وَقَتٍ إِيْنَاعِهَا كَالزَّرْعِ بَعْبَرٍ أَرْضِهِ.

If I speak out they would call me greedy towards power but if I keep quiet they would say I was afraid of death. It is a pity that after all the ups and downs (I have been through). By Allah, the son of Abu Talib² is more familiar with death than an infant with the breast of its mother. I have hidden knowledge, if I disclose it you will start trembling like ropes in deep wells.

خلقه وعلمه

فَإِنْ أَقُلُّ يَفُؤُلُوا: حَرَصَ عَلَى الْمُلْكِ، وَإِنْ أَسْكُتُ يَفُؤُلُوا: جَزَعٌ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ! هَيْهَاتَ بَعْدَ اللَّتْيَا وَالَّتِي! وَاللَّهِ لَأَبْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ أُنْسٌ بِالْمَوْتِ مِنَ الطَّقْلِ بِئَدْيِ أُمِّهِ، بَلِ انْدَجَجْتُ عَلَى مَكْنُونٍ عِلْمٌ لَوْ بُحْتُ بِهِ لَأَضْطَرَّنْتُمْ اضْطِرَابَ الْأَرْضِيَّةِ فِي الطَّوِيِّ الْبَعِيدَةِ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 5

(1) *Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, Tadhkirah, bab 6, 137;*

(2) *al-Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj, I, 127;*

(3) *al-Bayhaqi, al-Mahasin, II, 139, see `Arshi.*

Notes

1. When the Holy Prophet died Abu Sufyan was not in Medina. He was coming back when on his way he got the news of this tragedy. At once he enquired who had become the leader and Chief. He was told that people had paid allegiance to Abu Bakr. On hearing this the acknowledged mischief-monger of Arabia went into deep thought and eventually went to `Abbas ibn `Abd al-Muttalib with a proposal. He said to him, "Look, these people have by contrivance made over the Caliphate to the Taym and deprived Banu Hashim of it for good, and after himself this man would place over our heads a haughty man of Banu `Adi. Let us go to `Ali ibn `Abi Talib and ask him to get out of his house and take to arms to secure his right."

So taking `Abbas with him he came to `Ali and said: "Let me your hand; I pay allegiance to you and if anyone rises in opposition I would fill the streets of Medina with men of cavalry and infantry." This was the most delicate moment for Amir al-mu'minin. He regarded himself as the true head and successor of the Prophet while a man with the backing of his tribe and party like Abu Sufyan was ready to support him. Just a signal was enough to ignite the flames of war. But Amir al-mu'minin's foresight and right judgement saved the Muslims from civil war as his piercing eyes perceived that this man wanted to start civil war by rousing the passions of tribal partisanship and distinction of birth, so that Islam should be struck with a convulsion that would shake it to its roots.

Amir al-mu'minin therefore rejected his counsel and admonished him severely and spoke forth the words, whereby he has stopped people from mischief mongering, and undue conceit, and declared his stand to be that for him there were only two courses - either to take up arms or to sit quietly at home. If he rose for war there was no supporter so that he could suppress these rising insurgencies. The only course left was quietly to wait for the opportunity till circumstances were favourable.

Amir al-mu'minin's quietness at this stage was indicative of his high policy and far-sightedness, because if in those circumstances Medina had become the centre of war its fire would have engulfed the whole of Arabia in its flames. The discord and scuffle that had already begun among muhajirun (those who came from Mecca) and ansar (the locals of Medina) would have increased to maximum, the wire-pullings of the hypocrites would have had full play, and Islam's ship would have been caught in such a whirlpool that its balancing would have been difficult; Amir al-mu'minin suffered trouble and tribulations but did not raise his hands.

History is witness that during his life at Mecca the Prophet suffered all sorts of troubles but he was not prepared to clash or struggle by abandoning patience and endurance, because he realised that if war took place at that stage the way for Islam's growth and fruition would be closed. Of course, when he had collected supporters and helpers enough to suppress the flood of unbelief and curb the disturbances, he rose to face the enemy. Similarly, Amir al-mu'minin, treating the life of the Prophet as a torch for his guidance refrained from exhibiting the power of his arm because he was realising that rising against the enemy without helpers and supporters would become a source of revolt and defeat instead of success and victory.

Therefore, on this occasion Amir al-mu'minin has likened the desire for Caliphate to turbid water or a morsel suffocating the throat. Thus, even where people had forcibly snatched this morsel and wanted to swallow it by forcible thrusting, it became stuck in their throat. They could neither swallow it nor vomit it out. That is, they could neither manage it as is apparent from the blunders they committed in connection with Islamic injunctions, nor were they ready to cast off the knot from their neck.

He reiterated the same ideas in different words thus: "If had I attempted to pluck the unripe fruit of Caliphate then by this the orchard would have been desolated and I too would have achieved nothing, like these people who cultivate on other's land but can neither guard it, nor water it at proper time, nor reap any crop from it. The position of these people is that if I ask them to vacate it so that the owner should cultivate it himself and protect it, they say how greedy I am, while if I keep quiet they think I am afraid of death.

They should tell me on what occasion did I ever feel afraid, or flew from battle-field for life, whereas every small or big encounter is proof of my bravery and a witness to my daring and courage. He who plays with swords and strikes against hillocks is not afraid of death. I am so familiar with death that even an infant is not so familiar with the breast of its

mother. Hark! The reason for my silence is the knowledge that the Prophet has put in my bosom. If I divulge it you would get perplexed and bewildered. Let some days pass and you would know the reason of my inaction, and perceive with your own eyes what sorts of people would appear on this scene under the name of Islam, and what destruction they would bring about. My silence is because this would happen, otherwise it is not silence without reason."

A Persian hemistich says: "Silence has meaning which cannot be couched in words."

2. About death Amir al-mu'minin says that it is so dear to him that even an infant does not so love to leap towards the source of its nourishment while in its mother's lap. An infant's attachment with the breast of its mother is under the effect of a natural impulse but the dictates of natural impulses change with the advance of age. When the limited period of infancy ends and the infant's temperament changes, he does not like even to look at what was so familiar to him but rather turns his face from it in disgust.

But the love of prophets and saints for union with Allah is mental and spiritual, and mental and spiritual feelings do not change, nor does weakness or decay occur in them. Since death is the means and first rung towards this goal their love for death increases to such an extent that its rigours become the cause of pleasure for them and its bitterness proves to be the source of delight for their taste.

Their love for it is the same as that of the thirsty for the well or that of a lost passenger for his goal. Thus when Amir al-mu'minin was wounded by `Abd ar-Rahman ibn Muljam's fatal attack, he said, "I was but like the walker who has reached (the goal) or like the seeker who has found (his object) and whatever is with Allah is good for the pious." The Prophet also said that there is no pleasure for a believer other than union with Allah.

Sermon 6: By Allah, I shall not be like the badger that ...

Delivered on being advised not to chase Talhah ibn `Ubaydillah and az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwam for fighting.¹

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لما أشير عليه بالألا يتبع طلحة والزبير ولا يُرصد لهما القتال

[وفيه يبين عن صفته بأنه (عليه السلام) لا يخدع]

By Allah, I shall not be like the badger, that feigns sleep on continuous (sound of) stone-throwing till he who is in search of it finds it or he who is on the look out for it overpowers it. Rather, I shall ever strike the deviators from truth with the help of those who advance towards it, and the sinners and doubters with the help of those who listen to me and obey, till my day (of death) comes. By Allah I have been continually deprived of my right, with others being given preference to me, from the day the Prophet died till today.

وَاللّٰهُ لَا أَكُوْنُ كَالضَّبْعِ: تَنَامُ عَلٰى طُوْلِ اللَّدْمِ، حَتّٰى يَصِلَ اِلَيْهَا طَالِيْهَا، وَيَخْتَلِّهَا رَاصِدُهَا، وَلِكَيْتِيْ اَضْرِبُ بِالْمَقْبِلِ اِلَى الْحَقِّ الْمُدْبِرِ عَنْهُ، وَبِالسَّمَاعِ الْمَطِيْعِ الْعَاصِيِ الْمَرِيْبِ اَبَدًا، حَتّٰى يَأْتِيْ عَلَيَّ يَوْمِي. فَوَاللّٰهِ مَا زِلْتُ مَدْفُوْعًا عَنْ حَقِّي، مُسْتَتَاْثِرًا عَلَيَّ، مُنْذُ قَبَضَ اللّٰهُ تَعَالٰى نَبِيَّهٖ (صلى الله عليه وآله) حَتّٰى يَوْمِ النَّاسِ هَذَا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 6

- (1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, events of the year 36 H.S VI, 3107;*
- (2) *Ibn Salam, Gharib al-hadith, 174;*
- (3) *al-Jawhari, al-Sihah, V, 2026;*
- (4) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, 33*.*

Notes

1. When Amir al-mu'minin showed intention to chase Talhah and az-Zubayr, he was advised to leave them on their own lest he received some harm from them. Amir al-mu'minin uttered these words in reply, the sum total whereof is: "How long can I be a mere spectator to my right being snatched and keep quiet. Now, so long as I have breath of life I shall fight them and make them suffer the consequences of their conduct. They should not think that I can be easily over-powered like the badger."

Dabu` means badger. Its nickname is Umm `Amir and Umm Turrayq. It is also called "the glutton", because it swallows everything and eats up whatever it gets as if several bellies were contained in one, and they do not have their fill. It is also called Na`thal. It is a very simple and silly animal. Its slyness is apparent from the way it is easily caught. It is said that the hunter surrounds its den and strikes it with his foot or a stick, and calls out softly, "Bow you head Umm Turrayq, conceal yourself Umm `Amir."

On repeating this sentence and patting the ground, it conceals itself in a corner of the den. Then the hunter says, "Umm `Amir is not in its den, it is sleeping." On hearing this it stretches its limbs and feigns sleep. The hunter then puts the knot in its feet and drags it out, and if falls like a coward into his hand without resistance.

Sermon 7: They have made Satan the master of their affairs...

About the hypocrites

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يذم فيها أتباع الشيطان

They¹ have made Satan the master of their affairs, and he has taken them as partners. He has laid eggs and hatched them in their bosoms. He creeps and crawls in their laps. He sees through their eyes, and speaks with their tongues. In this way he has led them to sinfulness and adorned for them foul things like the action of one whom Satan has made partner in his domain and speaks untruth through his tongue.

اتَّخَذُوا الشَّيْطَانَ لِأَمْرِهِمْ مَلَكَاً، وَاتَّخَذَهُمْ لَهُ أَشْرَكَاءَ، فَبَاضَ وَفَرَّخَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ، وَدَبَّ وَدَرَجَ فِي حُجُورِهِمْ، فَنَظَرَ بِأَعْيُنِهِمْ، وَنَطَقَ بِأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ، فَركَبَ بِهِمُ الرِّزْلَ، وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الحِطْلَ، فَعَلَّ مَنْ قَدَّ شَرِكَةَ الشَّيْطَانِ فِي سُلْطَانِهِ، وَنَطَقَ بِالْبَاطِلِ عَلَى لِسَانِهِ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 7

(1) *Al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, 109;*

(2) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, II, 50. (kh-t-l)*

Notes

1. Amir al-mu'minin says about the hypocrites (i.e. those who opposed him before and during his Caliphate) that they are partners in action of Satan and his helpers and supporters. He too has befriended them so much that he has made his abode with them, resides on their bosoms, lays eggs and hatches young ones from them there, while these young ones jump and play in their laps without demur. He means that Satanic evil ideas take birth in their bosoms and grow and thrive there. There is no restraint on them, nor restriction of any kind.

He has so permeated in their blood and mingled in their spirit that both have become completely unified. Now eyes are theirs but sight is his, the tongue is theirs but the words are his, as the Prophet had said, "Verily, Satan permeates the progeny of Adam like blood." That is, just as the circulation of blood does not stop, in the same way the quick succession of Satan's evil ideas know no break and he draws man towards evil in sleep and wakefulness, and in every posture, rising or sitting. He so paints them with his dye that their word and action reflect an exact portrait of his word and action. Those whose bosoms shine with the effulgence of faith prevent such evil ideas but some are already ready to welcome those evils and these are the persons who under the garb of Islam are ever after advancement of heresy.

Sermon 8: He claims that he swore allegiance ...

Said about az-Zubayr at a time for which it was appropriate

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

يعني به الزبير في حال اقتضت ذلك

[ويدعوه للدخول في البيعة ثانية]

He claims that he swore allegiance to me with his hand but did not swear with his heart.¹ So he does admit allegiance. As regards his claiming it otherwise than with his heart he should come forward with a clear argument for it. Otherwise, he should return to wherefrom he has gone out.²

يَزْعُمُ أَنَّهُ قَدْ بَايَعَ بِيَدِهِ، وَلَمْ يُبَايِعْ بِقَلْبِهِ، فَقَدْ أَقْرَبَ بِالْبَيْعَةِ، وَادَّعَى الْوَلِيحَةَ، فَلَيَاتِ عَلَيْهَا بِأَمْرٍ يُعْرَفُ، وَإِلَّا فَلْيَدْخُلْ فِيَمَا حَرَجَ مِنْهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 8

(1) *Al-Mufid, al-Jamal, 175, from* (2)

(2) *al-Waqidi, al-Jamal.*

Notes

1. When after swearing allegiance on the hand of Amir al-mu'minin, az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwam broke the allegiance, then sometimes he put forth the excuse that he was forced to swear allegiance and that forced allegiance is no allegiance, and sometimes he said that allegiance was only for show. His heart did not go in accord with it. As though he himself admitted with his tongue the duplicity of his outer appearance and inner self.

But this excuse is like that of the one who reverts to apostasy after adopting Islam and to avoid penalty may say that he had accepted Islam only by the tongue, not in the heart. Obviously, such an excuse cannot be heard, nor can avoid punishment by this argument. If az-Zubayr suspected that `Uthman was slain at Amir al-mu'minin's insistence, this suspicion should have existed when he was taking oath for obedience and stretching his hand for allegiance, not now that his expectations were getting frustrated and hopes had started dawning from somewhere else.

2. Amir al-mu'minin has rejected his claim in short form thus: that when he admits that his hands had paid allegiance then until there is justification for breaking of the allegiance he should stick to it. But if, according to him his heart was not in accord with it he should produce other proof for it. Since proof about the state of heart cannot be adduced how can he bring such proof, and an assertion without proof is unacceptable to his mind.

Sermon 9: They thundered ...

Cowardice of the people of Jamal

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في صفته وصفة خصومه ويقال إنّها في أصحاب الجمل

They¹ thundered like clouds and shone like lightning but despite both these things they exhibited cowardice, while we do not thunder until we pounce upon the foe nor do we show flow (of words) until we have not virtually rained.

وقَدْ أَرَعَدُوا وَأَبْرَفُوا، وَمَعَ هَذَيْنِ الْأَمْرَيْنِ الْفَشْلُ، وَلَسْنَا نُرْعِدُ حَتَّى نُوقِعَ، وَلَا نُسِيلُ حَتَّى
نُطْرِرَ .

Alternative Sources for Sermon 9

- (1) *Al-Mufid, al-Jamal, 177, from* (2)
- (2) *al-Waqidi, al-Jamal.*
- (3) *Ibn A`tham, Futuh, as quoted by* (4)
- (4) *al-Khwarazmi in al-Manaqib.*

Notes

1. About the people of Jamal (i.e. the enemy in the battle of Jamal) Amir al-mu'minin says that they rose thundering, shouting and stampeding but when encounter took place they were seen flying like straw. At one time they made loud claims that they would do this and would do that and now they showed such cowardice as to flee from the battle-field. About himself Amir al-mu'minin says, that "We do not threaten the enemy before battle, nor utter boasts, nor terrorise the enemy by raising unnecessary cries because it is not the way of the brave to use the tongue instead of the hand." That is why on this occasion he said to his comrades: "Beware of excessive talk as it is cowardice."

Sermon 10: Satan has collected his group...

Regarding the incitement of Satan: alluding to a particular group of people (about Talhah and az-Zubayr)

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يريد الشيطان أويكني به عن قوم

Beware! Satan¹ has collected his group and assembled his horse-men and foot-soldiers. Surely, with me is my sagacity. I have neither deceived myself nor ever been deceived. By Allah I shall fill to the brim for them a cistern from which I alone would draw water. They can neither turn away from it nor return to it.

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ جَمَعَ حِزْبَهُ وَاسْتَجْلَبَ حَيْلَهُ وَرَجَلَهُ، وَإِنَّ مَعِيَ لَبَصِيرَتِي. مَا كَبَسْتُ عَلَى نَفْسِي، وَلَا لَيْسَ عَلَيَّ. وَآيِمُ اللَّهِ لَأَفْرِطَنَّ لَهُمْ حَوْضًا أَنَا مَاخِجُهُ! لَا يَصْدِرُونَ عَنْهُ، وَلَا يُعُودُونَ إِلَيْهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 10

(1) *Al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 118; see also under Sermon:22 and Sermon:134 below.*

Notes

1. When Talhah and az-Zubayr broke away by violating the Oath of allegiance and set for Basrah in the company of `A'ishah, Amir al-mu'minin spoke in these words which are part of the long speech.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written that in this sermon Satan denotes the real Satan as well as Mu`awiyah because Mu`awiyah was secretly conspiring with Talhah and az-Zubayr and instigating them to fight against Amir al-mu'minin but the reference to the real Satan is more appropriate, obvious and in accord with the situation and circumstances.

Sermon 11: Mountains may move from their position, but you should not...

Delivered in the Battle of Jamal when Amir al-mu'minin gave the standard to his son Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah¹ may move from their position, but you should not move from yours. Grit your teeth. Lend to Allah your head (in fighting for Allah, give yourself to Allah). Plant your feet firmly on the ground. Have your eye on the remotest foe and close your eyes (to their numerical majority). And keep sure that succour is but from Allah, the Glorified.

تَزُولُ الْجِبَالُ وَلَا تَزُولُ! عَضَّ عَلَى نَاجِدِكَ، أَعْرَ اللَّهُ جُمُوعَتَكَ، تَدَّ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَدَمَكَ، ازِمَّ بِبَصْرِكَ أَقْصَى الْقَوْمِ، وَغَضَّ بَصْرَكَ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ النَّصْرَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ .

Alternative Sources for Sermon 11

- (1) *Al-Mamatiri, Nuzhat al-'absar, see 'Abd al-Zahra', I, 340;*
- (2) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, IV, bab al-qatl wa al-shahadah.*

Notes

1. Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah was Amir al-mu'minin's son but called Ibn Hanafiyyah after his mother. His mother's name was Khawlah bint Ja'far. She was known as Hanafiyyah after her tribe Banu Hanifah. When people of Yamamah were declared apostates for refusing to pay zakat (religious tax) and were killed and their women-folk were brought to Medina as slave girls, this lady also came to Medina with them. When her tribesmen came to know it they approached Amir al-mu'minin and requested him to save her from the blemish of slavery and protect her family honour and prestige. Consequently, Amir al-mu'minin set her free after purchasing and married her whereafter Muhammad was born.

Most historians have written his surname as Abu'l-Qasim. Thus, the author of al-Isti'ab (vol. 3, pp. 1366, 1367-1368, 1370, 1371-1372) has narrated the opinion of Abu Rashid ibn Hafz az-Zuhri that from among the sons of the companions (of the Prophet) he came across four individuals everyone of whom was named Muhammad and surnamed Abu'l-Qasim, namely (1) Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah, (2) Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr (3) Muhammad ibn Talhah and (4) Muhammad ibn Sa'd. After this he writes that Muhammad ibn Talhah's name and surname was given by the Prophet. al-Waqidi writes that the name and surname of Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr was suggested by 'A'ishah. Apparently the Holy Prophet's giving the name of Muhammad ibn Talhah seems incorrect since from some traditions it appears that the Prophet had reserved it for a son of Amir al-mu'minin and he was Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah.

As regards his surname it is said that the Prophet had particularised it and that he had told 'Ali that a son would be born to you after me and I have given him my name and surname and after that it is not permissible for anyone in my people to have this name and surname together.

With this opinion before us how can it be correct that the Prophet had given this very name and surname to anyone else since particularisation means that no one else would share it. Moreover, some people have recorded the surname of Ibn Talhah as Abu Sulayman instead of Abu'l-Qasim and this further confirms our view point. Similarly, if the surname of Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr was on the ground that his son's name was Qasim, who was among the theologians of Medina, then what is the sense in 'A'ishah having suggested it. If she had suggested it along with the name how could Muhammad ibn Abu Bakr tolerate it later on since having been brought up under the care of Amir al-mu'minin

the Prophet's saying could not remain concealed from him. Moreover, most people have recorded his surname as Abu `Abd ar-Rahman, which weakens the view of Abu Rashid.

Let alone these people's surname being Abu'l-Qasim, even for Ibn al-Hanafiyyah this surname is not proved. Although Ibn Khallikan (in Wafayat al-a`yan, vol. 4, p.170) has taken that son of Amir al-mu'minin for whom the Prophet had particularised this surname to be Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah, yet al-`Allamah al-Mamaqani (in Tanqih al-maqal, vol. 3, Part 1, p. 112) writes:

In applying this tradition to Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah, Ibn Khallikan has got into confusion, because the son of Amir al-mu'minin whom the Prophet's name and surname together have been gifted by the Prophet, and which is not permissible to be given to any one else, is to the awaited last Imam (may our lives be his ransom), and not to Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah, nor is the surname Abu'l-Qasim established for him, rather some of the Sunnis being ignorant of the real intention of the Prophet, have taken to mean Ibn al-Hanafiyyah.

However, Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah was prominent in righteousness and piety, sublime in renunciation and worship, lofty in knowledge and achievements and heir of his father in bravery. His performance in the battles of Jamal and Siffin had created such impression among the Arabs that even warriors of consequence trembled at his name. Amir al-mu'minin too was proud of his courage and valour, and always placed him forward in encounters. ash-Shaykh al-Baha'i has written in al-Kashkul that `Ali ibn Abi Talib kept him abreast in the battles and did not allow Hasan and Husayn to go ahead, and used to say, "He is my son while these two are sons of the Prophet of Allah."

When a Kharijite said to Ibn al-Hanafiyyah that `Ali thrust him into the flames of war but saved away Hasan and Husayn he replied that he himself was like the right hand and Hasan and Husayn like `Ali's two eyes and that `Ali protected his eyes with his right hand. But al-`Allamah al-Mamaqani has written in Tanqih al-Maqal that this was not the reply of Ibn al-Hanafiyyah but of Amir al-mu'minin himself. When during the battle of Siffin Muhammad mentioned this matter to Amir al-mu'minin in a complaining tone he replied, "You are my right hand whereas they are my eyes, and the hand should protect the eyes."

Apparently it seems that first Amir al-mu'minin must have given this reply and thereafter someone might have mentioned it to Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah and he must have repeated the same reply as there could be no more eloquent reply than this one and its eloquence confirms the view that it was originally the outcome of the eloquent tongue of Amir al-mu'minin and was later appropriated by Muhammad al-Hanafiyyah.

Consequently, both these views can be held to be correct and there is no incongruity between them. However, he was born in the reign of the second Caliph and died in the reign of `Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan at the age of sixty-five years. Some writers have recorded the year of his death as 80 A.H. and others as 81 A.H. There is a difference about the place of his death as well. Some have put it as Medina, some Aylah and some Ta'if.

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لابنه محمد بن الحنفية لما أعطاه الراية يوم الجمل

Mountains When in the Battle of Jamal Amir al-mu'minin sent Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah to the battle-field, he told him that he should fix himself before the enemy like the mountain of determination and resoluteness so that the onslaught of the army should not be able to displace him, and should charge the enemy with closed teeth because by pressing teeth over the teeth tension occurs in the nerves of the skull as a result of which the stroke of the sword goes amiss, as he said at another place also viz. "Press together the teeth. It sends amiss the edge of the sword."

Then he says, "My child, lend your head to Allah in order that you may be able to achieve eternal life in place of this one, because for a lent article there is the right to get it back. Therefore, you should fight being heedless of your life, otherwise also if your mind clings to life you will hesitate to advance towards deathly encounters and that would tell upon your reputation of bravery. Look, don't let your steps falter because the enemy is emboldened at the faltering of steps, and faltering steps fastens the feet of the enemy.

Keep the last lines of the enemy as your aim so that the enemy may be overawed with loftiness of your intentions and you may feel ease in tearing through their lives, and their

movement should also not remain concealed from you. Look, do not pay heed to their superiority in numbers, otherwise your valour and courage would suffer." This sentence can also mean that one should not wide open the eyes to be dazzled by the shining of weapons, and the enemy may make an attack by taking advantage of the situation. Also, always bear it in mind that victory is from Allah. "If Allah helps you no one can overpower you." Therefore, instead of relying on material means seek His support and succour.

(Remember O' ye Believers!) If Allah helpeth you, none shall overcome you...(Qur'an, 3:160)

Sermon 12: Does your brother love us? ...

When¹ Allah gave him (Amir al-mu'minin) victory over the enemy at the Battle of Jamal one of his comrades said on that occasion, "I wish my brother so-and-so had been present and he too would have seen what success and victory Allah had given you," whereupon Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)
لما أظفروا الله تعالى بأصحاب الجمل وقد قال له بعض أصحابه:
وددت أن أخي فلاناً معك شاهداً ليرى ما نصرك الله به على أعدائك، فقال له عليه
السلام

"Did your brother hold me friend?"

He said: "Yes,"

Then Amir al-mu'minin said:

In that case he was with us. Rather in this army of ours even those persons were also present who are still in the loins of men and wombs of women. Shortly, time will bring them out and faith will get strength through them.

أَهْوَى أَخِيكَ مَعَنَا؟
قال: نَعَمْ.
قال: فَقَدْ شَهِدْنَا، وَلَقَدْ شَهِدْنَا فِي عَسْكَرِنَا هَذَا أَقْوَامٌ فِي أَصْلَابِ الرِّجَالِ، وَأَرْحَامِ
النِّسَاءِ، سَيَرَعُفُ بِهِمُ الزَّمَانُ، وَيُفَوَى بِهِمُ الْإِيمَانُ .

Alternative Sources for Sermon 12

(1) *Al-Barqi, al-Mahasin, I, 262.*

Notes

1. If a person falls short in his actions despite means and equipment, this would be indicative of the weakness of his will. But if there is an impediment in the way of action or his life comes to an end as a result of which his action remains incomplete, then in that case Allah would not deprive him of the reward on the basis that actions are judged by intention. Since his intention in any case was to perform the action, therefore he should deserve reward to some extent.

In the case of action, there may be absence of reward because action can involve show or pretence but intention is hidden in the depth of heart. It can have not a jot of show or affectation. The intention would remain at the same level of frankness, truth, perfection and correctness where it is, even though there may be no action due to some impediment. Even if there is no occasion for forming intention but there is passion and zeal in the heart, a man would deserve reward on the basis of his heart's feelings. This is to what Amir al-mu'minin has alluded in this sermon, namely that "If your brother loved me he would share the reward with those who secured martyrdom for our support."

Sermon 13: You are a woman's army ...

Condemning the people of Basrah [after the battle of Jamal]

1

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في ذم البصرة وأهلها [بعد وقعة الجمل]

You were the army of a woman and in the command of a quadruped. When it grumbled you responded, and when it was wounded (hamstrung) you fled away. Your character is low and your pledge is broken. Your faith is hypocrisy. Your water is brackish. He who stays with you is laden with sins and he who forsakes you secures Allah's mercy. It is as though I see your mosque prominent, resembling the surface of a boat, while Allah has sent chastisement from above and from below it and everyone who is on it is drowned.²

كُنْتُمْ جُنْدَ الْمَرْأَةِ، وَأَتْبَاعَ الْبَهِيمَةِ رَعَا فَأَجَبْتُمْ، وَعُغِرْفَهْرَيْتُمْ. أَخْلَافُكُمْ دِقَاقٌ وَعَهْدُكُمْ شِقَاقٌ، وَدِينُكُمْ نِفَاقٌ، وَمَاؤُكُمْ زُعَاقٌ الْمَقِيمِ بَيْنَ أَظْهُرِكُمْ مُرْتَهَنٌ بِدَنْبِهِ، وَالشَّاحِصُ عَنْكُمْ مُتَدَارِكٌ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ. كَأَنِّي بِمَسْجِدِكُمْ كَجَوْجُو سَفِينَةٍ قَدْ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا الْعَذَابَ مِنْ فَوْقِهَا وَمِنْ تَحْتِهَا، وَعَرِقَ مَنْ فِي ضِمْنِهَا

Another version

By Allah, your city would certainly be drowned so much so that as though I see its mosque like the upper part of a boat or a sitting ostrich.

وفي رواية:

وَأَيْمُ اللَّهِ لَتَعْرِقَنَّ بَلَدُكُمْ حَتَّى كَأَنِّي أَنْظُرُ إِلَى مَسْجِدِهَا كَجَوْجُو سَفِينَةٍ، أَوْ نَعَامَةٍ جَائِمَةٍ

Another version

Like the bosom of a bird in deep sea.

وفي رواية أخرى:

كَجَوْجُو طَيْرٍ فِي لُجَّةِ بَحْرٍ

Another version

Your city is the most stinking of all the cities as regards its clay, the nearest to water and remotest from the sky. It contains nine tenths of evil. He who enters it is surrounded with his sins and he who is out of it enjoys Allah's forgiveness. It seems as though I look at this habitation of yours that water has so engulfed it that nothing can be seen of it except the highest part of mosque appearing like the bosom of a bird in deep sea.

و في رواية:

بلادكم أنتن بلاد الله تربةً: أقرّهما من الماء و أبعدها من السماء . و بما تسعة اعشار
الشر، المحتبس فيها بذنيه، و الخارج بعفو الله . كأني أنظر الى قريبتكم هذه قد طبّقها الماء،
حتى ما يرى منها الا شرف المسجد، كأنه جؤجؤ طير في لجة بحر .

Alternative Sources for Sermon 13

- (1) *Al-Dinawari, al-'Akhbar, 153;*
- (2) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, II, 377;*
- (3) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, I, 217;*
- (4) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, IV, 328;*
- (5) *al-Majlisi, Bihar, VIII, 447;*
- (6) *`Ali ibn Ibrahim, Tafsir, 655;*
- (7) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali,* 78;*
- (8) *al-Mufid, al-Jamal, 210, 203.*

Notes

1. Ibn Maytham writes that when the Battle of Jamal ended then on the third day after it Amir al-mu'minin said the morning prayer in the central mosque of Basrah and after finishing it stood on the right side of the prayer place reclining against the wall and delivered this sermon wherein he described the lowness of character of the people of Basrah and their slyness, namely that they got enflamed at others' instigation without anything of their own and making over their command to a woman clung to a camel. They broke away after swearing allegiance and exhibited their low character and evil nature by practising double facedness. In this sermon woman implies `A'ishah and quadruped implies the camel (Jamal) after which this battle has been named the Battle of Jamal.'

This battle originated in this way that when although during the life time of `Uthman, `A'ishah used to oppose him and had left for Mecca leaving him in siege and as such she had a share in his assassination details of which would be stated at some suitable place but when on her return from Mecca towards Medina she heard from `Abdullah ibn Salamah that after `Uthman allegiance had been paid to `Ali (as Caliph) she suddenly exclaimed, "If allegiance has been paid to `Ali, I wish the sky had burst on the earth. Let me go back to Mecca." Consequently she decided to return to Mecca and began saying, "By Allah `Uthman has been killed helplessly. I shall certainly avenge his blood."

On seeing this wide change in the state of affairs Abu Salamah said, "What are you saying as you yourself used to say "Kill this Na`thal ; he had turned unbeliever." Thereupon she replied, "Not only I but everyone used to say so; but leave these things and listen to what I am now saying, that is better and deserves more attention. It is so strange that first he was called upon to repent but before giving him an opportunity to do so he has been killed." On this Abu Salamah recited the following verses addressing her:

You started it and now you are changing and raising storms of wind and rain.

You ordered for his killing and told us that he had turned unbeliever.

We admit that he has been killed but under your orders and the real Killer is one who ordered it.

Nevertheless, neither the sky fell over us nor did the sun and moon fall into eclipse.

Certainly people have paid allegiance to one who can ward off the enemy with power and grandeur, does not allow swords to come near him and loosens the twist of the rope, that is, subdues the enemy.

He is always fully armed for combat and the faithful is never like the traitor.

However, when she reached Mecca with a passion for vengeance she began rousing the people to avenge `Uthman's blood by circulating stories of his having been victimised. The first to respond to this call was `Abdullah ibn `Amir al-Hadrami who had been the governor of Mecca in `Uthman's reign and with him Marwan ibn al-Hakam, Sa`id ibn al-`As and other Umayyads rose to support her. On the other side Talhah ibn `Ubaydillah and az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwam also reached Mecca from Medina. From Yemen Ya`la ibn Munabbih who had been governor there during `Uthman's caliphate and the former

governor of Basrah, `Abdullah ibn `Amir ibn Kurayz also reached there, and joining together began preparing their plans.

Battle had been decided upon but discussion was about the venue of confrontation. `A'ishah's opinion was to make Medina the venue of the battle but some people opposed and held that it was difficult to deal with Medinites, and that some other place should be chosen as the venue. At last after much discussion it was decided to march towards Basrah as there was no dearth of men to support the cause. Consequently on the strength of `Abdullah ibn `Amir's countless wealth, and the offer of six hundred thousand Dirhams and six hundred camels by Ya`la ibn Munabbih they prepared an army of three thousand and set off to Basrah. There was a small incident on the way on account of which `A'ishah refused to advance further.

What happened was that at a place she heard the barking of dogs and enquired from the camel driver the name of the place. He said it was Haw'ab. On hearing this name she recalled the Prophet's admonition when he had said to his wives, "I wish I could know at which of you the dogs of Haw'ab would bark." So when she realised that she herself was that one she got the camel seated by patting and expressed her intention to abandon the march. But the device of her companions saved the deteriorating situation. `Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr swore to assure her that it was not Haw'ab, Talhah seconded him and for her further assurance also sent for fifty persons to stand witness to it. When all the people were on one side what could a single woman do by opposing. Eventually they were successful and `A'ishah resumed her forward march with the same enthusiasm.

When this army reached Basrah, people were first amazed to see the riding animal of `A'ishah. Jariyah ibn Qudamah came forward and said, "O' mother of the faithful, the assassination of `Uthman was one tragedy but the greater tragedy is that you have come out on this cursed camel and ruined your honour and esteem. It is better that you should get back." But since neither the incident at Haw'ab could deter her nor could the Qur'anic injunction: "Keep sitting in your houses" (33:33) stop her, what effect could these voices produce. Consequently, she disregarded all this.

When this army tried to enter the city the Governor of Basrah `Uthman ibn Hunayf came forward to stop them and when the two parties came face to face they drew their swords out of the sheaths and pounced upon each other. When a good number had been killed from either side `A'ishah intervened on the basis of her influence and the two groups agreed that till the arrival of Amir al-mu'minin the existing administration should continue and `Uthman ibn Hunayf should continue on his post. But only two days had elapsed when they made a nightly attack on `Uthman ibn Hunayf, killed forty innocent persons, beat `Uthman ibn Hunayf, plucked every hair of his beard, took him in their custody and shut him up. Then they attacked public treasury and while ransacking it killed twenty persons on the spot, and beheaded fifty more after arresting them.

Then they attacked the grain store, whereupon an elderly noble of Basrah Hukaym ibn Jabalah could not control himself and reaching there with his men said to `Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr, "Spare some of this grain for the city's populace. After all there should be a limit to oppression. You have spread killing and destruction all round and put `Uthman ibn Hunayf in confinement. For Allah's sake keep off these ruining activities and release `Uthman ibn Hunayf. Is there no fear of Allah in your hearts?" Ibn az-Zubayr said, "This is vengeance of `Uthman's life." Hukaym ibn Jabalah retorted, "Were those who have been killed assassins of `Uthman? By Allah, if I had supporters and comrades I should have certainly avenged the blood of these Muslims whom you have killed without reason." Ibn az-Zubayr replied, "We shall not give anything out of this grain, nor will `Uthman ibn Hunayf be released." At last the battle raged between these two parties but how could a few individuals deal with such a big force? The result was that Hukaym ibn Jabalah, his son al-Ashraf ibn Hukaym ibn Jabalah, his brother ar-Ri'l ibn Jabalah and seventy persons of his tribe were killed. In short, killing and looting prevailed all round. Neither anyone's life was secure nor was there any way to save one's honour or property.

When Amir al-mu'minin was informed of the march to Basrah he set out to stop it with a force which consisted of seventy of those who had taken part in the battle of Badr and four hundred out of those companions who had the honour of being present at the Allegiance of Ridwan (Divine Pleasure). When he stopped at the stage of Dhiqar he sent his son Hasan (p.b.u.h.) and `Ammar ibn Yasir to Kufah to invite its people to fighting.

Consequently, despite interference of Abu Musa al-Ash`ari seven thousand combatants from there joined Amir al-mu'minin's army. He left that place after placing the army under various commanders.

Eye witnesses state that when this force reached near Basrah first of all a contingent of ansar appeared foremost. Its standard was held by Abu Ayyub al-Ansari. After it appeared another contingent of 1000 whose commander was Khuzaymah ibn Thabit al-Ansari. Then another contingent came in sight. Its standard was borne by Abu Qatadah ibn ar-Rabi`. Then a crowd of a thousand old and young persons was seen. They had signs of prostration on their foreheads and veil of fear of Allah on their face. It seemed as if they were standing before the Divine Glory on the Day of Judgement. Their Commander rode a dark horse, was dressed in white, had black turban on his head and was reciting the Qur'an loudly. This was `Ammar ibn Yasir. Then another contingent appeared. Its standard was in the hand of Qays ibn Sa`d ibn `Ubadah.

Then an army came to sight. Its leader wore white dress and had a black turban on his head. He was so handsome that all eyes centred around him. This was `Abdullah ibn `Abbas. Then followed a contingent of the companions of the Prophet. Their standard bearer was Qutham ibn al-`Abbas. Then after the passing of a few contingents a big crowd was seen, wherein there was such a large number of spears that they were overlapping and flags of numerous colours were flying. Among them a big and lofty standard was seen with distinctive position. Behind it was seen a rider guarded by sublimity and greatness. His sinews were well-developed and eyes were cast downwards. His awe and dignity was such that no one could look at him. This was the Ever Victorious Lion of Allah namely `Ali ibn Abi Talib (p.b.u.h.).

On his right and left were Hasan and Husayn (p.b.u.t.). In front of him Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah walked in slow steps carrying the banner of victory and glory, and on the back were the young men of Banu Hashim, the people of Badr and `Abdullah ibn Ja`far ibn Abi Talib. When this army reached the place az-Zawiyah, Amir al-mu'minin alighted from the horse, and after performing four rak`ah of prayer put his cheeks on the ground. When he lifted his head the ground was drenched with tears and the tongue was uttering these words: O' Sustainer of earth, heaven and the high firmament, this is Basrah. Fill our lap with its good and protect us from its evils.

Then proceeding forward he got down in the battle-field of Jamal where the enemy was already camping. First of all Amir al-mu'minin announced in his army that no one should attack another, nor take the initiative. Saying this he came in front of the opposite army and said to Talhah and az-Zubayr, "You ask `A'ishah by swearing in the name of Allah and His prophet whether I am not free from the blame of `Uthman's blood, and whether I used the same words for him which you used to say, and whether I pressurised you for allegiance or you swore it of your own free will." Talhah got exasperated at these words but az-Zubayr relented, and Amir al-mu'minin turned back after it, and giving the Qur'an to Muslim (a young man from the tribe of `Abd Qays) sent him towards them to pronounce to them the verdict of the Qur'an. But people took both of them within aim and covered this godly man with their arrows.

Then `Ammar ibn Yasir went to canvass and convince them and caution them with the consequences of war but his words were also replied by arrows. Till now Amir al-mu'minin had not allowed an attack as a result of which the enemy continued feeling encouraged and went on raining arrows constantly. At last with the dying of a few valiant combatants consternation was created among Amir al-mu'minin's ranks and some people came with a few bodies before him and said, "O' Commander of the faithful you are not allowing us to fight while they are covering us with arrows. How long can we let them make our bosoms the victim of their arrows, and remain handfolded at their excesses?"

At this Amir al-mu'minin did show anger but acting with restraint and endurance, came to the enemy in that very form without wearing armour or any arm and shouted, "Where is az-Zubayr?" At first az-Zubayr hesitated to come forward but he noticed that Amir al-mu'minin had no arms he came out. Amir al-mu'minin said to him "O' az-Zubayr, you must remember that one day the Prophet told you that you would fight with me and wrong and excess would be on your side." az-Zubayr replied that he had said so. Then Amir al-mu'minin enquired "Why have you come then?" He replied that his memory had missed it and if he had recollected it earlier he would not have come that way. Amir al-mu'minin

said, "Well, now you have recollected it" and he replied, "Yes." Saying this he went straight to `A'ishah and told her that he was getting back.

She asked him the reason and he replied, "Ali has reminded me a forgotten matter. I had gone astray, but now I have come on the right path and would not fight `Ali ibn Abi Talib at any cost." `A'ishah said, "You have caught fear of the swords of the sons of `Abd al-Muttalib." He said, "No" and saying this he turned the reins of his horse. However, it is gratifying that some consideration was accorded to the Prophet's saying, for at Haw'ab even after recollection of the Prophet's words no more than transient effect was taken of it. On returning after this conversation Amir al-mu'minin observed that they had attacked the right and left flanks of his army. Noticing this Amir al-mu'minin said, "Now the plea has been exhausted. Call my son Muhammad." When he came Amir al-mu'minin said, "My son, attack them now."

Muhammad bowed his head and taking the standard proceeded to the battle-field. But arrows were falling in such exuberance that he had to stop. When Amir al-mu'minin saw this he called out at him, "Muhammad, why don't you advance?" He said, "Father, in this shower of arrows there is no way to proceed. Wait till the violence of arrows subsides." He said, "No, thrust yourself in the arrows and spears and attack." Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah advanced a little but the archers so surrounded him that he had to hold his steps. On seeing this a frown appeared on Amir al-mu'minin's fore-head and getting forward he hit the sword's handle on the Muhammad's back and said, "This is the effect of your mother's veins."

Saying this he took the standard from his hands and folding up his sleeves made such an attack that a tumult was created in the enemy's ranks from one end to the other. To whichever row he turned, it became clear and to whatever side he directed himself bodies were seen falling and heads rolling in the hoofs of horses. When after convulsing the rows he returned to his position he said to Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah, "Look, my son, battle is fought like this." Saying this he gave the standard to him and ordered him to proceed. Muhammad advanced towards the enemy with a contingent of ansar. The enemy also came out moving and balancing their spears. But the brave son of the valiant father convulsed rows over rows while the other warriors also made the battle-field glory and left heaps of dead bodies.

From the other side also there was full demonstration of spirit of sacrifice. Dead bodies were falling one over the other but they continued sacrificing their lives devotedly around the camel. Particularly the condition of Banu Dabbah was that although their hands were being severed from the elbows for holding the reins of the camel, and bosoms were being pierced yet they had the following battle-song on their tongues: a) To us death is sweeter than honey. We are Banu Dabbah, camel rearers. b) We are sons of death when death comes. We announce the death of `Uthman with the edges of spears. c) Give us back our chief and there is an end to it.

The low character and ignorance from faith of these Banu Dabbah, can be well understood by that one incident which al-Mada'ini has narrated. He writes that in Basrah there was a man with mutilated ear. He asked him its reason when he said, "I was watching the sight of dead bodies in the battle-field of Jamal when I saw a wounded man who sometimes raised his head and sometimes dashed it back on the ground. I approached near. Then the following two verses were on his lips: a) Our mother pushed us into the deep waters of death and did not get back till we had thoroughly drunk. b) By misfortune we obeyed Banu Taym who are none but slave men and slave girls.

"I told him it was not the time to recite verses; he should rather recall Allah and recite the kalimat ash-shahadah (verse of testimony). On my saying this he saw me with angry looks and uttering a severe abuse and said, "You are asking me to recite kalimat ash-shahadah, get frightened at the last moment and show impatience." I was astonished to hear this and decided to return without saying anything further. When he saw me returning he said, "Wait; for your sake I am prepared to recite, but teach me." I drew close to teach him the kalimah when he asked me to get closer. When I got closer he caught my ear with his teeth and did not leave it till he tore it from the root. I did not think it proper to molest a dying man and was about to get back abusing and cursing him when he asked me to listen one more thing. I agreed to listen lest he had an unsatisfied wish. He said that when I should get to my mother and she enquired who had bitten my ear I should say that it was

done by `Umayr ibn al-Ahlab ad-Dabbi who had been deceived by a woman aspiring to become the commander of the faithful (head of the state)."

However, when the dazzling lightning of swords finished the lives of thousands of persons and hundreds of Banu Azd and Banu Dabbah were killed for holding the rein of the camel, Amir al-mu'minin ordered, "Kill the camel for it is Satan." Saying this he made such a severe attack that the cries of "Peace" and "Protection" rose from all round. When he reached near the camel he ordered Bujayr ibn Duljah to kill the camel at once. Consequently, Bujayr hit him with such full might that the camel fell in agony on the side of its bosom. No sooner than the camel fell the opposite army took to heels and the carrier holding `A'ishah was left lonely and unguarded. The companion of Amir al-mu'minin took control of the carrier and under orders of Amir al-mu'minin, Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr escorted `A'ishah to the house of Safiyyah bint al-Harith.

This encounter commenced on the 10th of Jumada ath-thaniyah, 36 A.H., in the afternoon and came to an end the same evening. In it from Amir al-mu'minin's army of twenty two thousand, one thousand and seventy or according to another version five hundred persons were killed as martyrs while from `A'ishah's army of thirty thousand, seventeen thousand persons were killed, and the Prophet's saying, "That people who assigned their affairs (of state) to a woman would never prosper" was fully corroborated. (al-Imamah wa's-siyasah; Muruj adh-dhahab; al-'Iqd al-farid; at-Tarikh, at Tabari)

2. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written that as prophesied by Amir al-mu'minin, Basrah was flooded twice - once in the days of al-Qadir Bi'llah and once in the reign of al-Qa'im bi Amri'l-lah and the state of flooding was just this that while the whole city was under water but the top ends of the mosque were seen about the surface of the water and looked like a bird sitting on the side of its bosom.

Sermon 14: Your land is close to the sea ...

This also is in condemnation of the people of Basrah

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في مثل ذلك

Your land is close to the sea and away from the sky. Your wits have become light and your minds are full of folly. You are the aim of the archer, a morsel for the eater and an easy prey for the hunter.

أَرْضُكُمْ قَرِيبَةٌ مِنَ الْمَاءِ، بَعِيدَةٌ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ، خَفَّتْ عُقُولُكُمْ، وَسَفِهَتْ حُلُومُكُمْ، فَأَنْتُمْ
عَرَضٌ لِنَابِلٍ، وَأُكْلَةٌ لِأَكِلٍ، وَفَرِيْسَةٌ لِصَائِدٍ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 14

- (1) *Al-Mufid, al-Jamal, 217;*
- (2) *al-Waqidi, al-Jamal, see al-Mufid, op. cit.;*
- (3) *al-Dinawari, al-'Akhbar, 151;*
- (4) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, I, 217;*
- (5) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, II, 368;*
- (6) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, II, 169.*

Sermon 15: By God, even if I had found that ...

After returning to the Muslims the land grants made by `Uthman ibn `Affan, he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

فيما رده على المسلمين من قطائع عثمان

By Allah, even if I had found that by such money women have been married or slave-maids have been purchased I would have returned it (to its owners) because there is wide scope in dispensation of justice, and he who finds it hard to act justly will find it harder to deal with injustice.

وَاللّٰهُ لَوْ وَجَدْتُهُ قَدْ تُرِجَ بِهِ النِّسَاءُ، وَمُيْلِكَ بِهِ الْأَمْوَالُ، لَرَدَدْتُهُ؛ فَإِنَّ فِي الْعَدْلِ سَعَةً، وَمَنْ

ضَاقَ عَلَيْهِ الْعَدْلُ، فَالْجَوْرُ عَلَيْهِ أَضْيَقُ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 15

- (1) *Al-`Askari, al-'Awa'il, 102;*
- (2) *al-Qadi al-Nu`man, Da`a'im, I, 396;*
- (3) *al-Mas`udi, Ithbat, 120.*

Sermon 16: My word is the guarantee of my promise ...

Delivered when allegiance was sworn to him at Medina

من كلام له (عليه السلام)

لما بويع بالمدينة

وفيها يخبر الناس بعلمه بما تؤول إليه أحوالهم وفيها يقسمهم إلى أقسام

The responsibility for what I say is guaranteed and I am answerable for it. He to whom experiences have clearly shown the past exemplary punishments (given by Allah to peoples) is prevented by piety from falling into doubts. You should know that the same troubles have returned to you which existed when the Prophet was first sent.

By Allah who sent the Prophet with faith and truth, you will be severely subverted, bitterly shaken as in sieving and fully mixed as by spooning in a cooking pot till your low persons become high and high ones become low, those who were behind would attain forward positions and those who were forward would become backward. By Allah, I have not concealed a single word or spoken any lie and I had been informed of this event and of this time.

ذِمَّتِي بِمَا أَقُولُ رَهِينَةٌ وَأَنَا بِهِ زَعِيمٌ: إِنَّ مَنْ صَرَّحْتَ لَهُ الْعَبْرُ عَمَّا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْمُثَلَاتِ، حَجَزَهُ التَّقْوَى عَنْ تَفْحُمِ الشُّبُهَاتِ. أَلَا وَإِنَّ بَلِيَّتَكُمْ قَدْ عَادَتْ كَهَيْئَتِهَا يَوْمَ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ نَبِيَّهُ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، وَالَّذِي بَعَثَهُ بِالْحَقِّ لِيُتَّبَلَ بَلْبَلَةً، وَلِتُعَزَّبَ لِرَّ عَزْبَةً، وَلِتَسَاطُنَ سَوَاطِ الْقَدْرِ، حَتَّى يُعَوِّدَ أَسْفَلَكُمْ أَعْلَاكُمْ، وَأَعْلَاكُمْ أَسْفَلَكُمْ، وَلِيَسْبِقَنَّ سَابِقُونَ كَانُوا قَصْرُوا، وَلِيَقْصِرَنَّ سَبَّاقُونَ كَانُوا سَبَقُوا. وَاللَّهُ مَا كَتَمْتُ وَشَمَّةً، وَلَا كَذَبْتُ كَذِبَةً، وَلَقَدْ نُبِئْتُ بِهَذَا الْمَقَامِ وَهَذَا الْيَوْمِ.

Beware that sins are like unruly horses on whom their riders have been placed and their reins have been let loose so that they would jump with them in Hell. Beware that piety is like trained horses on whom the riders have been placed with the reins in their hands, so that they would take the riders to Heaven. There is right and wrong and there are followers for each. If wrong dominates, it has (always) in the past been so, and if truth goes down that too has often occurred. It seldom happens that a thing that lags behind comes forward.

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الْخَطَايَا حَيْلٌ شُمُسُ حُمَلٍ عَلَيْهَا أَهْلُهَا، وَخُلِعَتْ جُحْمُهَا، فَتَفَحَّحَمَتْ فِي النَّارِ. أَلَا وَإِنَّ التَّقْوَى مَطَايَا دُلٌّ (2)، حُمَلٍ عَلَيْهَا أَهْلُهَا، وَأَعْطُوا أَرْقَمَتَهَا، فَأَوْرَدَتْهُمْ الْجَنَّةَ. حَقٌّ وَبَاطِلٌ، وَلِكُلِّ أَهْلٍ، فَلْيُنْ أَمْرَ الْبَاطِلِ لَقَدِيمًا فَعَلْ، وَلْيُنْ قَلَّ الْحَقُّ لَرِيمًا وَلَعَلَّ، وَلَقَلَّمَا أَذْبَرَ شَيْءٌ فَأَقْبَلَ!

ash-Sharif ar-Radi says: In this small speech there is more beauty than can be appreciated, and the quantity of amazement aroused by it is more than the appreciation accorded to it. Despite what we have stated it has so many aspects of eloquence that cannot be expressed nor can anyone reach its depth, and no one can understand what I am saying unless one has attained this art and known its details.

No one appreciates it except those who know (Qur'an, 29:43)

قال السيد الشريف: وأقول: إنّ في هذا الكلام الادنى من مواقع الاحسان ملا تبلغه مواقع الاستحسان، وإنّ حظ العجب منه أكثر من حظ العجب به، وفيه - مع الحال التي وصفنا - زوائد من الفصاحة لا يقوم بها لسان، ولا يطلع فجها إنسان، ولا يعرف ما أقوله إلا من ضرب في هذه الصناعة بحق، وجرى فيها على عرق، (وَمَا يَعْقِلُهَا إِلَّا الْعَالَمُونَ).

From the same Sermon

ومن هذه الخطبة

[وفيها يقسم الناس إلى ثلاثة أصناف]

He who has heaven and hell in his view has no other aim. He who attempts and acts quickly, succeeds, while the seeker who is slow may also entertain hope, and he who falls short of action faces destruction in Hell. On right and left there are misleading paths. Only the middle way is the (right) path which is the Everlasting Book and the traditions of the Prophet. From it the sunnah has spread out and towards it is the eventual return.

شُغِلَ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ أَمَامَهُ! سَاعَ سَرِيْعٍ نَجَا، وَطَالِبٌ بَطِيءٍ رَجَا، وَمُقَصِّرٌ فِي النَّارِ هَوَى. الْيَمِيْنُ وَالشِّمَالُ مَضَلَّةٌ، وَالطَّرِيْقُ الْوَسْطَى هِيَ الْجَادَّةُ عَلَيْهَا بَاقِي الْكِتَابِ وَأَثَارُ النَّبُوَّةِ، وَمِنْهَا مَنْقَدُ السُّنَّةِ، وَإِلَيْهَا مَصِيْرُ الْعَاقِبَةِ.

He who claims (otherwise) is ruined and he who concocts falsehood is disappointed. He who opposes¹ right with his face gets destruction. It is enough ignorance for a man not to know himself. He who is strong rooted² in piety does not get destruction, and the plantation of a people based on piety never remains without water. Hide yourselves in your houses and reform yourselves. Repentance is at your back. One should praise only Allah and condemn only his own self.

هَلَكَ مَنْ ادَّعَى، وَخَابَ مَنْ افْتَرَى، مَنْ أَبْدَى صَفْحَتَهُ لِلْحَقِّ هَلَكَ، وَكَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ جَهْلًا أَلَّا يَعْرِفَ قَدْرَهُ، لَا يَهْلِكُ عَلَى التَّقْوَى سِنَخٌ أَصْلٌ، وَلَا يَظْمَأُ عَلَيْهَا زَرْعٌ قَوْمٌ. فَاسْتَبْرُوا بِيُوتِكُمْ، وَأَصْلِحُوا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ، وَالتَّوْبَةُ مِنْ وِرَائِكُمْ، وَلَا يَحْمَدُ حَامِدٌ إِلَّا رَبَّهُ، وَلَا يَلْمُ لَائِمٌ إِلَّا نَفْسَهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 16

(1) *Al-Jahiz, al-Bayan, I, 170;*

(2) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 132;*

(3) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 139;*

- (4) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, II, 236;*
- (5) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, II, 162;*
- (6) *al-`Askari, al-'Awa'il, 102;*
- (7) *al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, I, 369 and Rawdat al-Kafi, 67;*
- (8) *al-Tusi, al'Amali, * 147.*

Notes

1. In some versions after the words "man abda saffhatahu lilhaqqi halaka:" the words "inda jahalati'n-nas" also occur. In that case the meaning of this sentence would be that he who stands in face of right dies in the estimation of the ignorant.

2. Piety is the name of heart and mind being affected and impressed by the Divine Greatness and Glory, as an effect of which the spirit of man becomes full of fear of Allah, and its inevitable result is that engrossment in worship and prayer increases. It is impossible that heart may be full of Divine fear and there be no manifestation of it in actions and deeds. And since worship and submission reform the heart and nurture the spirit, purity of heart increases with the increase of worship. That is why in the Qur'an "taqwa" (piety) has been applied sometimes to fear, sometimes to worship and devotion and sometimes to purity of heart and spirit. Thus in the verse "wa iyyaya fattaqun" (and Me you fear [16:2]) taqwa implies fear, in the verse, "ittaqu'l-laha haqqa tuqatihi" (worship Allah as He ought to be worshipped [3:102]), taqwa implies worship and devotion and in the verse "wa yakhsa'l-laha wa yattaqhi faulaika humu'l-faizun" (24:52) taqwa implies purity of spirit and cleanliness of heart.

In the traditions taqwa has been assigned three degrees. The first degree is that a man should follow the injunctions and keep aloof from prohibitions. The second degree is that recommended matters should also be followed and disliked things should be avoided. The third degree is that for fear of falling into doubts one may abstain from the permissible as well. The first degree is for the common men, the second for the nobles and the third for high dignitaries. Allah has referred to these three degrees in the following verse: On those who believe and do good, is no blame for what they ate, (before) when they did guard themselves and did believe, and did good, still (furthermore) they guard themselves and do good; and Allah loveth the doers of good. (Qur'an, 5:93)

Amir al-mu'minin says that only action based on piety is lasting, and only that action will blossom and bear fruit which is watered by piety because worship is only that wherein the feeling of submission exists. Thus, Allah says: Is he therefore better who hath laid his foundation on fear of Allah and (His) goodwill or he who layeth his foundation on the brink of a crumbling hollowed bank so it crumbled down with him into the fire of Hell... (Qur'an, 9:109) Consequently, every such belief as is not based on knowledge and conviction is like the edifice, erected without foundation, wherein there is no stability or firmness while every action that is without piety is like the plantation which withers for lack of watering.

Sermon 17: Among all the people the most detested before Allah are two persons...

About those who sit for dispensation of justice among people but are not fit for it.

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في صفة من يتصدى للحكم بين الأمة وليس لذلك بأهل

Among¹ all the people the most detested before Allah are two persons. One is he who is devoted to his self. So he is deviated from the true path and loves speaking about (foul) innovations and inviting towards wrong path. He is therefore a nuisance for those who are enamoured of him, is himself misled from the guidance of those preceding him, misleads those who follow him in his life or after his death, carries the weight of others' sins and is entangled in his own misdeeds.

انَّ أَبْعَصَ الْخَلَائِقِ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى رَجُلَانِ: رَجُلٌ وَكَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَى نَفْسِهِ فَهُوَ جَائِرٌ عَن قَصْدِ السَّبِيلِ مَشْعُوفٌ بِكَلَامِ بَدْعَةٍ وَدُعَاءِ ضَلَالَةٍ، فَهُوَ فِتْنَةٌ لِمَن افْتَتَنَ بِهِ، ضَالٌّ عَن هَدْيِ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَهُ، مُضِلٌّ لِمَن افْتَدَى بِهِ فِي حَيَاتِهِ وَبَعْدَ وَفَاتِهِ، حَمَالٌ خَطَايَا غَيْرِهِ، رَهْنٌ بِخَطِيئَتِهِ

The other man is he who has picked up ignorance. He moves among the ignorant, is senseless in the thick of mischief and is blind to the advantages of peace. Those resembling like men have named him scholar but he is not so. He goes out early morning to collect things whose deficiency is better than plenty, till when he has quenched his thirst from polluted water and acquired meaningless things, he sits among the people as a judge responsible for solving whatever is confusing to the others.

If an ambiguous problem is presented before him he manages shabby argument about it of his own accord and passes judgement on its basis. In this way he is entangled in the confusion of doubts as in the spider's web, not knowing whether he was right or wrong. If he is right he fears lest he erred, while if he is wrong he hopes he is right. He is ignorant, wandering astray in ignorance and riding on carriages aimlessly moving in darkness. He did not try to find reality of knowledge. He scatters the traditions as the wind scatters the dry leaves.

وَرَجُلٌ فَمَشَّ جَهْلًا مُوضِعٌ فِي جُهَالِ الْأُمَّةِ غَادِرٌ فِي أَعْبَاشِ الْفِتْنَةِ، عَمِيمًا فِي عَقْدِ الْهُدْيَةِ قَدْ سَمَّاهُ أَشْبَاهُ النَّاسِ عَالِمًا وَلَيْسَ بِهِ، بَكَرٌ فَاسْتَكْتَرَ مِنْ جَمْعٍ، مَا قَلَّ مِنْهُ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا كَثُرَ، حَتَّى إِذَا ارْتَوَى مِنْ مَاءٍ آجِنِكَ، وَأَكْثَرَ مِنْ غَيْرِ طَائِلٍ جَلَسَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ قَاضِيًا ضَامِنًا لِتَخْلِيصِ مَا التَّبَسَّ عَلَى غَيْرِهِ. فَإِنْ نَزَلَتْ بِهِ إِحْدَى الْمُبْهَمَاتِ هَيَّأَ لَهَا حَشْوًا رَتًّا مِنْ رَأْيِهِ، ثُمَّ قَطَعَ بِهِ، فَهُوَ مِنْ لَبْسِ الشُّبُهَاتِ فِي مِثْلِ نَسْجِ الْعَنْكَبُوتِ: لَا يَدْرِي أَصَابَ أَمْ أَخْطَأَ. إِنْ أَصَابَ خَافَ أَنْ

يَكُونُ قَدْ أَحْطَأَ، وَإِنْ أَحْطَأَ رَجَا أَنْ يَكُونَ قَدْ أَصَابَ. جَاهِلٌ حَبَّاطُ جَهْلَاتٍ، عَاشِرُ كِتَابٍ
عَشَوَاتٍ لَمْ يَعْضَّ عَلَى الْعِلْمِ بِضُرْسٍ قَاطِعٍ، يُذِرِي الرِّوَايَاتِ إِذْرَاءَ الرِّيحِ الْهَشِيمِ .

By Allah, he is not capable of solving the problems that come to him nor is fit for the position assigned to him. Whatever he does not know he does not regard it worth knowing. He does not realise that what is beyond his reach is within the reach of others. If anything is not clear to him he keeps quiet over it because he knows his own ignorance. Lost lives are crying against his unjust verdicts, and properties (that have been wrongly disposed of) are grumbling against him.

لَا مَلِيٍّ وَاللَّهِ . بِإِصْدَارِ مَا وَرَدَ عَلَيْهِ، وَلَا هُوَ أَهْلٌ لِمَا فُوضَ إليه، لَا يَحْسَبُ الْعِلْمَ فِي شَيْءٍ
مِمَّا أَنْكَرَهُ، وَلَا يَرَى أَنَّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ مَا بَلَغَ مِنْهُ مَذْهَبًا لِعَيْبِهِ، وَإِنْ أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرٌ ائْتَمَّتْ بِهِ مَلِمًا يَعْزَمُ
مِنْ جَهْلٍ نَفْسِهِ، تَصْرُخُ مِنْ جُورِ قَضَائِهِ الدِّمَاءِ، وَتَعَجُّ مِنْهُ الْمَوَارِيثُ.

I complain to Allah about persons who live ignorant and die misguided. For them nothing is more worthless than the Qur'an if it is recited as it should be recited, nor anything more valuable than the Qur'an if its verses are removed from their places, nor anything more vicious than virtue nor more virtuous than vice.

إِلَى اللَّهِ أَشْكُو مِنْ مَعْشَرٍ يَعْيشُونَ جُهَالًا، وَيَمُوتُونَ ضَلَالًا، لَيْسَ فِيهِمْ سِلْعَةٌ أَبْوَرَمَنْ
الْكِتَابِ إِذَا تَلَّى حَقَّ تِلَاوَتِهِ، وَلَا سِلْعَةٌ أَنْفُقُوبِعَا وَلَا أَعْلَى تَمْنَا مِنْ الْكِتَابِ إِذَا حُرِّفَ عَنْ
مَوَاضِعِهِ، وَلَا عِنْدَهُمْ أَنْكَرٌ مِنَ الْمَعْرُوفِ، وَلَا أَعْرَفُ مِنَ الْمُنْكَرِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 17

- (1) *al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, I, 55;*
- (2) *Abu Talib al-Makki, Qut, I, 290;*
- (3) *al-Harawi, al-Jam`, see (4)*
- (4) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah (under kh-b-t);*
- (5) *al-Qadi al-Nu`man, Usul al-madhahib, 135;*
- (6) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, I, 240;*
- (7) *al-Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj, I, 390;*
- (8) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 109;*
- (9) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, I, 61;*
- (10) *Ibn Qutaybah, Gharib al-hadith, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh, I, 90.*

Notes

1. Amir al-mu'minin has held two categories of persons as the most detestable by Allah and the worst among people. Firstly, those who are misguided even in basic tenets and are busy in the spreading of evil. Secondly, those who abandon the Qur'an and sunnah and pronounce injunctions through their imagination. They create a circle of their devotees and popularise the religious code of law concocted by themselves. The misguidance and wrongfulness of such persons does not remain confined to their own selves but the seed of misguidance sown by them bears fruit and growing into the form of a big tree provides asylum to the misguided and this misguidance goes on multiplying. And since these very people are the real originators the weight of other's sins is also on their shoulders as the Qur'an says:

And certainly they shall bear their own burdens, and (other) burdens with their own burdens... (29:13)

Sermon 18: When a problem is put before ...

Amir al-mu'minin said in disparagement of the differences of view among the theologians

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في ذمّ اختلاف العلماء في الفتيا

[وفيه يذم أهل الرأي ويكل أمر الحكم في أمور الدين للقرآن]

When¹ a problem is put before anyone of them he passes judgement on it from his imagination. When exactly the same problem is placed before another of them he passes an opposite verdict. Then these judges go to the chief who had appointed them and he confirms all the verdicts, although their Allah is One (and the same), their Prophet is one (and the same), their Book (the Qur'an) is one (and the same)!

تَرُدُّ عَلَى أَحَدِهِمُ الْقَضِيَّةَ فِي حُكْمٍ مِنَ الْأَحْكَامِ فَيَحْكُمُ فِيهَا بِرَأْيِهِ، ثُمَّ تَرُدُّ تِلْكَ الْقَضِيَّةَ بِعَيْنِهَا عَلَى غَيْرِهِ فَيَحْكُمُ فِيهَا بِخِلَافِ قَوْلِهِ، ثُمَّ يَجْتَمِعُ الْقَضَاةُ بِذَلِكَ عِنْدَ إِمَامِهِمُ الَّذِي اسْتَفْضَاهُمْ فَيَصَوِّبُ آرَاءَهُمْ جَمِيعاً، وَإِلَهُهُمْ وَاحِدٌ! وَنَبِيُّهُمْ وَاحِدٌ! وَكِتَابُهُمْ وَاحِدٌ!

Is it that Allah ordered them to differ and they obeyed Him? Or He prohibited them from it but they disobeyed Him? Or (is it that) Allah sent an incomplete Faith and sought their help to complete it? Or they are His partners in the affairs, so that it is their share of duty to pronounce and He has to agree? Or is it that Allah the Glorified sent a perfect faith but the Prophet fell short of conveying it and handing it over (to the people)? The fact is that Allah the Glorified says:

We have not neglected anything in the Book (Qur'an) . . . (6:38),

and in it is a 'clarification of everything'² And He says that one part of the Qur'an verifies another part and that there is no divergence in it as He says:

.And if it had been from any other than Allah, they would surely have found in it much discrepancy. (4:82)

أَفَأَمَرَهُمُ اللَّهُ . سُبْحَانَهُ . بِالْاِخْتِلَافِ فَأَطَاعُوهُ! أَمْ نَهَاَهُمْ عَنْهُ فَعَصَوْهُ! أَمْ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ دِيناً نَاقِصاً فَاسْتَعَانَ بِهِمْ عَلَى إِتْمَامِهِ! أَمْ كَانُوا شُرَكَاءَ لَهُ فَلَهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا وَعَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَرْضَى؟ أَمْ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ دِيناً تَامَماً فَقَصَّرَ الرَّسُولُ (صلى الله عليه وآله) عَنْ تَبْلِيغِهِ وَأَدَائِهِ؟ وَاللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ يَقُولُ: (مَا قَرَطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ) وَفِيهِ تَبَيُّانٌ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ، وَذَكَرَ أَنَّ الْكِتَابَ يُصَدِّقُ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضاً، وَأَنَّهُ لَا اِخْتِلَافَ فِيهِ، فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ: (وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اِخْتِلَافاً كَثِيراً)

Certainly the outside of the Qur'an is wonderful and its inside is deep (in meaning). Its wonders will never disappear, its amazements will never pass away and its intricacies cannot be cleared except through itself.

وَإِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ ظَاهِرُهُ أُنِيقٌ وَبَاطِنُهُ عَمِيقٌ، لَا تَفْنَى عَجَائِبُهُ، وَلَا تَنْقُضِي عَرَائِبُهُ، وَلَا تُكْشِفُ الظُّلُمَاتُ إِلَّا بِهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 18

- (1) *Ibn Talhah, Matalib, I, 141;*
- (2) *al-Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj, I, 139;*
- (3) *al-Qadi al-Nu`man, Da`a'im, I, 93;*
- (4) *Narrated by Ibn Udhaynah from al-Imam al-Sadiq (A) in al-Nuri, Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, III, 174; see also al-Saffar, Basa'ir al-darajat.*

Notes

1. It is a disputed problem that where there is no clear argument about a matter in the religious law, whether there does in reality exist an order about it or not. The view adopted by Abu'l-Hasan al-Ash`ari and his master Abu `Ali al-Jubba'i is that in such a case Allah has not ordained any particular course of action but He assigned the task of finding it out and passing a verdict to the jurists so that whatever they hold as prohibited would be deemed prohibited and whatever they regard permissible would be deemed permissible. And if one has one view and the other another then as many verdicts will exist as there are views and each of them would represent the final order. For example, if one scholar holds that barley malt is prohibited and another jurist's view is that it is permissible then it would really be both prohibited and permissible. That is, for one who holds it prohibited, its use would be prohibited while for the other its use would be permissible. About this (theory of) correctness Muhammad ibn Abdi'l-Karim ash-Shahrastani writes:

A group of theorists hold that in matters where ijthihad (research) is applied there is no settled view about permissibility or otherwise and lawfulness and prohibition thereof, but whatever the mujtahid (the researcher scholar) holds is the order of Allah, because the ascertainment of the view of Allah depends upon the verdict of the mujtahid. If it is not so there will be no verdict at all. And according to this view every mujtahid would be correct in his opinion. (al-Milal wa'l-nihal, p.98)

In this case, the mujtahid is taken to be above mistake because a mistake can be deemed to occur where a step is taken against reality, but where there is no reality of verdict, mistake has no sense. Besides this, the mujtahid can be considered to be above mistake if it is held that Allah, being aware of all the views that were likely to be adopted has ordained as many final orders as a result of which every view corresponds to some such order, or that Allah has assured that the views adopted by the mujtahids should not go beyond what He has ordained, or that by chance the view of every one of them would, after all, correspond to some ordained order or other.

The Imamiyyah sect, however, has different theory, namely that Allah has neither assigned to anyone the right to legislate nor subjected any matter to the view of the mujtahid, nor in case of difference of views has He ordained numerous real orders. Of course, if the mujtahid cannot arrive at a real order then whatever view he takes after research and probe, it is enough for him and his followers to act by it. Such an order is the apparent order which is a substitute for the real order. In this case, he is excused for missing the real order, because he did his best for diving in the deep ocean and to explore its bottom, but it is a pity that instead of pearls he got only the sea-shell. He does not say that observers should except it as a pearl or it should sell as such. It is a different matter that Allah who watches the endeavours may price it at half so that the endeavour does not go waste, nor his passion discouraged.

If the theory of correctness is adopted then every verdict on law and every opinion shall have to be accepted as correct as Maybudhi has written in Fawatih: In this matter the view adopted by al-Ash`ari is right. It follows that differing opinions should all be right. Beware, do not bear a bad idea about jurists and do not open your tongue to abuse them.

When contrary theories and divergent views are accepted as correct it is strange why the action of some conspicuous individuals are explained as mistakes of decision, since mistake of decision by the mujtahid cannot be imagined at all. If the theory of correctness is right the action of Mu`awiyah and `A'ishah should be deemed right; but if their actions can be deemed to be wrong then we should agree that ijthad can also go wrong, and that the theory of correctness is wrong. It will then remain to be decided in its own context whether feminism did not impede the decision of `A'ishah or whether it was a (wrong) finding of Mu`awiyah or something else. However, this theory of correctness was propounded in order to cover mistakes and to give them the garb of Allah's orders so that there should be no impediment in achieving objectives nor should anyone be able to speak against any misdeeds.

In this sermon Amir al-mu'minin has referred to those people who deviate from the path of Allah and, closing their eyes to light, grope in the darkness of imagination, make Faith the victim of their views and opinions, pronounce new findings, pass orders by their own imagination and produce divergent results. Then on the basis of the theory of correctness they regard all these divergent and contrary orders as from Allah, as though each of their order represents divine Revelation so that no order of theirs can be wrong nor can they stumble on any occasion. Thus, Amir al-mu'minin says in disproving this view that:

1) When Allah is One, Book (Qur'an) is one, and Prophet is one then the religion (that is followed) should also be one. And when the religion is one how can there be divergent orders about any matter, because there can be divergence in an order only in case he who passed the order has forgotten it, or is oblivious, or senselessness overtakes him, or he wilfully desires entanglement in these labyrinths, while Allah and the Prophet are above these things. These divergences cannot therefore be attributed to them. These divergences are rather the outcome of the thinkings and opinions of people who are bent on twisting the delineations of religion by their own imaginative performances.

2) Allah must have either forbidden these divergences or ordered creating them. If He has ordered in their favour, where is that order and at what place? As for forbidding, the Qur'an says:

. . . Say thou! 'Hath Allah permitted you or ye forge a lie against Allah?' (10:59)

That is, everything that is not in accordance with the Divine orders is a concoction, and concoction is forbidden and prohibited. For concocters, in the next world, there is neither success or achievement nor prosperity and good. Thus, Allah says:

And utter ye not whatever lie describe your tongues (saying): This is lawful and this is forbidden, to forge a lie against Allah; verily, those who forge a lie against Allah succeed not. (Qur'an, 16:116)

3) If Allah has left religion incomplete and the reason for leaving it halfway was that He desired that the people should assist Him in completing the religious code and share with Him in the task of legislating, then this belief is obviously polytheism. If He sent down the religion in complete form the Prophet must have failed in conveying it so that room was left for others to apply imagination and opinion. This, Allah forbid, would mean a weakness of the Prophet and a bad slur on the selection of Allah.

4) Allah has said in the Qur'an that He has not left out anything in the Book and has clarified each and every matter. Now, if an order is carved out in conflict with the Qur'an it would be outside the religious code and its basis would not be on knowledge and perception, or Qur'an and sunnah, but it would be personal opinion and one's personal judgement which cannot be deemed to have accord with religion and faith.

5) Qur'an is the basis and source of religion and the fountain head of the laws of shari`ah. If the laws of shari`ah were divergent there should have been divergence in it also, and if there were divergences in it, it could not be regarded as Divine word. When it is Divine word the laws of shari`ah cannot be divergent, so as to accept all divergent and contrary views as correct and imaginative verdicts taken as Qur'anic dictates.

2. ref.16:89.

Sermon 19: How do you know what is for me and what is against me?!

Amir al-mu'minin was delivering a lecture from the pulpit of (the mosque of) Kufah when al-Ash`ath ibn Qays¹ objected and said, "O' Amir al-mu'minin this thing is not in your favour but against you."² Amir al-mu'minin looked at him with anger and said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

قاله للاشعث بن قيس وهو على منبر الكوفة يخطب

فمضى في بعض كلامه شيء اعترضه الاشعث، فقال: يا أمير المؤمنين، هذه عليك لا

لك، فخفض (عليه السلام) إليه بصره ثم قال:

How do you know what is for me and what is against me?! Curse of Allah and others be on you. You are a weaver and son of a weaver. You are the son of an unbeliever and yourself a hypocrite. You were arrested once by the Unbelievers and once by the Muslims, but your wealth and birth could not save you from either. The man who contrives for his own people to be put to sword and invites death and destruction for them does deserve that the near ones should hate him and the remote ones should not trust him.

وما يُدرِيكَ ما عَلَيَّ بما لي؟ عَلَيكَ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَلَعْنَةُ الْأَعْيُنِ! حَائِكُ ابْنِ حَائِكِ! مُنَافِقُ ابْنِ كُافِرٍ! وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ أَسْرَكَ الْكُفْرَ مَرَّةً وَالْإِسْلَامَ أُخْرَى! فَمَا فَدَاكَ مِنْ وَاحِدَةٍ مِنْهُمَا مَالِكَ وَلَا حَسْبُكَ! وَإِنَّ أَمْرًا دَلَّ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ السَّيْفَ، وَسَاقَ إِلَيْهِمُ الْحَتْفَ، لِحْرِيٍّ أَنْ يَمُقَّتَهُ الْأَقْرَبُ، وَلَا يَأْمَنَهُ الْأَبْعَدُ!

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This man was arrested once when an unbeliever and once in days of Islam. As for Amir al-mu'minin's words that the man contrived for his own people to be put to sword, the reference herein is to the incident which occurred to al-Ash`ath ibn Qays in confrontation with Khalid ibn Walid at Yamamah, where he deceived his people and contrived a trick till Khalid attacked them. After this incident his people nicknamed him "Urf an-Nar" which in the parlance stood for traitor.

قال السيد الشريف: يريد عليه السلام أنه أُسر في الكفر مرة وفي الإسلام مرة . وأما قوله: «دل على قومه السيف»، فأراد به: حديثاً كان للاشعث مع خالد بن الوليد باليمامة، غرّ فيه قومه ومكر بهم حتى أوقع بهم خالد، وكان قومه بعد ذلك يسمونه «عُرْفَ النار»، وهو اسم للغادر عندهم.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 19

(1) Abu al-Faraj, al-'Aghani, VIII, 59.

Notes

1. His original name was Ma`di Karib and surname Abu Muhammad but because of his dishevelled hair he is better known as al-Ash`ath (one having dishevelled hair). When after Proclamation (of Prophethood) he came to Mecca along with his tribe, the Prophet invited him and his tribe to accept Islam. But all of them turned back without anyone accepting

Islam. When after hijrah (migration of the Holy Prophet) Islam became established and in full swing and deputations began to come to Medina in large numbers he also came to the Prophet's audience with Banu Kindah and accepted Islam. The author of al-`Isti`ab writes that after the Prophet this man again turned unbeliever but when during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr he was brought to Medina as prisoner he again accepted Islam, though this time too his Islam was a show. Thus, ash-Shaykh Muhammad `Abduh writes in his annotations on Nahjul Balaghah: Just as `Abdullah ibn Ubay ibn Salul was a companion of the Prophet, al-Ash`ath was a companion of `Ali and both were high ranking hypocrites.

He lost one of his eyes in the battle of Yarmuk. Ibn Qutaybah has included him in the list of the one-eyed. Abu Bakr's sister Umm Farwah bint Abi Quhafah, who was once the wife of an al-Azdi and then of Tamim ad-Darimi, was on the third occasion married to this al-Ash`ath. Three sons were born of her viz. Muhammad, Isma`il and Is'haq. Books on biography show that she was blind. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has quoted the following statement of `Ali (p.b.u.h.): On the night of the assassination Ibn Muljam came to al-Ash`ath ibn Qays and both retired to a corner of the mosque and sat there when Hujr ibn `Adi passed by that side and he heard al-Ash`ath saying to Ibn Muljam, "Be quick now or else dawn's light would disgrace you." On hearing this Hujr said to al-Ash`ath, "O' one-eyed man, you are preparing to kill 'Ali" and hastened towards `Ali ibn Abi Talib, but Ibn Muljam had preceded him and struck 'Ali with sword when Hujr turned back people were crying, "Ali has been killed."

It was his daughter who killed Imam Hasan (p.b.u.h.) by poisoning him. Mas`udi has written that: His (Hasan's) wife Ja`dah bint al-Ash`ath poisoned him while Mu`awiyah had conspired with her that if she could contrive to poison Hasan he would pay her one hundred thousand Dirhams and marry her to Yazid. (Muruj adh-dhahab, vol. 2, p. 650)

His son Muhammad ibn al-Ash`ath was active in playing fraud with Hadrat Muslim ibn `Aqil in Kufah and in shedding Imam Husayn's blood in Karbala. But despite all these points he is among those from whom al-Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Dawud, at-Tirmidhi, an-Nasa'i and Ibn Majah have related traditions.

2. After the battle of Nahrawan, Amir al-mu'minin was delivering a sermon in the mosque of Kufah about ill effects of "Arbitration" when a man stood up and said "O' Amir al-mu'minin, first you desisted us from this Arbitration but thereafter you allowed it. We cannot understand which of these two was more correct and proper." On hearing this Amir al-mu'minin clapped his one hand over the other and said, "This is the reward of one who gives up firm view" that is, this is the outcome of your actions as you had abandoned firmness and caution and insisted on "Arbitration" but al-Ash`ath mistook it to mean as though Amir al mu'minin implied that "my worry was due to having accepted Arbitration," so he spoke out, "O' Amir al-mu'minin this brings blame on your own self" whereupon Amir al-mu'minin said harshly: "What do you know what I am saying, and what do you understand what is for me or against me. You are a weaver and the son of a weaver brought up by unbelievers and a hypocrite. Curse of Allah and all the world be upon you."

Commentators have written several reasons for Amir al-mu'minin calling Ash`ath a weaver. First reason is, because he and his father like most of the people of his native place pursued the industry of weaving cloth. So, in order to refer to the lowliness of his occupation he has been called 'weaver'. Yamanis had other occupations also but mostly this profession was followed among them. Describing their occupations Khalid ibn Safwan has mentioned this one first of all: "What can I say about a people among whom there are only weavers, leather dyers, monkey keepers and donkey riders. The hoopoe found them out, the mouse flooded them and a woman ruled over them". (al-Bayan wa't-tabyin, vol. 1, p. 130)

The second reason is that "hiyakah" means walking by bending on either side, and since out of pride and conceit this man used to walk shrugging his shoulders and making bends in his body, he has been called "hayik".

The third reason is --- and it is more conspicuous and clear --- that he has been called a weaver to denote his foolishness and lowliness because every low person is proverbially known as a weaver. Their wisdom and sagacity can be well gauged by the fact that their follies had become proverbial, while nothing attains proverbial status without peculiar characteristics. Now, that Amir al-mu'minin has also confirmed it no further argument or reasoning is needed.

The fourth reason is that by this is meant the person who conspires against Allah and the Holy Prophet and prepares webs of which is the peculiarity of hypocrites. Thus, in *Wasa'il ash-Shi'ah* (vol. 12, p. 101) it is stated: It was mentioned before Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) that the weaver is accused when he explained that the weaver implies the person who concocts against Allah and the Prophet.

After the word weaver Amir al-mu'minin has used the word hypocrite, and there is no conjunction in between them in order to emphasise the nearness of meaning thereof. Then, on the basis of this hypocrisy and concealment of truth he declared him deserving of the curse of Allah and all others, as Allah the Glorified says: Verily, those that conceal what we have sent of (Our) manifest evidences and guidance, after what we have (so) clearly shown for mankind in the Book (they are), those that Allah doth curse them and (also) curse them all those who curse (such ones). (Qur'an, 2:159)

After this Amir al-mu'minin says that "You could not avoid the degradation of being prisoner when you were unbeliever, nor did these ignominies spare you after acceptance of Islam, and you were taken prisoner." When an unbeliever the event of his being taken prisoner occurred in this way that when the tribe of Banu Murad killed his father Qays, he (al-Ash'ath) collected the warriors of Banu Kindah and divided them in three groups. Over one group he himself took the command, and on the others he placed Kabs ibn Hani' and al-Qash'am ibn Yazid al-Arqam as chiefs, and set off to deal with Banu Murad. But as misfortune would have it instead of Banu Murad he attacked Banu al-Harith ibn Ka'b. The result was that Kabs ibn Hani' and al-Qash'am ibn Yazid al-Arqam were killed and this man was taken prisoner alive. Eventually he got a release by paying three thousand camels as ransom. In Amir al-mu'minin's words, "Your wealth or birth could not save you from either," the reference is not to real 'fidyah' (release money) because he was actually released on payment of release money but the intention is that neither plenty of wealth nor his high position and prestige in his tribe could save him from this ignominy, and he could not protect himself from being a prisoner .

The event of his second imprisonment is that when the Holy Prophet of Islam passed away from this world a rebellion occurred in the region of Hadramawt for repelling which Caliph Abu Bakr wrote to the governor of the place Ziyad ibn Labid al-Bayadi. al-Ansari that he should secure allegiance and collect zakat and charities from those people. When Ziyad ibn Labid went to the tribe of Banu `Amr ibn Mu`awiyah for collection of zakat he took keen fancy for a she-camel of Shaytan ibn Hujr which was very handsome and of huge body. He jumped over it and took possession of it. Shaytan ibn Hujr did not agree to spare it and said to take over some other she-camel in its place but Ziyad would not agree. Shaytan sent for his brother al-`Adda' ibn Hujr for his support. On coming he too had a talk but Ziyad insisted on his point and did not, by any means, consent to keep off his hand from that she-camel. At last both these brothers appealed to Masruq ibn Ma`di Karib for help. Consequently, Masruq also used his influence so that Ziyad might leave the she-camel but he refused categorically, whereupon Masruq became enthusiastic and untying the she-camel handed it over to Shaytan. On this Ziyad was infuriated and collecting his men became ready to fight. On the other side Banu Wali`ah also assembled to face them, but could not defeat Ziyad and were badly beaten at his hands. Their women were taken away and property was looted. Eventually those who had survived were obliged to take refuge under the protection of al-Ash'ath. Al-Ash'ath promised assistance on the condition that he should be acknowledged ruler of the area. Those people agreed to this condition and his coronation was also formally solemnised. After having his authority acknowledged he arranged an army and set out to fight Ziyad. On the other side Abu Bakr had written to the chief of Yemen, al-Muhajir ibn Abi Umayyah to go for the help of Ziyad with a contingent. Al-Muhajir was coming with his contingent when they came face to face. Seeing each other they drew swords and commenced fighting at ad-Zurqan. In the end al-Ash'ath fled from the battle-field and taking his remaining men closed himself in the fort of an-Nujayr. The enemy was such as to let them alone. They laid siege around the fort. Al-Ash'ath thought how long could he remain shut up in the fort with this lack of equipment and men, and that he should think out some way of escape. So one night he stealthily came out of the fort and met Ziyad and al-Muhajir and conspired with them that if they gave asylum to nine members of his family he would get the fort gate opened. They accepted this term and asked him to write for them the names of those nine persons. He wrote down the nine

names and made them over to them, but acting on his traditional wisdom forgot to write his own name in that list. After settling this he told his people that he has secured protection for them and the gate of the fort should be opened. When the gate was opened Ziyad forces pounced upon them. They said they had been promised protection whereupon Ziyad's army said that this was wrong and that al-Ash`ath had asked protection only for nine members of his house, whose names preserved with them. In short eight hundred persons were put to sword and hands of several women were chopped off, while according to the settlement nine men were left off, but the case of al-Ash`ath became complicated. Eventually it was decided he should be sent to Abu Bakr and he should decided about him. At last he was sent to Medina in chains along with a thousand women prisoners. On the way relations and others, men and women, all hurled curses at him and the women were calling him traitor and one who got his own people put to sword. Who else can be a greater traitor? However, when he reached Medina Abu Bakr released him and on that occasion he was married to Umm Farwah.

Sermon 20: Indeed, if you could see ...

Death and taking lessons from it

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها ينفر من الغفلة وينبه إلى الفرار لله

Indeed, if you could see that has been seen by those of you who have died, you would be puzzled and troubled. Then you would have listened and obeyed; but what they have seen is yet curtained off from you. Shortly, the curtain would be thrown off. You have been shown, provided you see and you have been made to listen provided you listen, and you have been guided if you accept guidance. I spoke unto you with truth.

You have been called aloud by (instructive) examples and warned through items full of warnings. After the heavenly messengers (angels), only man can convey message from Allah. (So what I am conveying is from Allah).

فَإِنَّكُمْ لَوْ عَايَنْتُمْ مَا قَدْ عَايَنَ مَنْ مَاتَ مِنْكُمْ لَجَرَعْتُمْ وَوَهَلْتُمْ وَسَمِعْتُمْ وَأَطَعْتُمْ، وَلَكِنْ مَحْجُوبٌ عَنْكُمْ مَا عَايَنُوا، وَقَرِيبٌ مَا يُطْرَحُ الْحِجَابُ! وَلَقَدْ بُصِّرْتُمْ إِنْ أَبْصَرْتُمْ، وَأُسْمِعْتُمْ إِنْ سَمِعْتُمْ، وَهُدَيْتُمْ إِنْ اهْتَدَيْتُمْ، وَبِحَقِّ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ: لَقَدْ جَاهَرْتَكُمْ الْعِبْرَ وَزَجَرْتُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مُرْدَجَرٌ، وَمَا يُبَلِّغُ عَنِ اللَّهِ بَعْدَ رُسُلِ السَّمَاءِ إِلَّا الْبَشَرُ .

Alternative Sources for Sermon 20

(1) *Al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, I, 405*

Sermon 21: Your ultimate goal is before you ...

Advice to keep light in this world

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وهي كلمة جامعة للعظة والحكمة

Your ultimate goal (reward or punishment) is before you. Behind your back is the hour (of resurrection) which is driving you on. Keep (yourself) light and overtake (the forward ones). Your last ones are being awaited by the first ones (who have preceded).

فَإِنَّ الْعَايَةَ أَمَامَكُمْ، وَإِنَّ وِرَاءَكُمْ السَّاعَةَ تَحْدُوكُمْ تَحْفَفُوا تَلْحَقُوا، فَإِنَّمَا يُنْتَظَرُ بِأَوْلِيكُمْ آخِرُكُمْ.

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: If this utterance of `Ali (p.b.u.h.) is weighed with any other utterance except the word of Allah or of the Holy Prophet, it would prove heavier and superior in every respect. For example, `Ali's saying "Keep light and overtake" is the shortest expression ever heard with the greatest sense conveyed by it. How wide is its meaning and how clear its spring of wisdom! We have pointed out the greatness and meaningfulness of this phrase in our book al-Khasa'is.

وأقول: إنَّ هذا الكلام لو وزن بعد كلام الله سبحانه وكلام رسوله صلى الله عليه وآله بكل كلام لمال به راجحاً، وبرز عليه سابقاً. فأما قوله عليه السلام: «تخففوا تلحقوا»، فما سمع كلام أقل منه مسموعاً ولا أكثر منه محصولاً، وما أبعد غورها من كلمة! وأنقع نطفتها من حكمة! وقد نبهنا في كتاب «الخصائص» على عظم قدرها وشرف جوهرها .

Alternative Sources for Sermon 21

(1) *al-Sharif al-Radi, Khasa'is*, 87;

(2) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh*, * V, 157.

Sermon 22: Beware! Satan has certainly started...

When he received reports about those who had broken their oath of allegiance to him

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

حين بلغه خبر الناكثين ببيعته

[وفيها يذم عملهم ويلزمهم دم عثمان ويتهددهم بالحرب]

Beware! Satan has certainly started instigating his forces and has collected his army in order that oppression may reach its extreme ends and wrong may come back to its position. By Allah they have not put a correct blame on me, nor have they done justice between me and themselves.

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ ذَمَّرَ حِزْبَهُ وَاسْتَجَلَبَ جَلْبَهُ لِيَعُودَ الْجُوزُ إِلَى أَوْطَانِهِ، وَيَرْجِعَ الْبَاطِلُ إِلَى نِصَابِهِ وَاللَّهُ مَا أَنْكَرُوا عَلَيَّ مُنْكَرًا، وَلَا جَعَلُوا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُمْ نَصِفًا

Criticism of their actions

يذم عملهم

They are demanding of me a right which they have abandoned, and a blood that they have themselves shed.¹ If I were a partner with them in it then they too have their share of it. But if they did it without me they alone have to face the consequences. Their biggest argument (against me) is (really) against themselves.

They are suckling from a mother who is already dry, and bringing into life innovation that is already dead. How disappointing is this challenger (to battle)? Who is this challenger and for what is he being responded to? I am happy that the reasoning of Allah has been exhausted before them and He knows (all) about them.

وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَطْلُبُونَ حَقًّا هُمْ تَرَكُوهُ، وَدَمًا هُمْ سَفَكُوهُ، فَلَيْتَن كُنْتُ شَرِيكُهُمْ فِيهِ فَإِنَّ لَهُمْ لَنَصِيبُهُمْ مِنْهُ، وَلَيْتَن كَانُوا وَأُوهُ دُونِي، فَمَا التَّبَعَةُ إِلَّا عِنْدَهُمْ، وَإِنَّ أَعْظَمَ حُجَّتِهِمْ لَعَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ، يَرْتَضِعُونَ أُمَّاً قَدْ فَطَمَتْ وَجُيُونَ بِدَعَا قَدَامِيَّتْ. يَا حَيِّبَةَ الدَّاعِي! مَنْ دَعَا! وَالْأَمُّ أُحْيِبُ! وَإِيَّي لَرَاضٍ بِحُجَّةِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَعَلِمِهِ فِيهِمْ.

The threat to wage war against them

التهديد بالحرب

If they refuse (to obey) I will offer them the edge of the sword which is enough a curer of wrong and supporter of Right.

It is strange they send me word to proceed to them for spear-fighting and to keep ready for fighting with swords. May the mourning women mourn over them. I have ever been so that I was never frightened by fighting nor

threatened by clashing. I enjoy full certainty of belief from My God and have no doubt in my faith.

فَإِنْ أَبَوْا أُعْطِيْتُهُمْ حَدَّ السَّيْفِ، وَكَفَى بِهِ شَافِيًا مِنَ الْبَاطِلِ، وَنَاصِرًا لِلْحَقِّ! وَمَنْ الْعَجَبِ
بَعَثْتُهُمْ إِلَيَّ أَنْ أَتَرَزَّ لِلطَّعَانِ! وَأَنْ أَصْبِرَ لِلْجَلَادِ! هَبَلْتُهُمْ الْهَبُولُ! لَقَدْ كُنْتُ وَمَا أُهْدَدُ بِالْحَرْبِ،
وَلَا أُرْهَبُ بِالضَّرْبِ! وَإِنِّي لَعَلَى يَقِينٍ مِنْ رَبِّي، وَغَيْرِ شُبْهَةٍ مِنْ دِينِي.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 22

- (1) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-'Imamah, I, 154;*
- (2) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, II, 35;*
- (3) *al-Tabari, al-Mustarshid, 95;*
- (4) *Ibn Tawus, Kashf, 173;*
- (5) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, I, 172;*
- (6) *al-Khwarazmi, al-Manaqib; 117;*
- (7) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 171, II, 167;*
- (8) *al-Mufid, al-Jamal, * 129; see Sermon:26 and Sermon:171 below.*

Notes

1. When Amir al-mu'minin was accused of `Uthman's assassination he delivered this sermon to refute that allegation, wherein he says about those who blamed him that: "These seekers of vengeance cannot say that I alone am the assassin and that no one else took part in it. Nor can they falsify witnessed events by saying that they were unconcerned with it. Why then have they put me foremost for this avenging? With me they should include themselves also. If I am free of this blame they cannot establish their freedom from it. How can they detach themselves from this punishment? The truth of the matter is that by accusing me of this charge their aim is that I should behave with them in the same manner to which they are accustomed. But they should not expect from me that I would revive the innovations of the previous regimes. As for fighting, neither was I ever afraid of it nor am I so now. Allah knows my intention and He also knows that those standing on the excuse of taking revenge are themselves his assassins." Thus, history corroborates that the people who managed his (`Uthman's) assassination by agitation and had even prevented his burial in Muslims' graveyard by hurling stones at his coffin were the same who rose for avenging his blood. In this connection, the names of Talhah ibn `Ubaydillah, az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwam and `A'ishah are at the top of the list since on both occasions their efforts come to sight with conspicuousness. Thus Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes that:

Those who have written the account of assassination of `Uthman state that on the day of his killing Talhah's condition was that in order to obscure himself from the eyes of the people he had a veil on his face and was shooting arrows at `Uthman's house.

And in this connection, about az-Zubayr's ideas he writes:

Historians have also state that az-Zubayr used to say "Kill `Uthman. He has altered your faith." People said, "Your son is standing at his door and guarding him," and he replied, "Even my son may be lost, but `Uthman must be killed. `Uthman will be lying like a carcass on Sirat tomorrow." (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol.9, pp. 35-36)

About `A'ishah, Ibn `Abd Rabbih writes:

al-Mughirah ibn Shu`bah came to `A'ishah when she said, "O' Abu `Abdillah, I wish you had been with me on the day of Jamal; how arrows were piercing through my hawdaj (camel litter) till some of them stuck my body." al- Mughirah said, "I wish one of them should have killed you." She said, "Allah may have pity you; why so?" He replied, "So that it would have been some atonement for what you had done against `Uthman." (al-Iqd al-farid, vol. 4, p. 294)

Sermon 23: Verily, Divine orders descends ...

About keeping aloof from envy, and good behaviour towards kith and kin

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وتشتمل على تهذيب الفقراء بالزهد وتأديب الاغنياء بالشفقة

Now then, verily Divine orders descend from heaven to earth like drops of rain, bringing to everyone what is destined for him whether plenty or paucity. So if any one of you observes for his brother plenty of progeny or of wealth or of self, it should not be a worry for him. So long as a Muslim does not commit such an act that if it is disclosed he has to bend his eyes (in shame) and by which low people are emboldened, he is like the gambler who expects that the first draw of his arrow would secure him gain and also cover up the previous loss.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ الْأَمْرَ يَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَقَطْرِ الْمَطَرِ إِلَى كُلِّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا قُضِيَ لَهَا مِنْ زِيَادَةٍ أَوْ نُقْصَانٍ، فَإِذَا رَأَى أَحَدُكُمْ لِإِخِيهِ غَفِيرَةً فِي أَهْلِ أَوْ مَالٍ أَوْ نَفْسٍ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ لَهُ فِتْنَةً، فَإِنَّ الْمَرْءَ الْمُسْلِمَ مَا لَمْ يَغْشَ ذَنَاءَةً تَظْهَرُ فَيَحْشَعُ لَهَا إِذَا ذُكِرَتْ، وَيُغْرَى بِهَا لِإِقَامِ النَّاسِ، كَانَ كَالْفَالِجِ الْيَاسِرِشَةِ الَّذِي يَنْتَظِرُ أَوَّلَ فَوْزَةٍ مِنْ قِدَاحِهِ تُوجِبُ لَهُ الْمَعْنَمَ، وَيُرْفَعُ عَنْهُ بِهَا الْمَعْرَمُ.

Similarly, the Muslim who is free from dishonesty expects one of the two good things: either call from Allah and in that case whatever is with Allah is the best for him, or the livelihood of Allah. He has already children and property while his faith and respect are with him. Certainly, wealth and children are the plantations of this world while virtuous deed is the plantation of the next world. Sometimes Allah joins all these in some groups.

كَذَلِكَ الْمَرْءُ الْمُسْلِمُ الْبَرِيُّ مِنَ الْخِيَانَةِ يَنْتَظِرُ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِحْدَى الْحُسَيْنَيْنِ: إِمَّا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ فَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَهُ، وَإِمَّا رِزْقَ اللَّهِ فَإِذَا هُوَ ذُو أَهْلِ وَمَالٍ، وَمَعَهُ دِينُهُ وَحَسْبُهُ. إِنَّ الْمَالَ وَالْبَنِينَ حَرْثَ الدُّنْيَا، وَالْعَمَلَ الصَّالِحَ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ، وَقَدْ يَجْمَعُهُمَا اللَّهُ لِأَقْوَامٍ،

Beware of Allah against what He has cautioned you and keep afraid of Him to the extent that no excuse be needed for it. Act without show or intention of being heard, for if a man acts for other than Allah, then Allah entrusts him to that one. We ask Allah (to grant us) the positions of the martyrs, company of the virtuous and friendship of the prophets.

فَاخْذَرُوا مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا حَدَرَكُمُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ، وَاحْشَوْهُ حَشْيَةً لَيْسَتْ بِتَعْدِيرٍ وَاعْمَلُوا فِي غَيْرِ رِيَاءٍ وَلَا سُمْعَةٍ؛ فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ يَكِلْهُ اللَّهُ إِلَى مَنْ عَمِلَ لَهُ. نَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ مَنَازِلَ الشُّهَدَاءِ، وَمُعَايِشَةَ السُّعَدَاءِ، وَمُرَافِقَةَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ.

O people! Surely no one (even though he may be rich) can do without his kinsmen, and their support by hands or tongues. They alone are his support from rear and can ward off from him his troubles, and they are the most kind to him when tribulations befall him. The good memory of a man that Allah retains among people is better than the property which others inherit from him.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّهُ لَا يَسْتَعْنِي الرَّجُلُ . وَإِنْ كَانَ ذَا مَالٍ . عَنْ عَشِيرَتِهِ، وَدَفَاعِهِمْ عَنْهُ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ
وَأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ، وَهُمْ أَعْظَمُ النَّاسِ حَيْطَةً مِنْ وَرَائِهِ وَأَلْمُهُمْ لِشَعْنِهِ، وَأَعْظَمُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ عِنْدَ نَازِلَةِ إِنْ
نَزَلَتْ بِهِ . وَلِسَانُ الصِّدْقِ يَجْعَلُهُ اللَّهُ لِلْمَرْءِ فِي النَّاسِ حَبِيرٌ لَهُ مِنَ الْمَالِ يُورِثُهُ غَيْرُهُ .

In the same Sermon

Behold! If any one of you finds your near ones in want or starvation, he should not desist from helping them with that which will not increase if this help is not extended, nor decrease by thus spending it. Whoever holds up his hand from (helping) his kinsmen, he holds only one hand, but at the time of his need many hands remain held up from helping him. One who is sweet tempered can retain the love of his people for good.

أَلَا لَا يَعْدِلَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ عَنِ الْقَرَابَةِ يَرَى بِهَا الْحِصَاصَةَ أَنْ يَسُدَّهَا بِالْأَيْدِي لَا يَزِيدُهَا إِنْ أَمْسَكَهَا
وَلَا يَنْقُصُهَا إِنْ أَهْلَكَهَا، وَمَنْ يَفْبِضْ يَدَهُ عَنْ عَشِيرَتِهِ، فَإِنَّمَا تُفْبِضُ مِنْهُ عَنْهُمْ يَدٌ وَاحِدَةٌ،
وَتُفْبِضُ مِنْهُمْ عَنْهُ أَيْدٍ كَثِيرَةٌ؛ وَمَنْ تَلَّنَ حَاشِيئَتَهُ يَسْتَدِرُّ مِنْ قَوْمِهِ الْمَوَدَّةَ .

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: In this sermon "al-ghafirah" means plenty or abundance, and this is derived from the Arab saying, "al-jamm al-ghafir" or "al-jamma' al-ghafir" meaning thick crowd. In some versions for "al-ghafirah" "afwatan" appears. "afwah" means the good and selected part of anything.

It is said "akaltu `afwata 't-ta`am", to mean "I ate select meal." About "wa man yaqbid yadahu `an `ashiratihi" appearing towards the end he points out how beautiful the meaning of this sentence is, Amir al-mu'minin implies that he who does not help his own kinsmen withholds only his hand but when he is in need of their assistance and would be looking for their sympathy and support then he would remain deprived of the sympathies and succour of so many of their extending hands and marching feet.

قال السيد الشريف: اقول: الغفيرة ها هنا الزيادة و الكثرة، من قولهم للجمع الكثير: الجم الغفير، و الجماء الغفير. و يروي "عفوة من اهل أو مال" و العفوة: الخيار من الشيء، يقال: أكلت عفوة الطعام، اي خياره. وما أحسن المعنى الذي أراداه (عليه السلام) بقوله: «ومن يقبض يده عن عشيرته...» إلى تمام الكلام، فإن الممسك خيره عن عشيرته إنما يمسك نفع يد واحدة؛ فإذا احتاج إلى نصرتهم، واضطر إلى مرافقتهم قعدوا عن نصره، وتناقلوا عن صوته، فمنع ترافد الايدي الكثيرة، وتناهض الاقدام الجمعة.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 23

(1) *Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, II, 56, 294, V, 56;*

- (2) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, II, 366;*
- (3) *Nasr ibn Muzahim, Siffin, 10;*
- (4) *al-Ya`qubi Ta'rikh, II, 149;*
- (5) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, bab al-kasb wa al-mal;*
- (6) *al-Muttaqi, Kanz, VIII, 225;*
- (7) *Ibn `Asakir, Ta'rikh, in the biographical account of `Ali (A);*
- (8) *Ibn Salam, Gharib al-hadith, II, 183;*
- (9) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, III, 468;*
- (10) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, I, 189;*
- (11) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, I, 80.*

Sermon 24: By my life ...

Exhorting people for jihad

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وهي كلمة جامعة له

فيها تسويغ قتال المخالف، والدعوة إلى طاعة الله، والترقي فيها لضمان الفوز

By my life there will be no regard for anyone nor slackening from me in fighting against one who opposes right or gropes in misguidance. O creatures of Allah, fear Allah and flee unto Allah from His wrath (seek protection in His Mercy). Tread on the path He has laid down for you and stand by what He has enjoined upon you. In that case `Ali would stand surety for your success (salvation) eventually even though you may not get it immediately (i.e. in this world).

وَلَعْمَرِي مَا عَلَيَّ مِنْ قِتَالٍ مَنْ خَالَفَ الْحَقَّ، وَخَابَطَ الْعَيَّ مِنْ إِذْهَانٍ وَلَا إِيْهَانٍ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، وَفِرُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَامْضُوا فِي الَّذِي نَهَجَهُ لَكُمْ، وَفُؤِمُوا بِمَا عَصَبَهُ بِكُمْ فَعَلَيْ
ضَامِنٍ لِفُلْجِكُمْ آجِلًا، إِنْ لَمْ تُمْنَحُوهُ عَاجِلًا

Alternative Sources for Sermon 24

(1) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, III, 244 (a.s.b).*

Sermon 25: Nothing (is left to me) but Kufah...

When Amir al-mu'minin received successive news that Mu`awiyah's men were occupying cities¹ and his own officers in Yemen namely `Ubaydullah ibn `Abbas and Sa'id ibn Nimran came to him retreating after being overpowered by Busr ibn Abi Artah, he was much disturbed by the slackness of his own men in jihad and their difference with his opinion. Proceeding on to the pulpit he said:

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وقد تواترت عليه الأخبار باستيلاء أصحاب معاوية على البلاد، وقدم عليه عاملاه على اليمن . وهما عبيدالله بن العباس وسعيد بن نمران . لما غلب عليها بُسْرُ بن أبي أَرْطَاة، فقام (عليه السلام) إلى المنبر ضجراً بتناقل أصحابه عن الجهاد، ومخالفتهم له في الرأي، وقال:

Nothing (is left to me) but Kufah which I can hold and extend (which is in my hand to play with). (O Kufah) if this is your condition that whirlwinds continue blowing through you, then Allah may destroy you.

مَا هِيَ إِلَّا الْكُوفَةُ، أَفْبِضْهَا وَأَبْسُطْهَا، إِنْ لَمْ تَكُونِي إِلَّا أَنْتِ، تَهْبُتُ أَعَاصِيْرُكَ، فَفَبْحَكِ

اللَّهُ!

Then he illustrated with the verse of a poet:

وتمثّل بقول الشاعر:

O `Amr! By your good father's life. I have received only a small bit of fat from this pot (fat that remains sticking to it after it has been emptied).

لَعَمْرُ أَبِيكَ الْحَيِّ يَا عَمْرُوإِنِّي عَلَى وَصْرٍ - مِنْ ذَا الْأَنْاءِ . قَلِيلٌ

Then he continued:

I have been informed that Busr has overpowered Yemen. By Allah, I have begun thinking about these people that they would shortly snatch away the whole country through their unity on their wrong and your disunity (from your own right), and separation, your disobedience of your Imam in matters of right and their obedience to their leader in matters of wrong, their fulfilment of the trust in favour of their master and your betrayal, their good work in their cities and your mischief. Even if I give you charge of a wooden bowl I fear you would run away with its handle.

ثم قال (عليه السلام): أُنبئتُ بُسْرًا قَدْ اطَّلَعَ الْيَمَنَ، وَإِنِّي وَاللَّهِ لَأَطْرُقُ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمَ سَيِّدَالْوَنٍ مِنْكُمْ بِاجْتِمَاعِهِمْ عَلَى بَاطِلِهِمْ، وَتَفَرُّقِكُمْ عَنْ حَقِّكُمْ، وَمَعْصِيَتِكُمْ إِمَامِكُمْ فِي الْحَقِّ، وَطَاعَتِهِمْ إِمَامَهُمْ فِي الْبَاطِلِ، وَبَادَائِهِمْ الْأَمَانَةَ إِلَى صَاحِبِهِمْ وَخِيَانَتِكُمْ، وَبِصَلَاحِهِمْ فِي بِلَادِهِمْ وَفَسَادِكُمْ، فَلَوْ ائْتَمَنْتُ أَحَدَكُمْ عَلَى قَعْبٍ لَحَشِيتُ أَنْ يَذْهَبَ بِعِلَاقَتِيهِ.

O My God they are disgusted of me and I am disgusted of them. They are weary of me and I am weary of them. Change them for me with better ones

and change me for them with worse one. O My God, melt their hearts as salt melts in water. By Allah, I wish I had only a thousand horsemen of Banu Firas ibn Ghanm (as the poet says):

If you call them the horsemen would come to you like the summer cloud.
(Thereafter Amir al-mu'minin alighted from the pulpit).

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي قَدْ مَلَلْتُهُمْ وَمَلُونِي، وَسَيَّمْتُهُمْ وَسَيَّمُونِي، فَأَبْدِلْنِي بِهِمْ خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ، وَأَبْدِلْهُمْ بِي شَرًّا
مِثِّي، اللَّهُمَّ مِثْ قُلُوبِهِمْ كَمَا يُمَاتُ الْمِلْحُ فِي الْمَاءِ، أَمَا وَاللَّهِ لَوَدِدْتُ أَنَّ لِي بِكُمْ أَلْفَ فَارِسٍ
مِنْ بَنِي فِرَاسٍ بِنِ عَنَمٍ .:

هُنَالِكَ، لَوْ دَعَوْتُ، أَتَاكَ مِنْهُمْ فَوَارِسٌ مِثْلُ أَرْمِيَةِ الْحَمِيمِ
ثم نزل (عليه السلام) من المنبر.

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: In this verse the word "armiyah" is plural of "ramiyy" which means cloud and "hamim" here means summer. The poet has particularised the cloud of summer because it moves swiftly. This is because it is devoid of water while a cloud moves slowly when it is laden with rain. Such clouds generally appear (in Arabia) in winter. By this verse the poet intends to convey that when they are called and referred to for help they approach with rapidity and this is borne by the first line "if you call them they will reach you."

قال السيد الشريف: قلت أنا: والارمية جمع رمي وهو: السحاب، والحميم في هذا
الموضع: وقت الصيف، وإنما خص الشاعر سحاب الصيف بالذكر لأنه أشد جفولاً، وأسرع
خفولاً، لأنه لا ماء فيه، وإنما يكون السحاب ثقيل السير لامتلائه بالماء، وذلك لا يكون في
الاکثر إلا زمان الشتاء، وإنما أراد الشاعر وصفهم بالسرعة إذا دُعوا، والاعانة إذا استغيثوا،
والدليل على ذلك قوله: «هنالك، لو دعوت، أتاك منهم...»

Alternative Sources for Sermon 25

- (1) *Al-Mas`udi, Muruj, III, 149;*
- (2) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, III, 337;*
- (3) *Ibn `Asakir, Ta'rikh, I, 305, X, 225;*
- (4) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, II, 383;*
- (5) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, * 163;*
- (6) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat II, 636.*

Notes

1. When after arbitration Mu`awiyah's position was stabilised he began thinking of taking possession of Amir al-mu'minin's cities and extend his domain. He sent his armies to different areas in order that they might secure allegiance for Mu`awiyah by force. In this connection he sent Busr ibn Abi Artat to Hijaz and he shed blood of thousands of innocent persons from Hijaz upto Yemen, burnt alive tribes after tribes in fire and killed even children, so much so that he butchered two young boys of `Ubaydullah ibn `Abbas the Governor of Yemen before their mother Juwayriyah bint Khalid ibn Qaraz al-Kinaniyyah.

When Amir al-mu'minin came to know of his slaughtering and bloodshed he thought of sending a contingent to crush him but due to continuous fighting people had become weary and showed heartlessness instead of zeal. When Amir al-mu'minin observed their shirking from war he delivered this sermon wherein he roused them to enthusiasm and self respect,

and prompted them to jihad by describing before them the enemy's wrongfulness and their own short-comings. At last Jariyah ibn Qudamah as-Sa`di responded to his call and taking an army of two thousand set off in pursuit of Busr and chased him out of Amir al-mu'minin's domain.

Sermon 26: Verily, Allah sent Muhammad (S) ...

Arabia before proclamation of Prophethood

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها يصف العرب قبل البعثة ثم يصف حاله قبل البيعة له

[العرب قبل البعثة]

Verily, Allah sent Muhammad (S) as a warner (against vice) for all the worlds and a trustee of His revelation, while you people of Arabia were following the worst religion and you resided among rough stones and venomous serpents. You drank dirty water and ate filthy food. You shed blood of each other and cared not for relationship. Idols are fixed among you and sins are clinging to you.

انَّ الله سُبْحَانَهُ بَعَثَ مُحَمَّدًا نَذِيرًا لِّلْعَالَمِينَ، وَأَمِينًا عَلَى التَّنْزِيلِ، وَأَنْتُمْ مَعْشَرَ الْعَرَبِ عَلَى شَرِّ دِينٍ، وَفِي شَرِّ دَارٍ، مُنِيحُونَ بَيْنَ حِجَارَةٍ حُشِنَ وَحْيَاتِ صُمَّ تَشْرَبُونَ الْكَدِرَ، وَتَأْكُلُونَ الْجَشِبَ وَتَسْفِكُونَ دِمَاءَكُمْ، وَتَقْطَعُونَ أَرْحَامَكُمْ، الْأَصْنَامُ فِيكُمْ مَنْصُوبَةٌ، وَالْأَثَامُ بِكُمْ مَعْصُوبَةٌ

Part of the same sermon in describing his condition before allegiance was paid to him (after the death of the Holy Prophet)

I looked and found that there is no supporter for me except family, so I refrained from thrusting them unto death. I kept my eyes closed despite motes in them. I drank despite choking of throat. I exercised patience despite trouble in breathing and despite having to take sour colocynth as food.

منها:

فَنَظَرْتُ فَإِذَا لَيْسَ لِي مُعِينٌ إِلَّا أَهْلُ بَيْتِي، فَضَنَنْتُ بِهِمْ عَنِ الْمَوْتِ، وَأَعْصَيْتُ عَلَى الْقَدَى، وَشَرِبْتُ عَلَى الشَّجَا وَصَبَرْتُ عَلَى أَخْذِ الْكَطْمِ، وَعَلَى أَمْرٍ مِنْ طَعْمِ الْعَلْفَمِ.

Part of the same sermon on the settlement between Mu`awiyah and `Amr ibn al-`As

He did not swear allegiance till he got him to agree that he would pay him its price. The hand of this purchaser (of allegiance) may not be successful and the contract of the seller may face disgrace. Now you should take up arms for war and arrange equipment for it. Its flames have grown high and its brightness has increased. Clothe yourself with patience for it is the best to victory.¹

ومنها:

وَلَمْ يُبَايِعْ حَتَّى شَرَطَ أَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُ عَلَى الْبَيْعَةِ تَمْنًا، فَلَا ظَفِرَتْ يَدُ الْمُبَايِعِ، وَخَرِيَتْ أَمَانَةُ الْمَيْتَاعِ
فَخُذُوا لِلْحَرْبِ أَهْبَتَهَا وَأَعِدُّوا لَهَا عُدَّتَهَا، فَقَدْ شَبَّ لَهَا وَعَلَا سَنَاهَا وَاسْتَشْعِرُوا الصَّبْرَ فَإِنَّهُ
أَحْزَمٌ لِلنَّصْرِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 26

- (1) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-Imamah, I, 154;*
- (2) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, I, 303, II, 633;*
- (3) *al-Tabari, al-Mustarshid, 95;*
- (4) *Ibn Tawus, Kashf, 173;*
- (5) *al-Kulayni, al-Rasa'il, mentioned by Ibn Tawus, op. cit.*

Notes

1. Amir al-mu'minin had delivered a sermon before setting off for Nahrawan. These are three parts from it. In the first part he has described the condition of Arabia before Proclamation (of Prophethood); in the second he has referred to circumstances which forced him to keep quiet and in the third he has described the conversation and settlement between Mu'awiyah and `Amr ibn al-`As. The position of this mutual settlement was that when Amir al-mu'minin sent Jarir ibn `Abdillah al-Bajali to Mu'awiyah to secure his allegiance he detained Jarir under the excuse of giving a reply, and in the meantime he began exploring how far the people of Syria would support him. When he succeeded in making them his supporters by rousing them to avenge `Uthman's blood he consulted his brother `Utbah ibn Abi Sufyan. He suggested, "If in this matter `Amr ibn al-`As was associated he would solve most of the difficulties through his sagacity, but he would not be easily prepared to stabilise your authority unless he got the price he desired for it. If you are ready for this he would prove the best counsellor and helper." Mu'awiyah liked this suggestion, sent for `Amr ibn al-`As and discussed with him, and eventually it was settled that he would avenge `Uthman's blood by holding Amir al-mu'minin liable for it in exchange for the governorship of Egypt, and by whatever means possible would not let Mu'awiyah's authority in Syria suffer. Consequently, both of them fulfilled the agreement and kept their words fully.

Sermon 27: Indeed, surely jihad is one of the doors of Paradise ...

Exhorting people for jihad

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وقد قالها يستنهض بها الناس حين ورد خبر غزوالانبار بجيش معاوية فلم ينهضوا، وفيها يذكر فضل الجهاد، ويستنهض الناس، ويذكر علمه بالحرب، ويلقي عليهم التبعة لعدم طاعته

Indeed, surely jihad is one of the doors of Paradise, which Allah has opened for His chief friends. It is the dress of piety and the protective armour of Allah and His trustworthy shield. Whoever abandons it Allah covers him with the dress of disgrace and the clothes of distress. He is kicked with contempt and scorn, and his heart is veiled with screens (of neglect). Truth is taken away from him because of missing jihad. He has to suffer ignominy and justice is denied to him.

أَمَا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ الْجِهَادَ بَابٌ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ، فَتَحَهُ اللَّهُ لِحَاصَّةِ أَوْلِيَائِهِ، وَهُوَ لِبَاسُ التَّقْوَى، وَدِرْعُ اللَّهِ الْحَصِينَةُ، وَجُنَّةُ الْوَثِيقَةِ، فَمَنْ تَرَكَهُ رَغْبَةً عَنْهُ أَلْبَسَهُ اللَّهُ ثَوْبَ الدُّلِّ، وَسَمِلَهُ الْبَلَاءُ، وَدَيْتَ بِالصَّعَارِ وَالْقَمَاءِ وَضُرِبَ عَلَى قَلْبِهِ بِالْأَسْهَابِ وَأُذِيلَ الْحَقُّ مِنْهُ بِتَضْيِيعِ الْجِهَادِ، وَسِيمَ الْحَسَنِّ، وَمُنِعَ النَّصْفَ

Beware! I called you (insistently) to fight these people night and day, secretly and openly and exhorted you to attack them before they attacked you, because by Allah, no people have been attacked in the hearts of their houses but they suffered disgrace; but you put it off to others and forsook it till destruction befell you and your cities were occupied. The horsemen of Banu Ghamid¹ have reached al-Anbar and killed Hassan ibn Hassan al-Bakri. They have removed your horsemen from the garrison.

أَلَا وَإِنِّي قَدْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ إِلَى قِتَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا، وَسِرًّا وَإِعْلَانًا، وَقُلْتُ لَكُمْ: اغْزَوْهُمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَغْزَوْكُمْ، فَوَاللَّهِ مَا غَزِيَ قَوْمٌ قَطُّ فِي عُمْرِ دَارِهِمْ إِلَّا دَلُّوا، فَتَوَاكَلْتُمْ وَتَحَادَلْتُمْ حَتَّى شَنَنْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ الْعَارَاثَ وَمُلِكْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ الْأَوْطَانَ. وَهَذَا أَحْوُ غَامِدٍ قَدْ وَرَدَتْ حَيْلُهُ الْأَنْبَارَ وَقَدْ قَتَلَ حَسَنًا بَنَ حَسَانَ الْبَكْرِيِّ، وَأَزَالَ حَيْلَكُمْ عَنْ مَسَاحِلِهَا

I have come to know that every one of them entered upon Muslim women and other women under protection of Islam and took away their ornaments from legs, arms, necks and ears and no woman could resist it except by pronouncing the verse,

“We are for Allah and to Him we shall return.” (2:156)

Then they got back laden with wealth without any wound or loss of life. If any Muslim dies of grief after all this he is not to be blamed but rather there is justification for him before me.

وَلَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي أَنَّ الرَّجُلَ مِنْهُمْ كَانَ يَدْخُلُ عَلَى الْمَرْأَةِ الْمُسْلِمَةِ، وَالْأُخْرَى الْمِعَاهِدَةَ فَيَنْتَرِعُ حِجْلَهَا وَقَلْبَهَا وَقَلَابِدَهَا، وَرِعَائِهَا مَا تَمْتَنِعُ مِنْهُ إِلَّا بِالِاسْتِرْحَامِ وَالِاسْتِرْحَامِ ثُمَّ انْصَرَفُوا وَافْرِينَ مَا نَالَ رَجُلًا مِنْهُمْ كَلِمٌ وَلَا أُرْبِقُ لَهُمْ دَمًا، فَلَوْ أَنَّ امْرَأً مُسْلِمًا مَاتَ مِنْ بَعْدِ هَذَا أَسْفًا مَا كَانَ بِهِ مُلُومًا، بَلْ كَانَ بِهِ عِنْدِي جَدِيرًا.

How strange! How strange! By Allah my heart sinks to see the unity of these people on their wrong and your dispersion from your right. Woe and grief befall you. You have become the target at which arrows are shot. You are being killed and you do not kill. You are being attacked but you do not attack. Allah is being disobeyed and you remain agreeable to it.

When I ask you to move against them in summer you say it is hot weather. Spare us till heat subsides from us. When I order you to march in winter you say it is severely cold; give us time till cold clears from us. These are just excuses for evading heat and cold because if you run away from heat and cold, you would be, by Allah, running away (in a greater degree) from sword (war).

فَيَا عَجَبًا! عَجَبًا. وَاللَّهِ. يُمِثُّ الْقَلْبَ وَيَجْلِبُ الْهَمَّ مِنَ اجْتِمَاعِ هؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ عَلَى بَاطِلِهِمْ، وَتَفَرُّقِكُمْ عَنْ حَقِّكُمْ! ففُجِحًا لَكُمْ وَتَرَحًّا حِينَ صرْتُمْ غَرَضًا يُرْمَى يُعَارُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا تُغَيِّرُونَ، وَتُعَزُونَ وَلَا تَعُورُونَ، وَيُعَصَى اللَّهُ وَتَرَضُونَ! فَإِذَا أَمَرْتُمْ بِالسَّيْرِ إِلَيْهِمْ فِي أَيَّامِ الْحَرِّ قُلْتُمْ: هَذِهِ حِمَارَةُ الْقَيْظِ أَمِهَلْنَا يُسَبِّحُ عَنَّا الْحَرُّ وَإِذَا أَمَرْتُمْ بِالسَّيْرِ إِلَيْهِمْ فِي الشِّتَاءِ قُلْتُمْ: هَذِهِ صَبَاةُ الْقُرَى، أَمِهَلْنَا يُنْسَلِخُ عَنَّا الْبَرْدُ، كُلُّ هَذَا فِرَارًا مِنَ الْحَرِّ وَالْقُرَى؛ فَإِذَا كُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْحَرِّ وَالْقُرَى تَفْرُونَ فَأَنْتُمْ وَاللَّهِ مِنَ السَّيْفِ أَفْرُ!

O you semblance of men, not men, your intelligence is that of children and your wit is that of the occupants of the curtained canopies (women kept in seclusion from the outside world). I wish I had not seen you nor known you. By Allah, this acquaintance has brought about shame and resulted in repentance. May Allah fight you! You have filled my heart with pus and loaded my bosom with rage. You made me drink mouthful of grief one after the other.

You shattered my counsel by disobeying and leaving me so much so that Quraysh started saying that the son of Abi Talib is brave but does not know (tactics of) war. Allah bless them! Is any one of them fiercer in war and older in it than I am? I rose for it although yet within twenties, and here I am, have crossed over sixty, but one who is not obeyed can have no opinion.

يَا أَشْبَاهَ الرِّجَالِ وَلَا رِجَالًا! حُلُومُ الْأَطْفَالِ، وَعُقُولُ رِيَابِ الْحِجَالِ لَوَدِدْتُ أَنِّي لَمْ أَرَكُمُ وَلَمْ أَعْرِفَكُم مَعْرِفَةً. وَاللَّهِ. جَرَّتْ نَدْمًا، وَأَعْقَبْتَسَدَمًا قَاتِلَكُمْ اللَّهُ! لَقَدْ مَلَأْتُمْ قَلْبِي فَيْحًا وَشَحْنْتُمْ صَدْرِي غَيْظًا، وَجَرَعْتُمُونِي نَعَبَ التَّهْمَامِ أَنْفَاسًا وَأَفْسَدْتُمْ عَلَيَّ رَأْيِي بِالْعُصْيَانِ وَالْخِذْلَانِ، حَتَّى قَالَتْ قُرَيْشٌ: إِنَّ ابْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ رَجُلٌ شَجَاعٌ، وَلَكِنْ لَا عِلْمَ لَهُ بِالْحَرْبِ. اللَّهُ أَبُوهُمْ! وَهَلْ أَحَدٌ

مِنْهُمْ أَشَدُّ هَا مِرَاسًا وَأَقْدَمُ فِيهَا مَقَامًا مِثِّي؟! لَقَدْ نَهَضْتُ فِيهَا وَمَا بَلَغْتُ الْعِشْرِينَ، وَهَا أَنَا إِذَا
قَدْ دَرَفْتُ عَلَى السَّبْتَيْنِ! وَلَكِنْ لَا رَأْيَ لِمَنْ لَا يُطَاعُ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 27

- (1) *Al-Jahiz, al-Bayan, I, 170, II, 66;*
- (2) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, II, 236;*
- (3) *al-Dinawari, al-'Akhbar, 211;*
- (4) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, II, 474;*
- (5) *al-Mubarrad, al-Kamil, I, 13;*
- (6) *Abu al-Faraj, al-'Aghani, XV, 45;*
- (7) *Idem., Maqatil, 27;*
- (8) *al-Saduq, Ma`ani, 309;*
- (9) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, II, 442;*
- (10) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, II, 403;*
- (11) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-'Iqd, IV, 69;*
- (12) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, * 160-164;*
- (13) *al-Kulayni, Furu` al-Kafi, IV, 5.*

Notes

1. After the battle of Siffin, Mu`awiyah had spread killing and bloodshed all round, and started encroachments on cities within Amir al-mu'minin's domain. In this connection he deputed Sufyan ibn `Awf al-Ghamidi with a force of six thousand to attack Hit, al-Anbar and al-Mada'in. First he reached al-Mada'in but finding it deserted proceeded to al-Anbar. Here a contingent of five hundred soldiers was posted as guard from Amir al-mu'minin's side, but it could not resist the fierce army of Mu`awiyah. Only a hundred men stuck to their position and they did face them stoutly as far as they could but collecting together the enemy's force made such a severe attack that they too could no more resist and the chief of the contingent Hassan ibn Hassan al-Bakri was killed along with thirty others. When the battlefield was clear the enemy ransacked al-Anbar with full freedom and left the city completely destroyed.

When Amir al-mu'minin got the news of this attack he ascended the pulpit, and exhorted the people for crushing the enemy and called them to jihad, but from no quarter was there any voice or response. He alighted from the pulpit utterly disgusted and worried and in the same condition set off for the enemy on foot. When people observed this their sense of self respect and shame was also awakened and they too followed him. Amir al-mu'minin stopped at an-Nukhaylah. People then surrounded and insisted upon him to get back as they were enough with the enemy. When their insistence increased beyond reckoning, Amir al-mu'minin consented to return and Sa`id ibn Qays al-Hamdani proceeded forward with a force of eight thousand. But Sufyan ibn `Awf al-Ghamidi had gone, so Sa`id came back without any encounter. When Sa`id reached Kufah then - according to the version of Ibn Abi'l-Hadid - Amir al-mu'minin was so deeply grieved and indisposed during those days to an extent of not wishing to enter the mosque, but instead sat in the corridor of his residence (that connects the entrance of the mosque) and wrote this sermon and gave it to his slave Sa`d to read it over to the people. But al-Mubarrad (al-Kamil, vol. 1, pp. 104-107) has related from `Ubaydullah ibn Hafs al-Taymi, Ibn `A'ishah, that Amir al-mu'minin delivered this sermon on a high pace in an-Nukhaylah. Ibn Maytham has held this view preferable.

Sermon 28: Surely, the world has turned its back ...

About the transient nature of this world and importance of the next world

This is a section of the Sermon (45) that begins: 'All praise belongs to Allah from Whose mercy no one loses hope...'. It contains 11 exhortations

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

[وهو فصل من الخطبة التي أولها: «الحمد لله غير مقنوط من رحمته» وفيه أحد عشر

تنبيها]

Surely this world has turned its back and announced its departure while the next world has appeared forward and proclaimed its approach. Today is the day of preparation while tomorrow is the day of race. The place to proceed to is Paradise while the place of doom is Hell. Is there no one to offer repentance over his faults before his death? Or is there no one to perform virtuous acts before the day of trial?

أَمَا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا قَدْ أَدْبَرَتْ، وَأَذَنْتْ بِوَدَاعٍ، وَإِنَّ الْآخِرَةَ قَدْ أَقْبَلَتْ، وَأَشْرَفَتْ بِاطِّلَاعٍ
أَلَا وَإِنَّ الْيَوْمَ الْمِضْمَارَ وَعَدَا السِّبْاقِ، وَالسَّبْقَةَ الْجَنَّةِ، وَالْعَايَةَ النَّارِ؛ أَفَلَا تَأْتِبُ مِنْ خَطِيئَتِهِ قَبْلَ
مَنِيِّتِهِ أَلَا عَامِلٌ لِنَفْسِهِ قَبْلَ يَوْمِ بُؤْسِهِ

Beware, surely you are in the days of hopes behind which stands death. Whoever acts during the days of his hope before approach of his death, his action would benefit him and his death would not harm him. But he who fails to act during the period of hope before the approach of death his action is a loss and his death is a harm to him.

Beware, and act during a period of attraction just as you act during a period of dread. Beware, surely I have not seen a coveter for Paradise asleep nor a dreader from Hell to be asleep. Beware, he whom right does not benefit must suffer the harm of the wrong, and he whom guidance does not keep firm will be led away by misguidance towards destruction.

أَلَا وَإِنَّكُمْ فِي أَيَّامٍ أَمَلٍ مِنْ وَرَائِهِ أَجَلٌ، فَمَنْ عَمِلَ فِي أَيَّامٍ أَمَلِهِ قَبْلَ حُضُورِ أَجَلِهِ فَقَدْ نَفَعَهُ
عَمَلُهُ، وَمَنْ يَضُرُّهُ أَجَلُهُ؛ وَمَنْ فَصَّرَ فِي أَيَّامٍ أَمَلِهِ قَبْلَ حُضُورِ أَجَلِهِ، فَقَدْ خَسِرَ عَمَلَهُ، وَضُرَّ
أَجَلُهُ. أَلَا فَاعْمَلُوا فِي الرَّغْبَةِ كَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ فِي الرَّهْبَةِ الْأَوَّلِيَّ لَمْ أَرَ كَالجَنَّةِ نَامَ طَالِبُهَا، وَلَا كَالنَّارِ
نَامَ هَارِبُهَا، أَلَا وَإِنَّهُ مَنْ لَا يَنْفَعُهُ الْحَقُّ يَضُرُّهُ الْبَاطِلُ، وَمَنْ لَا يَسْتَقِمُ بِهِ الْهُدَى يَجُرُّ بِهِ الضَّلَالُ
إِلَى الرَّدَى

Beware, you have been ordered insistently to march and been guided how to provide for the journey. Surely the most frightening thing which I am afraid of about you is to follow desires and to widen the hopes. Provide

for yourself from this world what would save you tomorrow (on the Day of Judgement).

أَلَا وَإِنَّكُمْ قَدْ أُمِرْتُمْ بِالظَّنِّ وَدُلُّتُمْ عَلَى الرَّادِ. وَإِنَّ أَحْوَفَ مَا أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ: اتِّبَاعُ الْهَوَى، وَطُولُ الْأَمَلِ. نَزَّوْدُوا فِي الدُّنْيَا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا مَا تَحْزُونَ بِهِ أَنْفُسَكُمْ عَدَاً

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: If there could be an utterance which would drag by neck towards renunciation in this world and force to action for the next world, it is this sermon. It is enough to cut off from the entanglements of hopes and to ignite the flames of preaching (for virtue) and warning (against vice).

His most wonderful words in this sermon are “Today is the day of preparation while tomorrow is the day of race. The place to proceed to is Paradise while the place of doom is Hell,” because besides sublimity of words, greatness of meaning, true similes and factual illustrations, there are wonderful secrets and delicate implications therein.

قال السيد الشريف رضي الله عنه . وأقول: إنَّه لو كان كلامٌ يأخذ بالأعناق إلى الزهد في الدنيا، ويضطر إلى عمل الآخرة لكان هذا الكلام، وكفى به قاطعاً لعلائق الآمال، وقادحاً زناد الاتعاض والازدجار.

وَمِنْ أَعْجَبِهِ قَوْلُهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: أَلَا وَإِنَّ الْيَوْمَ الْمَضْمَارَ وَعَدَاً السَّبَّاقَ، وَالسَّبَّاقُ الْجَنَّةُ وَالْعَايَةَ النَّارَ فَإِنَّ فِيهِ . مع فخامة اللفظ، وعظم قدر المعنى، وصادق التمثيل، وواقع التشبيه . سرّاً عجيباً، ومعنى لطيفاً،

It is his saying that he place to proceed to is Paradise while the place of doom is Hell. Here he has used two different words to convey two different meanings. For Paradise he has used the word “the place to proceed to” but for Hell this word has not been used. One proceeds to a place which he likes and desires, and this can be true for Paradise only.

Hell does not have the attractiveness that it may be liked or proceeded to. We seek Allah’s protection from it. Since for Hell it was not proper to say “to be proceeded to” Amir al-mu’minin employed the word “doom” implying the last place of stay where one reaches even though it may mean grief and worry or happiness and pleasure.

وهو قوله عليه السلام: والسَّبَّاقُ الْجَنَّةُ، وَالْعَايَةُ النَّارُ، فخالف بين اللفظين لاختلاف المعنيين، ولم يقل: «السَّبَّاقُ النَّارُ» كما قال: السَّبَّاقُ الْجَنَّةُ، لان الاستباق إنما يكون إلى أمر محبوبٍ، وغرض مطلوبٍ، وهذه صفة الجنة، وليس هذا المعنى موجوداً في النار، نعوذ بالله منها! فلم يجوز أن يقول: «والسَّبَّاقُ النَّارُ»، بل قال: وَالْعَايَةُ النَّارُ، لان الغاية قد ينتهي إليها من لا يسره الانتهاء إليها ومن يسره ذلك،

This word is capable of conveying both senses. However, it should be taken in the sense of “al-masir” or “al-ma’al”, that is, last resort. The Qur’anic verse is

‘Say thou: “Enjoy ye (your pleasures yet a while), for your last resort is unto the (hell) fire” (14:30).

Here to say “sabqatakum” that is, “the place for you to proceed to” in place of the word “masirakum” that is, your doom or last resort would not be proper in any way. Think and ponder over it and see how wondrous is its inner implication and how far its depth goes with beauty. Amir al-mu’minin’s utterance is generally on these lines. In some versions the word “sabqah” is shown as “subqah” which is applied to reward fixed for the winner in a race. However, both the meanings are near each other, because a reward is not for an undesirable action but for good and commendable performance.

فصلح أن يعبرَ بما عن الامرين معاً، فهي في هذا الموضع كالمصير والمآل، قال الله عزّوجلّ: (قُلْ تَمَتَّعُوا فَإِنَّ مَصِيرَكُمْ إِلَى النَّارِ)، ولا يجوز في هذا الموضع أن يقال: سبقتكم إلى النار، فتأمل ذلك، فباطنه عجيب، وغوره بعيد، وكذلك أكثر كلامه (عليه السلام). وفي رواية أخرى: «والسُّبْقَةُ» بضم السين، والسُّبْقَةُ اسم عندهم لما يجعل للسابق إذا سبق من مال أو عَرَض، والمعنيان متقاربان، لان ذلك لا يكون جزاءً على فعل الامر المذموم، وإنما يكون جزاءً على فعل الامر المحمود.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 28

- (1) *Al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, * 138;*
- (2) *al-Jahiz, al-Bayan, I, 171;*
- (3) *al-Baqillani, I'jaz, 222;*
- (4) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 35;*
- (5) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-'Iqd, II, 365;*
- (6) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, II, 235;*
- (7) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, II, 413;*
- (8) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, II, 633.*

Sermon 29: O people, who are together with their bodies, but

...

About those who found pretexts at the time of jihad

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

بعد غارة الضحاك بن قيس صاحب معاوية على الحاج بعد قصة الحكمين

[وفيها يستنهض أصحابه لما حدث في الاطراف]

O people, your bodies are together but your desires are divergent. Your talk softens the hard stones and your action attracts your enemy towards you. You claim in your sittings that you would do this and that, but when fighting approaches, you say (to war), “turn thou away” (i.e. flee away). If one calls you (for help) the call receives no heed. And he who deals hardly with you his heart has no solace.

The excuses are amiss like that of a debtor unwilling to pay. The ignoble cannot ward off oppression. Right cannot be achieved without effort. Which is the house besides this one to protect? And with which leader (Imam) would you go for fighting after me?

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، الْمُجْتَمِعَةُ أُنْدَانُهُمْ، الْمُخْتَلِفَةُ أَهْوَاؤُهُمْ، كَلَامُهُمْ يُوهِي الصُّمَّ الصَّلَابِ، وَفِعْلُهُمْ يُطْمِعُ فِيكُمْ الْأَعْدَاءَ! تَقُولُونَ فِي الْمَجَالِسِ: كَيْتَ وَكَيْتَ، فَإِذَا جَاءَ الْقِتَالُ قُلْتُمْ: حَيْدِي حَيْدِي! مَا عَزَّتْ دَعْوَةُ مَنْ دَعَاكُمْ، وَلَا اسْتَرَاحَ قَلْبُ مَنْ قَاسَاكُمْ، أَعَالِيلُ بِأَضَالِيلِ، دِفَاعَ ذِي الدِّينِ الْمَطُولِ، لَا يَمْنَعُ الضَّيْمَ الدَّلِيلُ! وَلَا يُدْرِكُ الْحَقُّ إِلَّا بِالْجِدِّ! أَيُّ دَارٍ بَعْدَ دَارِكُمْ تَمُنُّونَ، وَمَعَ أَيِّ إِمَامٍ بَعْدِي تُقَاتِلُونَ؟

By Allah! Deceived is one whom you have deceived while, by Allah, he who is successful with you receives only useless arrows! You are like broken arrows thrown over the enemy. By Allah! I am now in the position that I neither confirm your views nor hope for your support, nor challenge the enemy through you. What is the matter with you? What is your ailment? What is your cure? The other party is also men of your shape (but they are so different in character). Will there be talk without action, carelessness without piety and greed in things not right? !¹

الْمَعْرُورُ وَاللَّهُ مَنْ عَرَزْتُمُوهُ، وَمَنْ فَازَ بِكُمْ فَازَ بِالسَّهْمِ الْأَحْيَبِ، وَمَنْ رَمَى بِكُمْ فَقَدْ رَمَى بِأَفْوَقٍ نَاصِلِ. أَصْبَحْتُ وَاللَّهِ لَا أَصَدِّقُ قَوْلَكُمْ، وَلَا أَطْمَعُ فِي نَصْرِكُمْ، وَلَا أُوعِدُ الْعَدُوَّ بِكُمْ. مَا بَالِكُمْ؟ مَا دَوَاؤُكُمْ؟ مَا طِبُّكُمْ؟ الْقَوْمُ رِجَالٌ أَمْثَالِكُمْ، أَقُولُ بَعِيرٍ عِلْمِ! وَعَقْلَةٌ مِنْ غَيْرِ وَرَعٍ! وَطَمَعًا فِي غَيْرِ حَقِّ؟!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 29

(1) *Al-Jahiz, al-Bayan, I, 170;*

(2) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-Imamah, I, 150;*

- (3) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, IV, 71;*
- (4) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, II, 380;*
- (5) *al-Qadi al-Nu`man, Da`a'im, I, 391;*
- (6) *Ibn `Asakir, Ta'rikh, I, 306;*
- (7) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, I, 112;*
- (8) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, II, 483;*
- (9) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, * 158;*
- (10) *al-Kulayni, al-Kafi.*

Notes

1. After the battle of Nahrawan, Mu`awiyah sent ad-Dahhak ibn Qays al-Fihri with a force of four thousand towards Kufah with the purpose that he should create disorder in this area, kill whomever he finds and keep busy in bloodshed and destruction so that Amir al-mu'minin should find no rest or peace of mind. He set off for the achievement of this aim, and shedding innocent blood and spreading destruction all round reached upto the place of ath-Tha`labiyyah. Here he attacked a caravan of pilgrims (to Mecca) and looted all their wealth and belongings. Then at al-Qutqutanah he killed the nephew of `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud, the Holy Prophet's companion, namely `Amr ibn `Uways ibn Mas`ud together with his followers. In this manner he created havoc and bloodshed all round. When Amir al-mu'minin came to know of this rack and ruin he called his men to battle in order to put a stop to this vandalism, but people seemed to avoid war. Being disgusted with their lethargy and lack of enthusiasm he ascended the pulpit and delivered this sermon, wherein he has roused the men to feel shame and not to try to avoid war but to rise for the protection of their country like brave men without employing wrong and lame excuses. At last Hujr ibn `Adi al-Kindi rose with a force of four thousand for crushing the enemy and overtook him at Tadmur. Only a small encounter had taken place between the parties when night came on and he fled away with only nineteen killed on his side. In Amir al-mu'minin's army also two persons fell as martyrs.

Sermon 30: If I had ordered it, ...

Disclosing real facts about assassination of `Uthman Ibn `Affan¹

Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في معنى قتل عثمان

[و هو حكم له على عثمان و على الناس بما فعلوا و براءة له من دمه]

If I had ordered his assassination I should have been his killer, but if I had refrained others from killing him I would have been his helper. The position was that he who helped him cannot now say that he is better than the one who deserted him while he who deserted him cannot say that he is better than the one who helped him. I am putting before you his case. He appropriated (wealth) and did it badly. You protested against it and committed excess therein. With Allah lies the real verdict between the appropriator and the protester.

لَوْ أَمَرْتُ بِهِ لَكُنْتُ قَاتِلًا، أَوْ نَهَيْتُ عَنْهُ لَكُنْتُ نَاصِرًا، غَيْرَ أَنَّ مَنْ نَصَرَهُ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يَقُولَ: حَدَلَهُ مَنْ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ، وَمَنْ حَدَلَهُ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يَقُولَ: نَصَرَهُ مَنْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِنِّي. وَأَنَا جَامِعٌ لَكُمْ أَمْرَهُ، اسْتَأْتَرْتُمْ فَأَسَاءَ الْأَثَرَةَ وَجَرَعْتُمْ فَأَسَأْتُمْ الْجَزَعَ وَاللَّهُ حُكْمٌ وَقَعَ فِي الْمُسْتَأْتَرِ وَالْجَزَاعِ .

Alternative Sources for Sermon 30

(1) *Al-Baladhuri, Ansab, V, 98, 101.*

Notes

1. `Uthman is the first Umayyad Caliph of Islam who ascended the Caliphate on the 1st Muharram, 24 A.H. at the age of seventy and after having wielded full control and authority over the affairs of the Muslims for twelve years was killed at their hands on the 18th Dhi'l-hijjah, 35 A.H. and buried at Hashsh Kawkab.

This fact cannot be denied that `Uthman's killing was the result of his weaknesses and the black deeds of his officers, otherwise, there is no reason that Muslims should have unanimously agreed on killing him while no one except a few persons of his house stood up to support and defend him. Muslims would have certainly given consideration to his age, seniority, prestige and distinction of companionship of the Prophet but his ways and deeds had so marred the atmosphere that no one seemed prepared to sympathise and side with him. The oppression and excesses perpetrated on high ranking companions of the Prophet had roused a wave of grief and anger among the Arab tribes. Everyone was infuriated and looked at his haughtiness and wrong doings with disdainful eyes. Thus, due to Abu Dharr's disgrace, dishonour and exile Banu Ghifar and their associate tribes, due to `Abdullah ibn Mas'ud's merciless beating Banu Hudhayl and their associates, due to breaking of the ribs of `Ammar ibn Yasir, Banu Makhzum and their associates Banu Zuhrah, and due to the plot for the killing of Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, Banu Taym all had a storm of rage in their hearts. The Muslims of other cities were also brimful of complaints at the hands of his officers who under intoxication of wealth and the effects of luxury did whatever they wished and crushed whomever they wanted. They had neither fear of punishment from the centre nor apprehension of any enquiry. People were fluttering to get out of their talons of oppression but no one was ready to listen to their cries of pain and restlessness; feelings of

hatred were rising but no care was taken to put them down. The companions of the Prophet were also sick of him as they saw that peace was destroyed, administration was topsy-turvy and Islam's features were being metamorphosed. The poor and the starving were craving for dried crusts while Banu Umayyah were rolling in wealth. The Caliphate had become a handle for belly-filling and a means of amassing wealth. Consequently, they too did not lag behind in preparing the ground for killing him. Rather, it was at their letters and messages that people from Kufah, Basrah and Egypt had collected in Medina. Observing this behaviour of the people of Medina, `Uthman wrote to Mu`awiyah: 'So now, certainly the people of Medina have turned heretics, have turned faith against obedience and broken the (oath of) allegiance. So you send to me the warriors of Syria on brisk and sturdy horses'.

The policy of action adopted by Mu`awiyah on receipt of this letter also throws light on the condition of the companions. Historian at-Tabari writes after this: When the letter reached Mu`awiyah he pondered over it and considered it bad to openly oppose the companions of the Prophet since he was aware of their unanimity.

In view of these circumstances to regard the killing of `Uthman as a consequence of merely enthusiasm and temporary feelings and to hurl it at some insurgents is to veil the fact, since all the factors of his opposition existed within Medina itself, while those coming from without had collected for seeking redress of their grievances at their call. Their aim was only improvement of the position, not killing or bloodshed. If their complaints had been heard then the occasion for this bloodshed would not have arisen.

What happened was that when, having been disgusted with the oppression and excesses of `Abdullah ibn Sa`d ibn Abi Sarh, who was foster brother of `Uthman, the people of Egypt proceeded towards Medina and camped in the valley of Dhakhushub near the city. They sent a man with a letter to `Uthman and demanded that oppression should be stopped, the existing ways should be changed and repentance should be offered for the future. But instead of giving a reply `Uthman got this man turned out of the house and did not regard their demands worth attention. On this these people entered the city to raise their voice against this pride and haughtiness, and complained to the people of this behaviour besides other excesses. On the other side many people from Kufah and Basrah had also arrived with their complaints and they, after joining these ones, proceeded forward with the backing of the people of Medina and confined `Uthman within his house, although there was no restriction on his going and coming to the mosque. But in his sermon on the very first Friday he severely rebuked these people and even held them accursed, whereupon people got infuriated and threw pebbles at him as a result of which he lost control and fell from the pulpit. After a few days his coming and going to the mosque was also banned.

When `Uthman saw matters deteriorating to this extent he implored Amir al-mu'minin very submissively to find some way for his rescue and to disperse the people in whatever way he could. Amir al-mu'minin said, "On what terms can I ask them to leave when their demands are justified?" `Uthman said, "I authorise you in this matter. Whatever terms you would settle with them I would be bound by them." So Amir al-mu'minin went and met the Egyptians and talked to them. They consented to get back on the condition that all the tyrannies should be wiped off and Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr be made governor by removing Ibn Abi Sarh. Amir al-mu'minin came back and put their demand before `Uthman who accepted it without any hesitation and said that to get over these excesses time was required. Amir al-mu'minin pointed out that for matters concerning Medina delay had no sense. However, for other places so much time could be allowed that the Caliph's message could reach them. `Uthman insisted that for Medina also three days were needed. After discussion with the Egyptians Amir al-mu'minin agreed to it also and took all the responsibility thereof upon himself. Then they dispersed at his suggestion. Some of them went to Egypt with Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr while some went to the valley of Dhakhushub and stayed there and this whole matter ended. On the second day of this event Marwan ibn al-Hakam said to `Uthman, "It is good, these people have gone, but to stop people coming from other cities you should issue a statement so that they should not come this way and sit quiet at their places and that statement should be that some people collected in Medina on hearing some irresponsible talk but when they came to know that whatever they heard was wrong they were satisfied and have gone back." `Uthman did not want to speak such a clear lie but Marwan convinced him and he agreed, and speaking in the Holy Prophet's mosque, he said:

These Egyptians had received some news about their Caliph and when satisfied that they were all baseless and wrong they went back to their cities.

No sooner he said this than there was great hue and cry in the mosque, and people began to shout to `Uthman, "Offer repentance, fear Allah; what is this lie you are uttering?" `Uthman was confused in this commotion and had to offer repentance. Consequently, he turned to the Ka`bah, moaned in the audience of Allah and returned to his house.

Probably after this very event Amir al-mu'minin advised `Uthman that, "You should openly offer repentance about your past misdeeds so that these uprisings should subside for good otherwise if tomorrow people of some other place come you will again cling to my neck to rid you of them." Consequently, he delivered a speech in the Prophet's mosque wherein admitting his mistakes he offered repentance and swore to remain careful in future. He told the people that when he alighted from the pulpit their representatives should meet him, and he would remove their grievances and meet their demands. On this people acclaimed this action of his and washed away their ill-feelings with tears to a great extent. When he reached his house after finishing from here Marwan sought permission to say something but `Uthman's wife Na'ilah bint Farafisah intervened. Turning to Marwan she said, "For Allah's sake you keep quiet. You would say only such a thing as would bring but death to him." Marwan took it ill and retorted, "You have no right to interfere in these matters. You are the daughter of that very person who did not know till his death how to perform ablution." Na'ilah replied with fury, "You are wrong, and are laying a false blame. Before uttering anything about my father you should have cast a glance on the features of your father. But for the consideration of that old man I would have spoken things at which people would have shuddered but would have confirmed every such word." When `Uthman saw the conversation getting prolonged he stopped them and asked Marwan to tell him what he wished.

Marwan said, "What is it you have said in the mosque, and what repentance you have offered? In my view sticking to the sin was a thousand times better than this repentance because however much the sins may multiply there is always scope for repentance, but repentance by force is no repentance. You have said what you have but now see the consequences of this open announcement, that crowds of people are at your door. Now go forward and fulfil their demands." `Uthman then said, "Well, I have said what I have said, now you deal with these people. It is not in my power to deal with them." Consequently, finding out his implied consent Marwan came out and addressing the people spoke out, "Why have you assembled here? Do you intend to attack or to ransack? Remember, you cannot easily snatch away power from our hands, take out the idea from your hearts that you would subdue us. We are not to be subdued by anyone. Take away your black faces from here. Allah may disgrace and dishonour you."

When people noticed this changed countenance and altered picture they rose from there full of anger and rage and went straight to Amir al-mu'minin and related to him the whole story. On hearing it Amir al-mu'minin was infuriated and immediately went to `Uthman and said to him, "Good Heavens. How badly you have behaved with the Muslims. You have forsaken faith for the sake of a faithless and characterless man and have lost all wit. At least you should have regard and consideration for your own promise. What is this that at Marwan's betokening you have set off with folded eyes. Remember he will throw you in such a dark well that you will never be able to come out of it. You have become the carrier animal of Marwan so that he can ride on you howsoever he desires and put you on whatever wrong way he wishes. In future I shall never intervene in your affair nor tell people anything. Now you should manage your own affairs."

Saying all this Amir al-mu'minin got back and Na'ilah got the chance, she said to `Uthman, "Did I not tell you to get rid of Marwan otherwise he would put such a stain on you that it would not be removed despite all effort. Well, what is the good in following the words of one who is without any respect among the people and low before their eyes. Make `Ali agree otherwise remember that restoring the disturbed state of affairs is neither within your power nor in that of Marwan." `Uthman was impressed by this and sent a man after Amir al-mu'minin but he refused to meet him. There was no siege around `Uthman but shame deterred him. With what face could he come out of the house? But there was no way without coming out. Consequently, he came out quietly in the gloom of night and reaching Amir al-mu'minin's place, he moaned his helplessness and loneliness, offered excuses, and

also assured him of keeping promises but Amir al-mu'minin said, "You make a promise in the Prophet's mosque standing before all the people but it is fulfilled in this way that when people go to you they are rebuked and even abuses are hurled at them. When this is the state of your undertakings which the world has seen, then how and on what ground can I trust any word of yours in future. Do not have any expectation from me now. I am not prepared to accept any responsibility on your behalf. The tracks are open before you. Adopt whichever way you like and tread whatever track you choose." After this talk `Uthman came back and began blaming Amir al-mu'minin in retort to the effect that all the disturbances were rising at his instance and that he was not doing anything despite being able to do everything.

On this side the result of repentance was as it was. Now let us see the other side. When after crossing the border of Hijaz, Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr reached the place Aylah on the coast of the Red Sea people caught sight of a camel rider who was making his camel run so fast as though the enemy was chasing him. These people had some misgivings about him and therefore called him and enquired who he was. He said he was the slave of `Uthman. They enquired wherefore he was bound. He said Egypt. They enquired to whom he was going. He replied to the Governor of Egypt. People said that the Governor of Egypt was with them. To whom was he going then? He said he was to go to Ibn Abi Sarh. People asked him if any letter was with him. He denied. They asked for what purpose he was going. He said he did not know that. One of these people thought that his clothes should be searched. So the search was made, but nothing was found on him. Kinanah ibn Bishr at-Tujibi said, "See his water-skin." People said, "Leave him, how can there be a letter in water! Kinanah said, "You do not know what cunning these people play. " Consequently, the water-skin was opened and seen. There was a lead pipe in it wherein was a letter. When it was opened and read, the Caliph's order in it was that "When Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr and his party reaches you then from among them kill so and so, arrest so and so, and put so and so in jail, but you remain on your post." On reading this all were stunned and thus began to look at one another in astonishment.

A Persian hemistich says: Mind was just burst in astonishment as to what wonder it was!

Now proceeding forward was riding into the mouth of death, consequently they returned to Medina taking the slave with them. Reaching there they placed that letter before all the companions of the Prophet. Whoever heard this incident remained stunned with astonishment, and there was no one who was not abusing `Uthman. Afterwards a few companions went to `Uthman along with these people, and asked whose seal was there on this letter. He replied that it was his own. They enquired whose writing it was. He said it was his secretary's. They enquired whose slave was that man. He replied that it was his. They enquired whose riding beast it was. He replied that it was that of the Government. They enquired who had sent it. He said he had no knowledge of it. People then said, "Good Heavens. Everything is yours but you do not know who had sent it. If you are so helpless, you leave this Caliphate and get off from it so that such a man comes who can administer the affairs of the Muslims." He replied, "It is not possible that I should put off the dress of Caliphate which Allah has put on me. Of course, I would offer repentance." The people said, "Why should you speak of repentance which has already been flouted on the day when Marwan was representing you on your door, and whatever was wanting has been made up by this letter. Now we are not going to be duped into these bluffs. Leave the Caliphate and if our brethren stand in our way we will hold them up; but if they prepare for fighting we too will fight. Neither our hands are stiff nor our swords blunt. If you regard all Muslims equally and uphold justice hand over Marwan to us to enable us to enquire from him on whose strength and support he wanted to play with the precious lives of Muslims by writing this letter." But he rejected this demand and refused to hand over Marwan to them, whereupon people said that the letter had been written at his behest.

However, improving conditions again deteriorated and they ought to have deteriorated because despite lapse of the required time everything was just as it had been and not a jot of difference had occurred. Consequently, the people who had stayed behind in the valley of Dhakhub to watch the result of repentance again advanced like a flood and spread over the streets of Medina, and closing the borders from every side surrounded his house.

During these days of siege a companion of the Prophet, Niyar ibn `Iyad desired to talk to `Uthman, went to his house and called him. When he peeped out from the above he said, "O' `Uthman, for Allah's sake give up this Caliphate and save Muslims from this bloodshed." While he was just conversing, one of `Uthman's men aimed at him with an arrow and killed him, whereupon people were infuriated and shouted that Niyar's killer should be handed over to them. `Uthman said it was not possible that he would hand over his own support to them. This stubbornness worked like a fan on fire and in the height of fury people set fire to his door and began advancing for entering, when Marwan ibn al-Hakam, Sa`id ibn al-`As and Mughirah ibn al-Akhnas together with their contingents pounced upon the besiegers and killing and bloodshed started at his door. People wanted to enter the house but they were being pushed back. In the meanwhile, `Amr ibn Hazm al-Ansari whose house was adjacent to that of `Uthman opened his door and shouted for advancing from that side. Thus through this house the besiegers climbed on the roof of `Uthman's house and descending down from there drew their swords. Only a few scuffles had taken place when all except people of `Uthman's house, his well-wishers and Banu Umayyah ran away in the streets of Medina and a few hid themselves in the house of Umm Habibah bint Abi Sufyan (Mu`awiyah's sister) the rest were killed with `Uthman defending him to the last. (at-Tabaqat, Ibn Sa`d, vol. 3, Part 1, pp. 50-58; at-Tabari, vol. 1, pp. 2998-3025; al-Kamil, Ibn al-Athir, vol. 3, pp. 167-180; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 2, pp. 144-161).

At his killing several poets wrote elegies. A couplet from the elegy by Abu Hurayrah is presented: Today people have only one grief but I have two griefs - the loss of my money bag and the killing of `Uthman.

After observing these events the stand of Amir al-mu'minin becomes clear, namely that he was neither supporting the group that was instigating at `Uthman's killing nor can be included in those who stood for his support and defence but when he saw that what was said was not acted upon he kept himself aloof.

When both the parties are looked at then among the people who had raised their hands off from `Uthman's support are seen `A'ishah, and according to the popular versions (which is not right) the then living persons out of the ten Pre-informed ones (who had been pre-informed in this world by the Prophet for their being admitted in Paradise), out of those who took part in the consultative committee (formed for `Uthman's selection for Caliphate), ansar, original muhajirun, people who took part in the battle of Badr and other conspicuous and dignified individuals, while on the side (of Uthman) are seen only a few slaves of the Caliph and a few individuals from Banu Umayyah. If people like Marwan and Sa`id ibn al-`As cannot be given precedence over the original muhajirun their actions too cannot be given precedence over the actions of the latter. Again, if ijma` (consensus of opinion) is not meant for particular occasions only then it would be difficult to question this overwhelming unanimity of the companions.

Sermon 31: Don't meet Talhah ...

Before the commencement of the Battle of Jamal Amir al-mu'minin sent `Abdullah ibn `Abbas to az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwam with the purpose that he should advise him back to obedience, he said to him on that occasion:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)
لما أنفذ عبدالله بن العباس (رحمه الله) إلى الزبير
قبل وقوع الحرب يوم الجمل ليستفيئه إلى طاعته

Do not meet Talhah (ibn `Ubaydillah). If you meet him you will find him like an unruly bull whose horns are turned towards its ears. He rides a ferocious riding beast and says it has been tamed. But you meet az-Zubayr because he is soft-tempered. Tell him that your maternal cousin says that, “(It looks as if) in the Hijaz you knew me (accepted me), but (on coming here to) Iraq you do not know me (do not accept me). So, what has dissuaded (you) from what was shown (by you previously)?!”

لَاتُلْفِيَنَّ طَلْحَةَ، فَإِنَّكَ إِذَا تَلَقَّاهُ تَجِدُهُ كَالثَّوْرِ عَاقِصًا قَرْنُهُ يَرْكَبُ الصَّعْبِي وَيَقُولُ: هُوَ
الذَّلُولُ، وَلَكِنَّ الْقُرَيْشِيَّ، فَإِنَّهُ أَلْبَنُ عَرِيكَةً فَقُلْ لَهُ: يَقُولُ لَكَ ابْنُ خَالِكَ: عَرَفْتَنِي بِالْحِجَازِ
وَأَنْكَرْتَنِي بِالْعِرَاقِ، فَمَا عَدَا مِمَّا بَدَا

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: The last sentence of this sermon “fama `ada mimma bada” has been heard only from Amir al-mu'minin.

قال السيد الشريف: وهو (عليه السلام) أول من سمعت منه هذه الكلمة، أعني: «فَمَا

عَدَا مِمَّا بَدَا.»

Alternative Sources for Sermon 31

- (1) *Al-Jahiz, al-Bayan, II, 115;*
- (2) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, I, 115;*
- (3) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, IV, 314;*
- (4) *al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar, al-Muwaffaqiyyat, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, I, 171;*
- (5) *Ibn Khallikan, Wafayat al-a`yan, biographical account of Ibn al-Mu`allim, see `Abd al-Zahra', I, 412.*

Sermon 32: O people, we have been born in ...

About the disparagement of the world and categories of its people

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيهما يصف زمانه بالجور، ويقسم الناس فيه خمسة أصناف، ثم يزهّد في الدنيا

معنى جور الزمان

O people! We have been born in such a wrongful and thankless period wherein the virtuous is deemed vicious and the oppressor goes on advancing in his excess. We do not make use of what we know and do not discover what we do not know. We do not fear calamity till it befalls.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّا قَدْ أَصْبَحْنَا فِي دَهْرٍ عُنُودٍ وَزَمَنٍ كَنُودٍ يُعَدُّ فِيهِ الْمُحْسِنُ مُسِيئًا، وَيَزْدَادُ الظَّالِمُ فِيهِ عُنُودًا، لَا نَنْتَفِعُ بِمَا عَلِمْنَا، وَلَا نَسْأَلُ عَمَّا جَهِلْنَا، وَلَا نَتَّخِذُ قَارِعَةً حَتَّى تَحُلَّ بِنَا.

People are of four categories. Among them is one who is prevented from mischief only by his low position, lack of means and paucity of wealth.

فَالنَّاسُ عَلَى أَرْبَعَةِ أَصْنَافٍ: مِنْهُمْ مَنْ لَا يَمْنَعُهُ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَهَانَةٌ نَفْسِهِ، وَكِلَالَةٌ

حَدِيدِهِ وَنَضِيضُ وَفْرِهِ

Then there is he who has drawn his sword, openly commits mischief, has collected his horsemen and foot-men and has devoted himself to securing wealth, leading troops, rising on the pulpit and has allowed his faith to perish. How bad is the transaction that you allow (enjoyment of) this world to be a price for yourself as an alternative for what there is with Allah for you.

وَمِنْهُمْ الْمُصِلْتُ لِسَيْفِهِ، وَالْمَجْلِبُ بِسَيْرِهِ، وَالْمَجْلِبُ بِحَيْلِهِ وَرَجَلِهِ قَدْ أَشْرَطَ نَفْسَهُ وَأَوْبَقَ دِينَهُ لِحُطَامٍ يَنْتَهَرُهُ أَوْ مِقْنَبٍ يَفُودُهُ، أَوْ مِنْبَرٍ يَفْرَعُهُ وَلَيْسَ الْمُتَجَرُّ أَنْ تَرَى الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْسِكَ ثَمًّا، وَمِمَّا لَكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عِوَضًا!

And among them is he who seeks (benefits of) this world through actions meant for the next world, but does not seek (good of) the next world through actions of this world. He keeps his body calm (in dignity), raises small steps, holds up his clothes, embellishes his body for appearance of trustworthiness and uses the position of Allah's connivance as a means of committing sins.

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَطْلُبُ الدُّنْيَا بِعَمَلِ الْآخِرَةِ، وَلَا يَطْلُبُ الْآخِرَةَ بِعَمَلِ الدُّنْيَا، قَدْ طَامَنَ مِنْ شَخْصِهِ، وَقَارَبَ مِنْ حُطُوبِهِ، وَثَمَّرَ مِنْ ثَوْبِهِ، وَرَحِيفَ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ لِلْأَمَانَةِ، وَاتَّخَذَ سِتْرَ اللَّهِ دَرِيْعَةً إِلَى الْمُعْصِيَةِ

Then there is one whose weakness and lack of means have held him back from conquest of lands. This keeps down his position and he has named it

contentment and he clothes himself with the robe of renunciation although he has never had any connection with these qualities.

وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ أَقْعَدَهُ عَنْ طَلَبِ الْمَلِكِ ضُؤُولُهُ نَفْسِهِ وَأَنْقِطَاعُ سَبَبِهِ، فَقَصَّرَتْهُ الْحَالُ عَلَى حَالِهِ، فَتَحَلَّى بِاسْمِ الْقِنَاعَةِ، وَتَزَيَّنَ بِلِبَاسِ أَهْلِ الرَّهَادَةِ، وَلَيْسَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فِي مَرَاحٍ وَلَا مَعْدَى.

Then there remain a few people in whose case the remembrance of their return (to Allah on Doomsday) keeps their eyes bent, and the fear of Resurrection moves their tears. Some of them are scared away (from the world) and dispersed; some are frightened and subdued; some are quiet as if muzzled; some are praying sincerely, some are grief-stricken and pain-ridden whom fear has confined to namelessness and disgrace has shrouded them, so they are in (the sea of) bitter water, their mouths are closed and their hearts are bruised. They preached till they were tired, they were oppressed till they were disgraced and they were killed till they remained few in number.

وَبَقِيَ رِجَالٌ غَضَّ أَبْصَارَهُمْ ذِكْرُ الْمَرْجِعِ، وَأَرَاقَ دُمُوعِهِمْ خَوْفُ الْمَحْشَرِ، فَهُمْ بَيْنَ شَرِيدٍ نَادٍ وَخَائِفٍ مَقْمُوعٍ وَسَاكِتٍ مَكْعُومٍ وَدَاعٍ مُخْلِصٍ، وَتَكْلَانٍ مُوجِعٍ قَدْ أَحْمَلَتْهُمُ التَّقِيَّةُ وَشَمَلَتْهُمُ الدَّلَّةُ، فَهُمْ فِي بَحْرِ أَجَاغٍ أَفْوَاهُهُمْ ضَامِرَةٌ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ قَرِحَةٌ قَدْ وَعَظُوا حَتَّى مَلُّوا وَقَهَرُوا حَتَّى ذُلُّوا، وَقُتِلُوا حَتَّى قَلُّوا.

The world in your eyes should be smaller than the bark of acacia and the clippings of wool. Seek instruction from those who preceded you before those who follow you take instruction from you, and keep aloof from it realising its evil because it cuts off even from those who were more attached to it than you.

فَلْتَكُنِ الدُّنْيَا أَصْغَرَ فِي أَعْيُنِكُمْ مِنْ حُثَالَةِ الْقَرْظِ وَقُرَاصَةِ الْجَلَمِ وَاتَّعَظُوا بِمَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَتَّعِظَ بِكُمْ مَنْ بَعْدَكُمْ؛ وَارْضُوهَا دَمِيمَةً، فَإِنَّهَا قَدْ رَفَضَتْ مَنْ كَانَ أَشْغَفَ بِهَا مِنْكُمْ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Some ignorant persons attributed this sermon to Mu`awiyah but it is the speech of Amir al-mu'minin. There should be no doubt about it. What comparison is there between gold and clay or sweet and bitter water. This has been pointed out by the skilful guide and the expert critic `Amr ibn Bahr al-Jahiz as he has mentioned this sermon in his book, al-Bayan wa't-tabyin (vol. 2, pp. 59-61).

He has also mentioned who attributed it to Mu`awiyah and then states that it is most akin to be the speech of `Ali and most in accord with his way of categorising people and information about their oppression, disgrace, apprehension and fear. (On the other hand) we never found Mu`awiyah speaking on the lives of renunciates or worshippers.

قال السيد الشريف: أقول: وهذه الخطبة ربما نسبها من لا علم له بها إلى معاوية، وهي من كلام أمير المؤمنين (عليه السلام) الذي لا يشك فيه، وأين الذهب من الرغام! والعذب من الاجاج! وقد دلّ على ذلك الدليل الحريّيت ونقده الناقد البصير عمرو بن بحر الجاحظ؛

فإنه ذكر هذه الخطبة في كتابه «البيان والتبيين» وذكر من نسبتها إلى معاوية، ثم تكلم من بعدها بكلام في معناها، جملة أنه قال: وهذا الكلام بكلام علي (عليه السلام) أشبه، ومذهبه في تصنيف الناس وفي الاخبار عما هم عليه من القهر والاذلال ومن التقية والخوف أليق. قال: ومتى وجدنا معاوية في حال من الاحوال يسلك في كلامه مسلك الزهاد، ومذاهب العباد!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 32

- (1) *Ibn Talhah, Matalib, I, 90;*
- (2) *al-Jahiz, al-Bayan, I, 175;*
- (3) *al-Dhahabi, Mizan, II, 276;*
- (4) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, II, 237;*
- (5) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, * II, 173;*
- (6) *al-Baqillani, I`jaz, I, 197.*

Sermon 33: Verily, God sent Muhammad (S) ...

At the time of setting out for the Battle of Jamal

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

عند خروجه لقتال أهل البصرة

[وفيها حكمة مبعث الرسل، ثم يذكر فضله ويذم الخارجين]

`Abdullah ibn `Abbas says that when Amir al-mu`minin set out for war with the people of Basrah he came to his audience at Dhi Qar and saw that he was stitching his shoe. Then Amir al-mu`minin said to me, "What is the price of this shoe?" I said: "It has no value now." He then said, "By Allah, it should have been dearer to me than ruling over you but for the fact that I may establish right and ward off wrong."

Then he came out and spoke:

قال عبدالله بن عباس (رحمه الله): دخلت على أمير المؤمنين صلوات الله عليه بذي قار وهو يخصف نعله، فقال لي: ما قيمة هذا النعل؟ فقلت: لا قيمة لها! قال: والله لهي أحب إلي من إمرتكم، إلا أن أقيم حقاً، أو أدفع باطلاً، ثم خرج (عليه السلام) فخطب الناس فقال:

Verily, Allah sent Muhammad (S) when none among the Arabs read a book or claimed prophethood. He guided the people till he took them to their (correct) position and their salvation. So their spears (i.e. officers) became straight and their conditions settled down.

إنَّ الله سبحانه بعث مُحَمَّدًا (صلى الله عليه وآله)، وَلَيْسَ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْعَرَبِ يَفْرَأُ كِتَابًا، وَلَا يَدْعِي نُبُوَّةً، فَسَاقَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى بَوَّأَهُمْ مَحَلَّتَهُمْ، وَبَلَّغَهُمْ مَنْجَاتَهُمْ، فَاسْتَقَامَتْ قَنَاثُهُمْ، وَاطْمَأَنَّتْ صِفَاتُهُمْ.

By Allah, surely I was in their lead till it took shape with its walls. I did not show weakness or cowardice. My existing march is also like that. I shall certainly pierce the wrong till right comes out of its side.

أَمَا وَاللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُ لَفِي سَاقَتِهَا حَتَّى تَوَلَّتْ بِحَدَافِيرِهَا، مَا عَجَزْتُ، وَلَا جَبُنْتُ، وَإِنَّ مَسِيرِي هَذَا لِمِثْلِهَا، فَلَا تُفِرَّ الْبَاطِلَ حَتَّى يَخْرُجَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ جَنِبِهِ.

What (cause of conflict) is there between me and the Quraysh? By Allah, I have fought them when they were unbelievers and I shall fight them when they have been misled. I shall be the same for them today as I was for them yesterday. By Allah, the Quraysh only take revenge against us because Allah has given us (i.e. the Holy Prophet and his progeny) preference over them. So, we have allowed them into our domain, whereupon they have become as the former poet says:

By my life, you continued drinking fresh milk every morning,

And (continued) eating fine stoned dates with butter;
We have given you the nobility which you did not possess before;
And surrounded (protected) you with thoroughbred horses and tawny-
coloured spears (strong spears).¹

مَالِي وَلِقُرَيْشٍ! وَاللَّهِ لَمَدُّ قَاتِلْتُهُمْ كَافِرِينَ، وَلَا قَاتِلْتَهُمْ مَفْتُونِينَ، وَإِنِّي لَصَاحِبُهُمْ بِالْأَمْسِ،
كَمَا أَنَا صَاحِبُهُمْ الْيَوْمَ! وَاللَّهِ مَا تَنْقِمُ مِنَّا قُرَيْشٌ إِلَّا أَنَّ اللَّهَ اخْتَارَنَا عَلَيْهِمْ، فَادْخَلْنَاهُمْ فِي
حَيَاتِنَا، فَكَانُوا كَمَا قَالَ الْأَوَّلُ:

أَدَمَّتْ لَعْمَرَى شُرْبَكَ الْمَحْضَ صَاحِبًا *** وَ أَكَلَكِ بِالرُّبْدِ الْمُقَشَّرَةَ الْبُجْرَا
وَ نُحْنُ وَهَبْنَاكَ الْعَلَاءَ وَ لَمْ تَكُنْ *** عَلِيًّا، وَ حُطْنَا حَوْلَكَ الْجُرْدَ وَالسُّمْرَا

Alternative Sources for Sermon 33

(1) *Al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 154.*

Notes

1. In fact, the aim of the poet here is to say that the condition of the addressee's life, from the moral and material point of view, had been worse in the past, and that the poet and his tribe have given him the best means of leading their lives. But as the result of this improved condition the addressee has completely lost himself and forgotten his past condition and thinks that he had had this kind of life previously.

Now, Amir al-mu'minin wants to convey the same idea here to the Quraysh as Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) the holy daughter of the Holy Prophet said in her speech on Fadak:

(O' People) ... You were on the brink of the pit of Hell Fire (Qur'an, 3:103). You were as worthless as the mouthful of water. You were minority like the handful greedy and a spark of the hasty. You were as down-trodden as the dust under feet. You drank dirty water. You ate untanned skin. You were abased and condemned. But Allah has rescued you through my father Muhammad (S). . .

Sermon 34: Woe to you! I am tired of rebuking you ...

To prepare the people for fighting with the people of Syria (ash-Sham)¹

After dealing with the Kharijites, Amir al-mu'minin rebukes the people and counsels them to be on the right:

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في استنفار الناس إلى الشام [بعد فراغه من أمر الخوارج]

[وفيها يتأفف بالناس، وينصح لهم بطريق السداد]:

Woe to you. I am tired of rebuking you. Do you accept this worldly life in place of the next life? Or disgrace in place of dignity? When I invite you to fight your enemy your eyes revolve as though you are in the clutches of death, and in the senselessness of last moments.

My pleadings are not understood by you and you remain stunned. It is as though your hearts are affected with madness so that you do not understand. You have lost my confidence for good. Neither are you a support for me to lean upon, nor a means to honour and victory. Your example is that of the camels whose protector has disappeared, so that if they are collected from one side they disperse away from the other side.

أَفِ لَكُمْ! لَقَدْ سَمِعْتُ عِتَابَكُمْ! أَرْضَيْتُمْ بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا مِنَ الْأَخِرَةِ عَوْضًا؟ وَبِالدَّلِيلِ مِنَ الْعِزِّ خَلْفًا؟ إِذَا دَعَوْتُمْ إِلَى جِهَادِ عَدُوِّكُمْ دَارَتْ أَعْيُنُكُمْ، كَأَنَّكُمْ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ فِي عَمْرَةٍ وَمِنَ الدُّهُولِ فِي سَكْرَةٍ، يُرْتَجِعُ عَلَيْكُمْ حَوَارِي فَتَعَمَّهُوْنَ فَكَأَنَّ قُلُوبَكُمْ مَأْلُوسَةٌ فَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْقِلُونَ. مَا أَنْتُمْ لِي بِثِقَّةٍ سَجِيسَ اللَّيَالِي وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِرُكْنٍ يُمَالُ بِكُمْ وَلَا زَوَافِرٍ عِزٍّ يُفْتَقَرُ إِلَيْكُمْ. مَا أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا كَأَبِلٍ ضَلَّ رِعَاتُهَا، فَكُلَّمَا جُمِعَتْ مِنْ جَانِبٍ انْتَشَرَتْ مِنْ آخَرَ،

By Allah, how bad are you for igniting flames of war. You are intrigued against but do not intrigue (against the enemy). Your boundaries are decreasing but you do not get enraged over it. Those against you do not sleep but you are unmindful. By Allah, those who leave matters one for the other are subdued. By Allah, I believed about you that if battle rages and death hovers around you, you will cut away from the son of Abi Talib like the severing of head from the trunk.²

لَيْسَ . لَعَمْرُ اللَّهِ . سَعُرَ نَارِ الْحَرْبِ أَنْتُمْ! تُكَادُونَ وَلَا تَكِيدُونَ، وَتُنْتَقِصُ أَطْرَافَكُمْ فَلَا تَمْتَعِضُونَ لَا يُنَامُ عَنْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ فِي عَقْلَةٍ سَاهُونَ، غُلِبَ وَاللَّهِ الْمُتَخَاذِلُونَ! وَأَيْمُ اللَّهِ إِنِّي لِأَطْرُقُ بِكُمْ أَنْ لَوْ حِمَسَ الْوَعْمِي، وَاسْتَحَرَّ الْمَوْتُ قَدِ انْفَرَجْتُمْ عَنِ ابْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ انْفِرَاجَ الرَّأْسِ

By Allah, he who makes it possible for his adversary to so overpower him as to remove the flesh (from his bones), crush his bones and cut his skin into pieces, then it means that his helplessness is great and his heart surrounded within the sides of his chest is weak. You may become like this if you wish. But for me, before I allow it I shall use my sharp edged swords

of al-Mushrafiyyah which would cut as under the bones of the head and fly away arms and feet. Thereafter, Allah will do whatever He wills.

وَاللّٰهُ اِنَّ اَمْرًا مُّكِّنٌ عَدُوَّهُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ يَعْزُقُ لَحْمَهُ وَيَهْشِمُ عَظْمَهُ، وَيَقْرِي جِلْدَهُ، لَعَظِيمٌ عَجْرُهُ، ضَعِيفٌ مَا ضَمَّتْ عَلَيْهِ جَوَانِحُ صَدْرِهِ اَنْتَ فَكُنْ ذَاكَ اِنْ شِئْتَ، فَاَمَّا اَنَا فَوَاللّٰهِ دُونَ اَنْ اُعْطِيَ ذٰلِكَ ضَرْبٌ بِالْمَشْرِفِيَّةِ تَطِيرُ مِنْهُ فَرَّاشُ اَهَامٍ وَتَطِيحُ السَّوَاعِدُ وَالْاَقْدَامُ، وَيَفْعَلُ اللّٰهُ بَعْدَ ذٰلِكَ مَا يَشَاءُ.

O people, I have a right over you and you have a right over me. As for your right over me, that is to counsel you, to pay you your dues fully, to teach you that you may not remain ignorant and instruct you in behaviourism that you may act upon. As for my right over you, it is fulfilment of (the obligation of) allegiance, well-wishing in presence or in absence, response when I call you and obedience when I order you.

اَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! اِنَّ لِيْ عَلَيْكُمْ حَقًّا، وَلَكُمْ عَلَيَّ حَقٌّ: فَاَمَّا حَقُّكُمْ عَلَيَّ: فَالنَّصِيحَةُ لَكُمْ، وَتَوْفِيرٌ فَيْئَكُمْ عَلَيَّكُمْ، وَتَعْلِيمُكُمْ كَيْلًا يَّجْهَلُوْا، وَتَاْدِيْبُكُمْ كَيْمًا تَعْلَمُوْا. وَاَمَّا حَقِّيْ عَلَيْكُمْ: فَالْوَفَاءُ بِالْبَيْعَةِ، وَالنَّصِيحَةُ فِي الْمَشْهَدِ وَالْمَغِيْبِ، وَالْاِجَابَةُ حِيْنَ اَدْعُوْكُمْ، وَالطَّاعَةُ حِيْنَ اَمْرُكُمْ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 34

- (1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 51;*
- (2) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-'Imamah, I, 150;*
- (3) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, 380;*
- (4) *al-Mufid, al-Majalis, 79;*
- (5) *Nasr ibn Muzahim, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, I, 179.*

Notes

1. The word "ash-Sham" was a name used for a vast geographical area occupied by Muslim countries in those days. This area included present-day Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. Its capital was Damascus. Wherever the word Syria is mentioned (in this book) it should be understood in its larger meaning.

2. This sentence is employed for such severance after which there is no occasion or possibility of joining. The author of Durrah Najafiyyah has quoted several views in its explanation:

i)

Ibn Durayd's view is that it means that. "Just as when the head is severed its joining again is impossible, in the same way you will not join me after once deserting me."

ii)

al-Mufaddal says ar-ra's(head) was the name of a man, and a village of Syria, Bayt ar-ra's is named after him. This man left his home and went away somewhere and never again returned to his village after which the proverb sprang up "you went as ar-ra's had gone."

iii)

One meaning of it is that "Just as if the joints of the bones of the head are opened they cannot be restored, in the same way you will not join me after cutting from me."

iv)

It has also been said that this sentence is in the sense of separating completely. After copying this meaning from the Sharh of ash-Shaykh Qutbu'd-Din ar-Rawandi, the commentator Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written that this meaning is not correct because when the word "ar-ra's" is used in the sense of whole it is not preceded by "alif" and "lam"

v)

It is also taken to mean that "You will so run away from me as one (fleeing for life) to save his head." Besides this, one or two other meanings have also been stated but being remote they are disregarded.

First of all it was used by the philosopher of Arabia Aktham ibn Sayfi while teaching unity and concord to his children. He says: "O my children do not cut away (from each other) at the time of calamities like the cutting of head, because after that you will never get together".

Sermon 35: Praise belongs to God, even though ...

Amir al-mu'minin said after Arbitration.

1

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)
بعد التحكيم وما بلغه من أمر الحكّمين
وفيها حمد الله على بلائه، ثمّ بيان سبب البلوى

All praise is due to Allah even though time has brought (for us) crushing calamity and great occurrence. And I stand witness that there is no god but Allah the One, there is no partner for Him nor is there with Him any god other than Himself, and that Muhammad is His slave and His Prophet (May Allah's blessing and greeting be upon him and his progeny).

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَإِنْ أَتَى الدَّهْرُ بِالْحَطْبِ الْفَادِحِ وَالْحَدِيثِ الْجَلِيلِ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، لَيْسَ
مَعَهُ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ.

So now, certainly the disobedience of sympathetic counsellor who has knowledge as well as experience brings about disappointment and result in repentance. I had given you my orders about this arbitration and put before you my hidden view, if Qasir's² orders were fulfilled but you rejected it (my orders) like rough opponents and disobedient insurgents till the counsellor himself fell in doubt about his counsel and the flint (of his wit) ceased to give flame. Consequently, mine and your position became as the poet of Hawazin says:

I gave you my orders at Mun`araji'l-liwa but you did not see the good of my counsel till the noon of next day (when it was too late)³.

مَا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ مَعْصِيَةَ النَّاصِحِ الشَّفِيقِ الْعَالِمِ أَلْجُبْرِبِ ثَوْرَتْ الْحُسْرَةَ، وَتُعَقَّبُ النَّدَامَةَ، وَقَدْ
كُنْتُ أَمْرُكُمْ فِي هَذِهِ الْحُكُومَةِ أَمْرِي، وَمَحَلَّتْ لَكُمْ مَحْزُونَ رَأْيِي لَوْ كَانَ يُطَاعُ لِقَصِيرٍ أَمْرًا!
فَأَبَيْتُمْ عَلَيَّ إِيَاءَ أَلْ مُخَالِفِينَ الْجَفَاءَةَ، وَالْمُنَابِذِينَ الْعُصَاةَ، حَتَّى اِرْتَابَ النَّاصِحُ بِنُصْحِهِ، وَضَنَّ
الرَّئِدُ بِفَدْحِهِج، فَكُنْتُ وَإِيَّاكُمْ كَمَا قَالَ أَحْو
هَوَازِنَ:

أَمْرُكُمْ أَمْرِي بِمَنْعَرَجِ اللَّوَى فَلَمْ تَسْتَبِينُوا النَّصْحَ إِلَّا ضَحَى الْعَدِ

Alternative Sources for Sermon 35

- (1) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, 365;*
- (2) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 43;*
- (3) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-'Imamah, I, 119, 141;*
- (4) *Nasr, Siffin, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, I, 110;*
- (5) *Sibt, Tadhkirah, 103;*
- (6) *Abu al-Faraj, al-'Aghani, IX, 5;*
- (7) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, II, 412;*

(8) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Kamil, II, 171;*

(9) *Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah, VII, 286.*

Notes

1. When the Syrians' spirit was broken by the bloody swords of the Iraqis, and the incessant attacks of the night of al-Harir lowered their morale and ended their aspirations `Amr ibn al-`As suggested to Mu`awiyah the trick that the Qur'an should be raised on spears and shouts urged forth to treat it as the arbitrator. Its effect would be that some people would try to stop the war and others would like to continue it. We would thus divide them and be able to get the war postponed for another occasion. Consequently, copies of the Qur'an were raised on spears. The result was that some brainless persons raised hue and cry and created division and disturbance in the army and the efforts of simple Muslims turned slow after having been near victory. Without understanding anything they began to shout that they should prefer the verdict of the Qur'an over war.

When Amir al-mu'minin saw the Qur'an being the instrument of their activities, he said:

"O people do not fall in this trap of deceit and trickery. They are putting up this device only to escape the ignominy of defeat. I know the character of each one of them. They are neither adherents of the Qur'an nor have they any connection with the faith or religion. The very purpose of our fighting has been that they should follow the Qur'an and act on its injunctions. For Allah's sake do not fall in their deceitful device. Go ahead with determination and courage and stop only after vanquishing the dying foe." Nevertheless, the deceitful instrument of wrong had worked. The people took to disobedience and rebellion. Mis`ar ibn Fadaki at-Tamimi and Zayd ibn Husayn at-Ta'i each with twenty thousand men came forward and said to Amir al-mu'minin, 'O `Ali, if you do not respond to the call of the Qur'an we will deal with you in the same manner as we did with `Uthman. You end the battle at once and bow before the verdict of the Qur'an. Amir al-mu'minin tried his best to make them understand but Satan was standing before them in the garb of the Qur'an. He did not allow them to do so, and they compelled Amir al-mu'minin that he should send someone to call Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar from the battlefield. Being obliged, Amir al-mu'minin sent Yazid ibn Hani to call Malik back. When Malik heard this order he was bewildered and said, "Please tell him this is not the occasion to leave the position. He may wait a bit then I will come to his audience with the tidings of victory." Hani conveyed this message on return but people shouted that Amir al-mu'minin must have sent word to him secretly to continue. Amir al-mu'minin said he never got any occasion to send any secret message to him. Whatever he said was said before them. People said he should be sent again and that if Malik delayed his return Amir al-mu'minin should forsake his life. Amir al-mu'minin again sent Yazid ibn Hani and sent word that rebellion had occurred, he should return in whatever condition he was. So Hani went and told Malik "You hold victory dear or the life of Amir al-mu'minin. If his life is dear you should raise hands off the battle and go to him." Leaving the chances of victory Malik stood up and came to the audience of Amir al-mu'minin with grief and disappointment. Chaos raged there. He rebuked the people very much but matters had taken such a turn that could not be corrected.

It was then settled that either party should nominate an arbitrator so that they should settle the (matter of) Caliphate according to the Qur'an. From Mu`awiyah's side `Amr ibn al-`As was decided upon and from Amir al mu'minin's side people proposed the name of Abu Musa al-Ash`ari. Seeing this wrong selection Amir al-mu'minin said, "Since you have not accepted my order about arbitration at least now agree that do not make Abu Musa the arbitrator. He is not a man of trust. Here is `Abdullah ibn `Abbas and here is Malik al-Ashtar. Select one of them." But they did not at all listen to him and stuck to his name. Amir al-mu'minin said, "All right, do whatever you want. The day is not far when you will cut your own hands through your misdeeds."

After the nomination of arbitrators when the deed of agreement was being written, then with `Ali ibn Abi Talib (p.b.u.h.) the word Amir al-mu'minin was also written. `Amr ibn al-`As said, "This should be rubbed off. If we regarded him Amir al-mu'minin why should this battle have been fought?" At first Amir al-mu'minin refused to rub it off but when they did not in any way agree, he rubbed it off and said, "This incident is just similar to the one at al-Hudaybiyah when the unbelievers stuck on the point that the words 'Prophet of Allah' with the name of the Prophet should be removed and the Prophet did remove it." On this `Amr

ibn al-`As got angry and said, "Do you treat us as unbelievers?" Amir al-mu'minin said, "On what day have you had anything to do with believers and when have you been their supporters?" However, after this settlement, the people dispersed, and after mutual consultation these two arbitrators decided that by removing both `Ali and Mu`awiyah from the Caliphate the people should be accorded the power to choose whomever they desired. When time came to its announcement there was a meeting at Dumatu'l-Jandal, a place between Iraq and Syria, and then two arbitrators also reached there to announce the judgement on the fate of the Muslims. Acting cunningly `Amr ibn al-`As said to Abu Musa, "I regard it ill manner to precede you. You are older in years and age so first you make the announcement." Abu Musa succumbed to his flattery and came out proudly and stood before the gathering. Addressing them he said, "O' Muslims we have jointly settled that `Ali ibn Abi Talib and Mu`awiyah should be removed and the right to choose a Caliph be accorded to the Muslims. They should choose whomever they like." Saying this he sat down. Now the turn was for `Amr ibn al-`As and he said, "O' Muslims you have heard that Abu Musa removed `Ali ibn Abi Talib. I also agree with it. As for Mu`awiyah, there is no question of removing him. Therefore I place him in his position." No sooner that he said this there were cries all round. Abu Musa cried hoarse that it was a trick, a deceit and told `Amr ibn al-`As that, "You have played a trick, and your example is that of a dog on which if you load something he would gasp, or leave him he would gasp." `Amr ibn al-`As said, "Your example is like the ass on whom books are loaded." However `Amr ibn al-`As's trick was effective and Mu`awiyah's shaking feet were again stabilised. This was the short sketch of the Arbitration whose basis was laid in the Qur'an and sunnah. But was it a verdict of the Qur'an or the result of those deceitful contrivances which people of this world employ to retain their authority? Could these pages of history be made a torch-guide for the future and the Qur'an and sunnah be not used as a means of securing authority or as an instrument of worldly benefits.

When Amir al-mu'minin got the news of this lamentable result of arbitration, he climbed on the pulpit and delivered this sermon every word of which savours of his grief and sorrow and at the same time it throws light on soundness of his thinking, correctness of his opinion and foresighted sagacity.

2. This is a proverb which is used on an occasion where the advice of a counsellor is rejected and afterwards it is repented. The fact of it was that the ruler of al-Hirah namely Jadhimah al-Abrash killed the ruler of al-Jazirah named `Amr ibn Zarib whereafter his daughter az-Zabba' was made the ruler of al-Jazirah. Soon after accession to the throne she thought out this plan to avenge her father's blood, that she sent a message to Jadhimah that she could not alone carry on the affairs of the state and that if he could become her patron by accepting her as his wife she would be grateful. Jadhimah was more than puffed up at this proposal, and prepared himself to set off for al-Jazirah with a thousand horsemen. His slave Qasir advised him much that this was just a deceit and trick and that he should not place himself in this danger; but his wit had been so blinded that he could not think over why az-Zabba' should select the Murderer of her father for her life companionship. Anyhow, he set off and when he reached the border of al-Jazirah although az-Zabba's army was present for his reception but she neither gave any special reception nor offered any warm welcome. Seeing this state Qasir was again suspicious and he advised Jadhimah to get back, but nearness to the goal had further fanned his passion. He paid no heed and stepping further entered the city. Soon on arrival there he was killed. When Qasir saw this he said, "Had the advice of Qasir been followed." From that time this proverb gained currency.

3. The poet of Hawazin implies Durayd ibn as-Simmah. He wrote this couplet after the death of his brother `Abdullah ibn as-Simmah. Its facts are that `Abdullah along with his brother led an attack of two groups of Banu Jusham and Bani Nasr who were both from Hawazin, and drove away many camels. On return when they intended to rest at Mun`araji'l-liwa, Durayd said it was not advisable to stay there lest the enemy attacks from behind, but `Abdullah did not agree and stayed there. The result was that as soon as dawn appeared the enemy attacked and killed `Abdullah on the spot. Durayd also received wounds but he slipped away alive, and after this he wrote a few couplets out of which one couplet is this wherein he has referred to the destruction resulting from his advice having been rejected.

Sermon 36: I warn you ...

Warning the people of Nahrawan¹ of their fate

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في تخويف أهل النهروان

I am warning you that you will be killed on the bend of this canal and on the level of this low area while you will have no clear excuse before Allah nor any open authority with you. You have come out of your houses and then divine decree entangled you.

I had advised you against this arbitration but you rejected my advice like adversaries and opponents till I turned my ideas in the direction of your wishes. You are a group whose heads are devoid of wit and intelligence. May you have no father! (Allah's woe be to you!) I have not put you in any calamity nor wished you harm.

فَأَنَا نَذِيرٌ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُصْبِحُوا صَرَغَى بِأَتْنَاءِ هَذَا النَّهْرِ، وَبِأَهْضَامِ هَذَا الْعَائِطِ عَلَى غَيْرِ بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ، وَلَا سُلْطَانٍ مُبِينٍ مَعَكُمْ، قَدْ طَوَّحَتْ بِكُمْ الدَّارُ، وَاخْتَبَلَكُمْ الْمِقْدَارُ وَقَدْ كُنْتُ نَهَيْتُكُمْ عَنْ هَذِهِ الْحُكُومَةِ فَأَبَيْتُمْ عَلَيَّ إِبَاءَ الْمُخَالَفِينَ، حَتَّى صَرَفْتُ رَأْيِي إِلَى هَوَاكُمْ، وَأَنْتُمْ مَعَاشِرُ أَخْفَاءِ الْهَامِّ، سُفَهَاءُ الْأَحْلَامِ وَلَمْ آتِ . لَا أَبَا لَكُمْ . بُجْرًا وَلَا أَرَدْتُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 36

- (1) *Al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar, al-Muwaffaqiyyat, 350;*
- (2) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 47;*
- (3) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-'Imamah, I, 147;*
- (4) *Sibt, Tadhkirah, 100;*
- (5) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 97;*
- (6) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, II, 402;*
- (7) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, II, 371.*

Notes

1. The cause of the battle of Nahrawan was that when after Arbitration Amir al-mu'minin was returning to Kufah, the people who were foremost in pleading acceptance of Arbitration began to say that appointment of anyone other than Allah as arbitrator is heresy, and that, Allah forbid, by accepting the Arbitration Amir al-mu'minin turned heretic. Consequently, by distorting the meaning of "There is no authority same with Allah" they made simple Muslims share their views and separating from Amir al-mu'minin encamped at Hanira' near Kufah. When Amir al-mu'minin learned of these plottings he sent Sa' sa' ah ibn Suhan al-'Abdi and Ziyad ibn an-Nadr al-Harithi in the company of Ibn `Abbas towards them and afterwards himself went to the place of their stay and dispersed them after discussion.

When these people reached Kufah they began to spread the news that Amir al-mu'minin had broken the agreement of Arbitration and that he is again ready to fight against the Syrians. When Amir al-mu'minin learned this he contradicted it whereupon these people stood up in rebellion and encamped twelve miles from Baghdad in the low area of the canal called Nahrawan.

On the other side, after hearing the verdict of Arbitration Amir al-mu'minin rose for fighting the army of Syria and wrote to the Kharijites that the verdict passed by the two

arbitrators in pursuance of their heart's wishes instead of the Qur'an and sunnah was not acceptable to him, that he had therefore decided to fight with them and they should support him for crushing the enemy. But the Kharijites gave him this reply, "When you had agreed to Arbitration in our view you had turned heretic. Now if you admit your heresy and offer repentance we will think over this matter and decide what we should do." Amir al-mu'minin understood from their reply that their disobedience and misguidance had become very serious. To entertain any kind of hope from them now was futile. Consequently, ignoring them he encamped in the valley of an-Nukhaylah with a view to marching towards Syria. When the army had been arrayed he came to know that the men desired to deal with the people of Nahrawan first, and to move towards Syria afterwards. Amir al-mu'minin, however, said that they should be left as they were, that they themselves should first move towards Syria while the people of Nahrawan could be dealt with afterwards. People said that they were prepared to obey every order of his with all their might whether he moved this way or that way. The army had not moved when news about the rebellion of Kharijites began to reach, and it was learnt that they had butchered the governor of Nahrawan namely `Abdullah ibn Khabbab ibn al-Aratt and his slave maid with the child in her womb, and have killed three women of Banu Tayyi and Umm Sinan as-Saydawiyyah. Amir al-mu'minin sent al-Harith ibn Murrah al-`Abdi for investigation but he too was killed by them. When their rebellion reached this stage it was necessary to deal with them. Consequently, the army turned towards Nahrawan. On reaching there Amir al-mu'minin sent them word that those who had killed `Abdullah ibn Khabbab ibn al-Aratt and innocent women should be handed over to him for avenging blood. Those people replied that they had killed these persons jointly and that they considered it lawful to shed the blood of all the people on his side. Even at this Amir al-mu'minin did not take the initiative for the battle, but sent Abu Ayyub al-Ansari with a message of peace. So he spoke to them aloud, "Whoever comes under this banner or separates from that party and goes to Kufah or al-Mada'in would get amnesty and he would not be questioned. As a result of this Farwah ibn Nawfal al-Ashja'i said that he did not know why they were at war with Amir al-mu'minin. Saying this he separated along with five hundred men. Similarly group after group began to separate and some of them joined Amir al-mu'minin. Those who remained numbered four thousand, and according to at-Tabari's account they numbered two thousand eight hundred. These people were not in any way prepared to listen to the voice of truth, and were ready to kill or be killed. Amir al-mu'minin had stopped his men to take the initiative but the Kharijites put arrows in their bows and broke and threw away the sheathes of their swords. Even at this juncture Amir al-mu'minin warned them of the dire consequences of war and this sermon is about that warning and admonition. But they were so brimming with enthusiasm that they leapt on Amir al-mu'minin's force all of a sudden. This onslaught was so severe that the foot men lost ground but they soon fixed themselves firmly that the attack of arrows and spears could not dislodge them from their position and they soon so cleared away the Kharijites that except for nine persons who fled away to save their lives not a single person was left alive. From Amir al-mu'minin's army only eight persons fell as martyrs. The battle took place on the 9th Safar, 38 A.H.

Sermon 37: I took up the task ...

Amir al-mu'minin's utterance which runs like a Sermon.

About his own steadfastness in religion and precedence in (acceptance of) belief. Spoken after the Battle of Nahrawan

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

يجري مجرى الخطبة

[وفيه يذكر فضائله (عليه السلام) قاله بعد وقعة النهروان]

I discharged duties when others lost courage (to do so), and I came forward when others hid themselves. I spoke when others remained mum. I stroke with Divine light when others remained standing. I was the quietest of them in voice but the highest in going forward. I cleaved to its rein and applied myself solely to its pledge, like the mountain which neither sweeping wind could move nor storm could shake. No one could find fault with me nor could any speaker speak ill of me.

فَقُمْتُ بِالْأَمْرِ حِينَ فَشِلُوا وَتَطَلَّعْتُ حِينَ تَعَتَّعُوا وَمَضَيْتُ بِنُورِ اللَّهِ حِينَ وَقَفُوا، وَكُنْتُ أَحْفَظَهُمْ صَوْتًا، وَأَعْلَاهُمْ فَوْتًا فَطَرْتُ بِعِنَانِهَا وَاسْتَبَدَّدْتُ بِرِهَانِهَا كَالْجَبَلِ لَا تُحْرِكُهُ الْقَوَاصِفُ، وَلَا تُزِيلُهُ الْعَوَاصِفُ. لَمْ يَكُنْ لِأَحَدٍ فِي مَهْمَزٍ، وَلَا لِقَائِلٍ فِي مَعْمَزٍ.

The low is in my view worthy of honour till I secure (his) right for him while the strong is in my view weak till I take (other's) right from him. We are happy with the destiny ordained by Allah and have submitted to the command of Allah. Do you think I would speak lie about the Prophet of Allah?

By Allah, I am surely the first to testify him, so I will not be the first to falsify him. I looked at my affairs and found that my obedience should have precedence over my allegiance while my pledge with him is a burden on my neck.

الدَّلِيلُ عِنْدِي عَزِيزٌ حَتَّى آخُذَ الْحَقَّ لَهُ، وَالْقَوِيُّ عِنْدِي ضَعِيفٌ حَتَّى آخُذَ الْحَقَّ مِنْهُ، رَضِينَا عَنِ اللَّهِ قَضَاءَهُ، وَسَلَّمْنَا لَهُ أَمْرَهُ. أَتَرَانِي أَكْذِبُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ؟ وَاللَّهِ لَأَنَا أَوْلُ مَنْ صَدَقَهُ فَلَا أَكُونُ أَوْلَ مَنْ كَذَبَ عَلَيْهِ. فَتَنْظَرْتُ فِي أَمْرِي، فَإِذَا طَاعَتِي قَدْ سَبَقَتْ بَيْعَتِي، وَإِذَا الْمِيثَاقُ فِي عُنُقِي لِعَيْرِي.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 37

(1) *Al-Saduq, al-'Amali, 134;*

(2) *al-Bayhaqi, al-Mahasin, I, 37.*

Sermon 38: Doubt is called doubt because ...

About naming of doubt as such and disparagement of those in doubt

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها علة تسمية الشبهة شبهة، ثم بيان حال الناس فيها

Doubt is named doubt (al-shubhah) because it resembles truth. As for lovers of Allah, their conviction serves them as light and the direction of the right path (itself) serves as their guide; while the enemies of Allah, in time of doubt call to misguidance in the darkness of doubt and their guide is blindness (of intelligence). One who fears death cannot escape it nor can one who loves eternal life secure it.

وَإِنَّمَا سُمِّيَتِ الشُّبْهَةُ شُبْهَةً لِأَنَّهَا تُشْبِهُ الْحَقَّ، فَأَمَّا أَوْلِيَاءُ اللَّهِ فَضِيَّائُهُمْ فِيهَا الْيَقِينُ، وَدَلِيلُهُمْ سَمْتُ الْهُدَى وَأَمَّا أَعْدَاءُ اللَّهِ فَدَعَاؤُهُمُ الضَّلَالُ، وَدَلِيلُهُمُ الْعُمَى، فَمَا يَنْجُو مِنَ الْمَوْتِ مَنْ خَافَهُ، وَلَا يُعْطَى الْبَقَاءَ مَنْ أَحَبَّهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 38

- (1) *Al-'Amidi, Ghurar*, 98;
- (2) *Ibn Talhah, Matalib*, I, 170;
- (3) *al-Jahiz, Rasa'il*, 125.

Sermon 39: I am faced with men who do not obey ...

In disparagement of those who shrink from fighting

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

[خطبها عند علمه بغزوة النعمان بن بشير صاحب معاوية لعين التمر]

[وفيها بيدي عذره، ويستنهض الناس لنصرته]

I am faced with men who do not obey when I order and do not respond when I call them. May you have no father! (Woe to you!) What are you waiting for to rise for the cause of Allah? Does not faith join you together, or sense of shame rouse you? I stand among you shouting and I am calling you for help, but you do not listen to my word, and do not obey my orders, till circumstances show out their bad consequences.

*No blood can be avenged through you and no purpose can be achieved with you. I called you for help of your brethren but made noises like the camel having pain in stomach, and became loose like the camel of thin back. Then a wavering weak contingent came to me from amongst you: "as if they are being led to death and they are only watching."*¹ (Qur'an, 8:6)

مُنِيْتُ بِمَنْ لَا يُطِيعُ إِذَا أَمَرْتُ وَلَا يُجِيبُ إِذَا دَعَوْتُ، لَا أَبَا لَكُمْ! مَا تَنْتَظِرُونَ بِنَصْرِكُمْ رَبِّكُمْ؟ أَمَا دِينَ يَجْمَعُكُمْ، وَلَا حِمِيَّةَ تُحْمِسُكُمْ؟! أَقُومُ فِيكُمْ مُسْتَصْرِحًا، وَأُنَادِيكُمْ مُتَعَوِّثًا، فَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ لِي قَوْلًا، وَلَا تُطِيعُونَ لِي أَمْرًا، حَتَّى تَكْشِفَ الْأُمُورُ عَن عَوَاقِبِ الْمَسَاءَةِ، فَمَا يُدْرِكُ بِكُمْ ثَارًا، وَلَا يُبَلِّغُ بِكُمْ مَرَامًا، دَعَوْتُكُمْ إِلَى نَصْرِ إِخْوَانِكُمْ فَجَرَجَرْتُمْ جَرَجِرَةَ الْجَمَلِ الْأَسْرَى، وَتَنَاقَلْتُمْ تَنَاقُلَ الْبُضُوِّ الْأَذْبَرِ، ثُمَّ خَرَجَ إِلَيَّ مِنْكُمْ جُنَيْدٌ مُتَدَائِبٌ ضَعِيفٌ (كَأَنَّهَا يُسَافِقُونَ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنْظُرُونَ).

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Amir al-mu'minin's word "mutadha'ib" means "mudtarib" (i.e. moved or troubled), as they say "tadha'abat ar-rih" (i.e. the winds blow in troubled manner). Similarly the wolf is called "dhi'b" because of its troubled movement.

قال السيد الشريف: أقول: قوله (عليه السلام): «مُتَدَائِبٌ» أي: مضطرب، من قولهم:

تدأبت الريح أي: اضطرب هبوبها، ومنه سمي الذئب، لاضطراب مشيته.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 39

(1) Al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, I, 291, 297, II, 453-4;

(2) al-Baladhuri, Ansab, II, 404;

(3) al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 41, events of the year 39 H.

Notes

1. Mu'awiyah sent a contingent of two thousand soldiers under an-Nu'man ibn Bashir to assault Aynu't-Tamr. This place was a defence base of Amir al-mu'minin near Kufah whose incharge was Malik ibn Ka'b al-Arhabi. Although there were a thousand combatants

under him, but at the moment only hundred men were present there. When Malik noticed the offensive force advancing he wrote to Amir al-mu'minin for help. When Amir al-mu'minin received the message he asked the people for his help but only three hundred men got ready as a result of which Amir al-mu'minin was much disgusted and delivered this sermon in their admonition. When Amir al-mu'minin reached his house after delivering the sermon `Adi ibn Hatim at-Ta'i came and said, "O' Amir al-mu'minin a thousand men of Banu Tayyi' are under me. If you say I shall send them off." Amir al-mu'minin said, "It does not look nice that people of one tribe only should meet the enemy. You prepare your force in the Valley of an-Nukhaylah." Accordingly he went there and called people to jihad, when besides Banu Tayyi' one thousand other combatants also assembled. They were still preparing to set off when word reached from Malik ibn Ka'b that there was no need for help as he had repulsed the enemy.

The reason of this was that Malik had sent off `Abdullah ibn Hawalah al-Azdi hastily to Qarazah ibn Ka'b al-Ansari and Mikhnaf ibn Sulaym al-Azdi so that if there was delay in the arrival of support from Kufah he could get help from here in time. `Abdullah went to both, but got no help from Qarazah. However, Mikhnaf ibn Sulaym got ready fifty persons under `Abd ar-Rahman ibn Mikhnaf and they reached there near evening. Upto that time the two thousand men (of the enemy) had not been able to subdue the hundred men of Malik. When an-Nu`man saw these fifty men he thought that their forces had started coming in so he fled away from the battlefield. Even in their retreat Malik attacked them from rear and killed three of their men.

Sermon 40: A true statement to which a false meaning ...

When Amir al-mu'minin heard the cry of Kharijites that "Verdict is only that of Allah" he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في الخوارج لما سمع (عليه السلام) قولهم: "لا حكم إلا لله"

A true statement to which a false meaning is attributed. It is true that verdict lies but with Allah, but these people say that (the function of) governance is only for Allah. The fact is that there is no escape for men from ruler good or bad. The faithful persons perform (good) acts in his rule while the unfaithful enjoys (worldly) benefits in it. During the rule, Allah would carry everything to end. Through the ruler tax is collected, enemy is fought, roadways are protected and the right of the weak is taken from the strong till the virtuous enjoys peace and allowed protection from (the oppression of) the wicked.

قال (عليه السلام):

كَلِمَةٌ حَقٌّ يُرَادُ بِهَا بَاطِلٌ! نَعَمْ إِنَّهُ لَا حُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ، وَلَكِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ يُقُولُونَ: لَا إِمْرَةَ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا بُدَّ لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ أَمِيرٍ بَرٍّ أَوْ فَاجِرٍ، يَعْمَلُ فِي إِمْرَتِهِ الْمُؤْمِنُ، وَيَسْتَمْتِعُ فِيهَا الْكَافِرُ، وَيُبْلِغُ اللَّهُ فِيهَا الْأَجَلَ، وَيُجْمَعُ بِهِ الْفِيءُ، وَيُقَاتَلُ بِهِ الْعَدُوُّ، وَتَأْمَنُ بِهِ السُّبُلُ، وَيُؤَخَذُ بِهِ لِلضَّعِيفِ مِنَ الْقَوِيِّ، حَتَّى يَسْتَرِيحَ بَرٌّ، وَيُسْتَرَاخَ مِنْ فَاجِرٍ.

Another version

When Amir al-mu'minin heard the cry of the Kharijites on the said verdict he said:

I am expecting the verdict (destiny) of Allah on you.

Then he continued:

As for good government the pious man performs good acts in it, while in a bad government the wicked person enjoys till his time is over and death overtakes him.

وفي رواية أخرى أنه (عليه السلام) لما سمع تحكيمهم قال: حُكْمُ اللَّهِ أَنْتَظِرُ فِيكُمْ.

وقال:

أَمَّا الْأَمْرَةُ الْبَرَّةُ فَيَعْمَلُ فِيهَا التَّقِيُّ، وَأَمَّا الْأَمْرَةُ الْفَاجِرَةُ فَيَسْتَمْتِعُ فِيهَا الشَّقِيُّ، إِلَى أَنْ تَنْقَطِعَ

مُدَّتُهُ، وَتُدْرِكُهُ مَبِيئَتُهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 40

- (1) *Al-Shafi'i, Kitab al-'umm;*
- (2) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 41;*
- (3) *Abu Talib al-Makki, Qut, I, 530;*
- (4) *al-Ya'qubi, Ta'rikh, II, 136;*

- (5) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab*, 352, 355, 361, 377;
(6) *al-Mubarrad, al-Kamil, II*, 131.

Sermon 41: O people, surely loyalty and truthfulness are twins ...

In condemnation of treason

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها ينهى عن الغدر ويحذر منه

O people! Surely loyalty (fulfilment of pledge) and truthfulness are twins. I do not know a better shield (against the assaults of sin) than it. One who realises the reality of return (to the next world) never betrays. We are in a period when most of the people regard betrayal as wisdom. In these days the ignorants call it excellence of cunning. What is the matter with them? Allah may destroy them.

One who has been through thick and thin of life finds the excuses to be preventing him from orders and prohibitions of Allah but he disregards them despite capability (to succumb to them and follows the commands of Allah), while one who has no restraints of religion seizes the opportunity (and accepts the excuses for not following the commands of Allah).

إِنَّ الْوَفَاءَ تَوْأَمُ الصِّدْقِ، وَلَا أَعْلَمُ جُنَّةً أَوْفَى مِنْهُ، وَمَا يَعْدِرُ مَنْ عَلِمَ كَيْفَ الْمَرْجِعِ، وَلَقَدْ أَصْبَحْنَا فِي زَمَانٍ اتَّخَذَ أَكْثَرُ أَهْلِهِ الْعَدْرَ كَيْسًا، وَنَسَبَهُمْ أَهْلُ الْجَهْلِ فِيهِ إِلَى حُسْنِ الْحِيلَةِ، مَا لَهُمْ! فَاتْلَهُمُ اللَّهُ! فَدَى الْحَوْلِ الْقَلْبُ وَجَهَ الْحِيلَةَ وَدُونَهَا مَانِعٌ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ وَنَهْيِهِ، فَيَدْعُهَا رَأْيَ عَيْنٍ بَعْدَ الْقُدْرَةِ عَلَيْهَا، وَيَنْتَهِرُ فُرْصَتَهَا مَنْ لَا حَرِيحَةَ لَهُ فِي الدِّينِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 41

(1) Ibn Talhah, *Matalib*, I, 170;

(2) *al-Jahiz, Rasa'il*, 125.

Sermon 42: O people, what I fear most for you ...

About heart's desires and extended hopes

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها يحذر من اتباع الهوى وطول الامل في الدنيا

O people! What I fear most about you are two things - acting according to desires and extending of hopes. As regards acting according to desires, this prevents from truth; and as regards extending of hopes, it makes one forget the next world.

You should know this world is moving rapidly and nothing has remained out of it except last particles like the dregs of a vessel which has been emptied by someone. Beware, the next world is advancing, and either of them has sons i.e. followers. You should become sons of the next world and not become sons of this world because on the Day of Judgement every son would cling to his mother. Today is the Day of action and there is no reckoning while tomorrow is the Day of reckoning but there would be no (opportunity for) action.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ! إِنَّ أَحْوَفَ مَا أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ اثْنَانِ: اتِّبَاعَ الْهَوَى، وَطُولُ الْأَمَلِ؛ فَأَمَّا اتِّبَاعُ الْهَوَى فَيَصُدُّ عَنِ الْحَقِّ، وَأَمَّا طُولُ الْأَمَلِ فَيُنْسِي الْأَخِرَةَ. أَلَا وَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا قَدْ وَلَّتْ حَذَاءً، فَلَمْ يَبْقَ مِنْهَا إِلَّا صُبَابَةٌ كَصُبَابَةِ الْأَنْاءِ اصْطَبَّتْهَا صَابُهَا، أَلَا وَإِنَّ الْأَخِرَةَ قَدْ أَقْبَلَتْ، وَلِكُلِّ مِنْهُمَا بَنُونَ، فَكُونُوا مِنْ أَبْنَاءِ الْأَخِرَةِ، وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنْ أَبْنَاءِ الدُّنْيَا، فَإِنَّ كُلَّ وَكِدٍ سَيُلْحَقُ بِأُمَّةٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَإِنَّ الْيَوْمَ عَمَلٌ وَلَا حِسَابَ، وَغَدًا حِسَابٌ وَلَا عَمَلٍ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: “al-hadhdha” means rapid but some people have read it “jadhdha”. According to this version the meaning would be that the cycle of worldly enjoyments would end soon.

قال السيد الشريف: أقول: الحذاء: السريعة. و من الناس من يزويه جداء، بالجيم و الدال، أي انقطع دهرها و خيرها.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 42

- (1) *Nasr, Siffin, 3, 4;*
- (2) *al-Mufid, al-Majalis, 50;*
- (3) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, II, 353;*
- (4) *al-Kulayni, Furu` al-Kafi, III, 29;*
- (5) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 35, 47;*
- (6) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, * 138;*
- (7) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, * 73, 145;*
- (8) *Abu Nu`aym, Hilyah, I, 56;*

(9) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, II, 436.*

Sermon 43: My preparations for war with the Syrians ...

After Amir al-mu'minin had sent Jarir ibn `Abdillah al-Bajali to Mu`awiyah

After Amir al-mu'minin had sent Jarir ibn `Abdillah al-Bajali to Mu`awiyah (for securing his allegiance) some of his companions suggested preparation to fight with him then he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

وقد أشار عليه أصحابه بالاستعداد لحرب أهل الشام بعد إرساله جرير بن عبدالله البجلي

إلى معاوية

My preparation for war with the people of Syria (ash-Sham) while Jarir ibn `Abdillah al-Bajali is still there would be closing the door for Syria and prevention of its people from good action (i.e. allegiance) if they intend doing it.

However, I have fixed a time limit for Jarir after which he would not stay without either deception or in disobedience. My opinion is in favour of patience, so wait a while. (In the meantime) I do not dislike your getting ready.

إِنَّ اسْتِعْدَادِي لِحَرْبِ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ وَجَرِيرٍ عِنْدَهُمْ، إِغْلَاقٌ لِلشَّامِ، وَصَرْفٌ لِأَهْلِهِ عَنِ خَيْرٍ إِنْ أَرَادُوهُ، وَلَكِنْ قَدْ وَقَّتْ لِحَرْبِ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ وَقْتًا لَا يُقِيمُ بَعْدَهُ إِلَّا مَخْدُوعًا أَوْ عَاصِيًا، وَالرَّأْيُ مَعَ الْأَنْتَاهِ، فَأَرْوِدُوا، وَلَا أَكْرَهُ لَكُمْ الْأَعْدَادَ.

I have observed this matter thoroughly from all sides but I do not find any way except war or heresy. Certainly, there was over the people a ruler (before me) who brought about new (un-Islamic) things and compelled the people to speak out. So they did speak, then rose up and thereafter changed the whole system.

وَلَقَدْ صَرَنْتُ أَنْفَ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ وَعَيْنَهُ، وَقَلَّبْتُ ظَهْرَهُ وَبَطْنَهُ، فَلَمْ أَرِ إِلَّا الْقِتَالَ أَوْ الْكُفْرَ. إِنَّهُ قَدْ كَانَ عَلَى الْأُمَّةِ وَالْأَحْدَثَ أَحْدَانًا، وَأَوْجَدَ النَّاسَ مَقَالًا، فَقَالُوا، ثُمَّ نَقَمُوا فَعَبَّرُوا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 43

- (1) *Al-Khwarazmi, Manaqib, 108;*
- (2) *Nasr ibn Muzahim, Siffin, 55;*
- (3) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-Imamah, I, 94;*
- (4) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-Iqd, II, 108;*
- (5) *al-Saduq, Man la yahduruha, I, 461;*
- (6) *al-Tusi, Misbah, 429.*

Sermon 44: May God disgrace Masqalah, ...

When Masqalah¹ ibn Hubayrah ash-Shaybani fled to Mu`awiyah because he had purchased some prisoners of Banu Najiyah from an executive of Amir al-mu'minin, but when he demanded the price the latter avoided and ran to Syria, Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لما هرب مَصْقَلَةٌ بنُ هُبَيْرَةَ الشَّيْبَانِي إِلَى مَعَاوِيَةَ، وَكَانَ قَدْ ابْتَاعَ سَيِّئِ بَنِي نَاجِيَةَ مِنْ عَامِلِ
أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) وَأَعْتَقَهُمْ، فَلَمَّا طَالَبَهُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) بِالْمَالِ خَاسٍ بِهِ وَهَرَبَ إِلَى
الشَّامِ،

Allah may be bad to Masqalah. He acted like the noble but fled away like a slave. Before his admirer could speak (about him) he silenced him and before his eulogist could testify to his good deeds he closed his mouth. If he had stayed behind we would have taken from him what he could easily pay and waited for the balance till his money increased.

قَبَّحَ اللَّهُ مَصْقَلَةَ! فَعَلَّ فَعَلَّ السَّادَةَ، وَفَرَّ فِرَارَ الْعَبِيدِ! فَمَا أَنْطَقَ مَادِحَهُ حَتَّى أَسْكَنَتْهُ، وَلَا
صَدَّقَ وَاصِفُهُ حَتَّى بَكَتَتْهُ، وَلَوْ أَقَامَ لَأَخَذْنَا مَيْسُورَهُ، وَأَنْتَظَرْنَا بِمَالِهِ وَفُورَهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 44

- (1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 65-77,*
- (2) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, 329-372;*
- (3) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, 411-417;*
- (4) *Ibn `Asakir, Ta'rikh, vol. 55 in the account of Masqalah ibn Hubayrah;*
- (5) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, III, 419;*
- (6) *Abu al-Faraj, al-'Aghani, IX, 100-106.*

Notes

1. When after Arbitration the Kharijites rose, a man of Bani Najiyah from them named al-Khirrit ibn Rashid an-Naji stood up for instigating people and set off towards al-Mada'in with a group killing and marauding. Amir al-mu'minin sent Ziyad ibn Khasafah with three hundred men to check him. When the two forces met at al-Mada'in they attacked each other with swords. Only one encounter or so had taken place when the gloom of evening prevailed and the battle had to be stopped. When morning appeared Ziyad's men noticed that five dead bodies of the Kharijites were lying and they themselves had cleared off the battlefield. Seeing this Ziyad set off for Basrah along with his men. There he came to know that the Kharijites had gone to Ahwaz. Ziyad did not move onwards for paucity of force and informed Amir al-mu'minin of it. Amir al-mu'minin called back Ziyad and sent Ma`qil ibn Qays ar-Riyah'i with two thousand experienced combatants towards Ahwaz and wrote to the governor of Basrah `Abdullah ibn `Abbas to send two thousand swordsmen of Basrah for the help of Ma`qil. Consequently, the contingent from Basrah also joined them at Ahwaz and after proper organisation they got ready for attacking the enemy. But al-Khirrit marched on along with his men to the hills of Ramhurmuz. These people also followed him and overtook him near these hills. Both arrayed their forces and started attacking each other. The result of this encounter was also that three hundred and seventy Kharijites were killed in the battlefield while the rest ran away. Ma`qil informed Amir al-mu'minin of his

performance and of the enemy's running away when Amir al-mu'minin directed him to chase them and so to shatter their power that they should not be able to raise heads again. On receipt of this order he moved on and overtook him on the coast of the Persian gulf where al-Khirrit had by persuasion secured the co-operation of the people and enlisting men from here and there, had collected a considerable force. When Ma`qil reached there, he raised the flag of peace and announced that those who had collected from here and there should get away. They would not be molested. The effect of this announcement was that save for his own community all others deserted him. He organised those very men and commenced the battle but valorous combatants of Basrah and Kufah displayed such excellent use of swords that in a short time one hundred and seventy men of the insurgents were killed while an-Nu`man ibn Suhban ar-Rasib'i encountered al-Khirrit (ibn Rashid an-Naji) and eventually felled him and killed him. Soon upon his fall the enemy lost ground and they fled away from the battlefield. Thereafter Ma`qil collected all the men, women and children from their camps at one place. From among them those who were Muslims were released after swearing of allegiance. Those who had turned heretics were called upon to resume Islam. Consequently except one old Christian all others secured release by accepting Islam and this old man was killed. Then he took with him those Christians of Bani Najiyah who had taken part in this revolt together with their families. When Ma`qil reached Ardashir Khurrah (a city of Iran) these prisoners wailed and cried, before its governor Masqalah ibn Hubayrah ash-Shaybani and beseeched humilatively to do something for their release. Masqalah sent word to Ma`qil through Dhuhl ibn al-Harith to sell these prisoners to him. Ma`qil agreed and sold those prisoners to him for five hundred thousand Dirhams and told him to dispatch the price immediately to Amir al-mu'minin. He said that he was sending the first instalment at once and the remaining instalments would also be sent soon. When Ma`qil met Amir al-mu'minin he related the whole event before him. Amir al-mu'minin ratified this action and waited for the price for some time, but Masqalah observed such deep silence as if nothing was due from him. At last Amir al-mu'minin sent a messenger to him and sent him word to either send the price or to come himself. On Amir al-mu'minin's order he came to Kufah and on demand of the price paid two hundred thousand Dirhams but to evade the balance went away to Mu`awiyah's who made him the governor of Tabarastan. When Amir al-mu'minin came to know all this he spoke these words (as in this sermon). Its sum total is that, "If he had stayed we would have been considerate to him in demanding the price and would have waited for improvement of his financial condition, but he fled away like slaves after displaying a showy act. Talk about his high perseverance had just started when people began to discuss his baseless and lowliness."

Sermon 45: Praise belongs to God, Whose mercy ...

About Allah's greatness and lowliness of this world

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)
وهو بعض خطبة طويلة خطبها يوم الفطر
وفيها يحمد الله ويذم الدنيا:

Praise is due to Allah from Whose mercy no one loses hope, from Whose bounty no one is deprived, from Whose forgiveness no one is disappointed and for Whose worship no one is too high. His mercy never ceases and His bounty is never missed.

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ غَيْرَ مَقْنُوطٍ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ، وَلَا مَحْلُوقٍ مِنْ نِعْمَتِهِ، وَلَا مَأْيُوسٍ مِنْ مَعْفَرَتِهِ، وَلَا مُسْتَنْكَفٍ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ، الَّذِي لَا تَبْرَحُ مِنْهُ رَحْمَةٌ، وَلَا تُفْقَدُ لَهُ نِعْمَةٌ.

This world is a place for which destruction is ordained and for its inhabitants departure from here is destined. It is sweet and green. It hastens towards its seeker and attaches to the heart of the viewer. So depart from here with the best of provision available with you and do not ask herein more than what is enough and do not demand from it more than subsistence.

وَالدُّنْيَا دَارٌ مُنِي لَهَا الْفَنَاءُ، وَلَا هِلَهَا مِنْهَا الْجَلَاءُ، وَهِيَ حُلُوءٌ حَضِرَةٌ، قَدْ عَجَلَتْ لِلطَّالِبِ، وَالتَّبَسَّتْ بِقَلْبِ النَّاطِرِ؛ فَارْتَحِلُوا مِنْهَا بِأَحْسَنِ مَا بَحَضَرَتْكُمْ مِنَ الزَّادِ، وَلَا تَسْأَلُوا فِيهَا فَوْقَ الْكِفَافِ، وَلَا تَطْلُبُوا مِنْهَا أَكْثَرَ مِنَ الْبَلَغِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 45

- (1) *Al-Saduq, Man la yahduru, I, 327;*
- (2) *al-Tusi, Misbah, 458; parts of it recorded by (3)*
- (3) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad;*
- (4) *al-Jahiz, al-Bayan, I, 171;*
- (5) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, II, 235;*
- (6) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf;*
- (7) *al-Baqillani, I'jaz, 222.*

Sermon 46: My God, I seek Thy refuge ...

When Amir al-mu'minin decided to march towards Syria (ash-Sham) he made this supplication when mounting the horse and placing his foot in the stirrup

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

عند عزمه على المسير إلى الشام

[وهو دعاء دعا به ربّه عند وضع رجله في الركاب]:

My God, I seek Thy protection from the hardships of journey, from the grief of returning and from the scene of devastation of property and men. O Allah, Thou art the companion in journey and Thou art one who is left behind for (protection of the) family.

None except Thee can join these two because one who is left behind cannot be a companion in journey nor one who is in company on a journey can at the same time be left behind.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ وَعَثَاءِ السَّفَرِ، وَكَآبَةِ الْمِنْقَلَبِ، وَسُوءِ الْمِنْظَرِ فِي الْأَهْلِ وَالْمَالِ وَالْوَالِدِ .
اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ الصَّاحِبُ فِي السَّفَرِ، وَأَنْتَ الْخَلِيفَةُ فِي الْأَهْلِ، وَلَا يَجْمَعُهُمَا غَيْرُكَ، لِأَنَّ الْمُسْتَخْلَفَ لَا يَكُونُ مُسْتَصْحَبًا، وَالْمُسْتَصْحَبَ لَا يَكُونُ مُسْتَخْلَفًا.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: The earlier part of this sermon is related from the Prophet but Amir al-mu'minin has completed it very aptly by adding most eloquent sentences at the end. This addition is from “None except Thee can join” upto the end.

قال السيد الشريف: أقول: وابتداء هذا الكلام مروى عن رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وآله)، وقد قفاه (عليه السلام) بأبلغ كلام وتممه بأحسن تمام; من قوله: «ولا يجمعُهُمَا غَيْرُكَ» إلى آخر الفصل.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 46

- (1) *A`tham al-Kufi, al-Futuh, II, 461;*
- (2) *Nasr, Siffin, 132;*
- (3) *al-Qadi al-Nu`man, Da`a'im, I, 347;*
- (4) *narrated from the Prophet (S) in al-'Azhari, Tahdhib, III, 153;*
- (5) *al-Nuri, Riyad al-salihin, 197, hadith 975.*

Sermon 47: O Kufah! It is as if I see you ...

About calamities befalling Kufah

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في ذكر الكوفة

O Kufah, as though I see you being drawn like the tanned leather of `Ukazi¹ in the market, you are being scraped by calamities and being ridden by severe troubles. I certainly² know that if any tyrant intends evil for you Allah will afflict him with worry and fling him with a killer (set someone on him to kill him).

كَأَنِّي بِكَ يَا كُوفَةُ تُمَدِّينَ مَدَّ الْأَدِيمِ الْعُكَاظِيِّ، تُعْرَكِينَ بِالنَّوَازِلِ، وَتُرَكَّبِينَ بِالزَّلَازِلِ، وَإِنِّي
لَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ مَا أَرَادَ بِكَ جَبَّارٌ سُوءًا إِلَّا ابْتِلَاءَهُ اللَّهُ بِشَاغِلٍ، وَرَمَاهُ بِقَاتِلٍ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 47

(1) *Ibn al-Faqih, Kitab al-buldan, 163;*

(2) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, bab al-bilad wa al-diyar.*

Notes

1. During pre-Islamic days a market used to be organised every year near Mecca. Its name was `Ukaz where mostly hides were traded as a result of which leather was attributed to it. Besides sale and purchase literary meetings were also arranged and Arabs used to attract admiration by reciting their works. After Islam, because of the better congregation in the shape of hajj this market went down.

2. This prophecy of Amir al-mu'minin was fulfilled word by word and the world saw how the people who had committed tyranny and oppression on the strength of their masterly power had to face tragic end and what ways of their destruction were engendered by their blood-shedding and homicidal activities. Consequently, the end of Ziyad ibn Abih (son of unknown father) was that when he intended to deliver a speech for vilification of Amir al-mu'minin suddenly paralysis overtook him and he could not get out of his bed thereafter. The end of the bloodshed perpetrated by `Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad was that he fell a prey to leprosy and eventually blood thirsty swords put him to death. The ferocity of al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf ath-Thaqafi drove him to the fate that snakes cropped up in his stomach as a result of which he died after severe pain. `Umar ibn Hubayrah al-Fazari died of leucoderma. Khalid ibn `Abdillah al-Qasri suffered the hardships of prison and was killed in a very bad way. Mus`ab ibn az-Zubayr and Yazid ibn al-Muhallab ibn Abi Sufrah were also killed by swords.

Sermon 48: Praise belongs to God when night ...

Delivered at the time of marching towards Syria.

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

عند المسير إلى الشام

قيل: إنه خطب بها وهو بالنخيلة خارجاً من الكوفة إلى صفين:

Praise is due to Allah when night spreads and darkens, and praise be to Allah whenever the star shines and sets. And praise be to Allah whose bounty never misses and whose favours cannot be repaid.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كُلَّمَا وَقَبَ لَيْلٌ وَعَسَقَ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كُلَّمَا لَاحَ نَجْمٌ وَخَفَقَ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَيْرَ مَفْقُودِ
الْأَنْعَامِ، وَلَا مُكَافَأَ الْأَفْضَالِ.

Well, I have sent forward my vanguard¹ and have ordered them to remain in camp on this bank of the River till my order reaches them. My intention is that I should cross this water over to the small habitation of people residing on the sides of the Tigris and rouse them to march with you towards the enemy and keep them as auxiliary force for you.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ بَعَثْتُ مُقَدِّمَتِي، وَأَمَرْتُهُمْ بِالزُّومِ هَذَا الْمَلْطَاطِ، حَتَّى يَأْتِيَهُمْ أَمْرِي، وَقَدْ رَأَيْتُ
أَنْ أَقْطَعَ هَذِهِ النُّطْفَةَ إِلَى شِرْذِمَةٍ مِنْكُمْ، مُوْطِنِينَ أَكْنَافَ دَجَلَةَ، فَأُتْمِضَهُمْ مَعَكُمْ إِلَى عَدُوِّكُمْ،
وَأَجْعَلُهُمْ مِنْ أَمْدَادِ الْقُوَّةِ لَكُمْ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Here by "miltat" Amir al-mu'minin has meant the direction where he had ordered the men to camp and that was the bank of the Euphrates, and "miltat" is used for the bank of a river although its literal meaning is level ground whereas by "nutfah" he means the water of the Euphrates, and these are amazing expressions.

قال السيد الشريف: أقول: يعني عليه السلام بالملطاط ها هنا: السمت الذي أمرهم بلزومه، وهو شاطئ الفرات، ويقال ذلك أيضاً لشاطئ البحر، وأصله ما استوى من الأرض. ويعني بالنطفة: ماء الفرات، وهو من غريب العبارات وعجيبها.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 48

(1) *Nasr, Siffin, 131, 132;*

(2) *mentioned by a group of biographers, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, I, 287.*

Notes

1. Amir al-mu'minin delivered this sermon when he camped at the Valley of an-Nukhaylah on Wednesday the 5th Shawwal 37 A.H. on his way to Siffin. The Vanguard mentioned herein means the twelve thousand persons whom he had sent towards Siffin under the command of Ziyad ibn an-Nadr and Shurayh ibn Hani, while the small force of al-Mada'in mentioned by him was a contingent of twelve hundred men who had come up in response to Amir al-mu'minin's call.

Sermon 49: Praise belongs to God, Who knows the inside ...

About Allah's greatness and sublimity

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها جملة من صفات الربوبية والعلم الالهي

Praise be to Allah Who lies inside all hidden things, and towards Whom all open things guide. He cannot be seen by the eye of an onlooker, but the eye which does not see Him cannot deny Him while the mind that proves His existence cannot perceive Him. He is so high in sublimity that nothing can be more sublime than He, while in nearness, He is so near that no one can be nearer than He.

But his sublimity does not put Him at a distance from anything of His creation, nor does His nearness bring them on equal level to Him. He has not informed (human) wit about the limits of His qualities.

Nevertheless, He has not prevented it from securing essential knowledge of Him. So he is such that all signs of existence stand witness for Him till the denying mind also believes in Him. Allah is sublime beyond what is described by those who liken Him to things or those who deny Him.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي بَطَّنَ خَفِيَّاتِ الْأُمُورِ، وَدَلَّتْ عَلَيْهِ أَعْلَامُ الظُّهُورِ، وَامْتَنَعَ عَلَى عَيْنِ
الْبَصِيرِ؛ فَلَا عَيْنٌ مَنْ لَمْ يَرَهُ تُنْكِرْهُ، وَلَا قَلْبٌ مَنْ أَثْبَتَهُ يُبْصِرْهُ، سَبَقَ فِي الْعُلُوِّ فَلَا شَيْءَ أَعْلَى
مِنْهُ، وَقَرَّبَ فِي الدُّنُوِّ فَلَا شَيْءَ أَقْرَبُ مِنْهُ، فَلَا اسْتِعْلَاؤُهُ بِأَعَدَهُ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ، وَلَا قُرْبُهُ
سَاوَاهُمْ فِي الْمَكَانِ بِهِ، لَمْ يُطْلِعِ الْعُقُولَ عَلَى تَحْدِيدِ صِفَتِهِ، وَلَمْ يَجْجِبْهَا عَنْ وَاجِبِ مَعْرِفَتِهِ، فَهُوَ
الَّذِي تَشْهَدُ لَهُ أَعْلَامُ الْوُجُودِ، عَلَى إِقْرَارِ قَلْبِ ذِي الْجُحُودِ، تَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَمَّا يَقُولُ الْمُشْبِهُونَ
بِهِ وَالْجَاهِدُونَ لَهُ غُلُوًّا كَبِيرًا!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 49

(1) *Al-Wasiti, 'Uyun, see al-Majlisi, Bihar, vol.67, 304.*

Sermon 50: Verily, the source of misguidance lies in ...

Admixture of right and wrong

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها بيان لما يخرب العالم به من الفتن وبيان هذه الفتن

The basis of the occurrence of evils are those desires which are acted upon and the orders that are innovated. They are against the Book of Allah. People co-operate with each other about them even though it is against the Religion of Allah. If wrong had been pure and unmixed it would not be hidden from those who are in search of it. And if right had been pure without admixture of wrong those who bear hatred towards it would have been silenced.

What is, however, done is that something is taken from here and something from there and the two are mixed! At this stage Satan overpowers his friends and they alone escape for whom 'virtue has been apportioned by Allah from before' (ref. 21:101).

إِنَّمَا بَدَأُ وَفُوعَ الْفِتَنِ أَهْوَاءُ تُتَّبَعُ، وَأَحْكَامُ تُبْتَدَعُ، يُخَالَفُ فِيهَا كِتَابُ اللَّهِ، وَيَتَوَلَّى عَلَيْهَا رِجَالٌ رِجَالًا، عَلَى غَيْرِ دِينِ اللَّهِ، فَلَوْ أَنَّ الْبَاطِلَ خَلَصَ مِنْ مِزَاجِ الْحَقِّ لَمْ يَخْفَ عَلَى الْمُؤْتَادِينَ، وَلَوْ أَنَّ الْحَقَّ خَلَصَ مِنْ لَبْسِ الْبَاطِلِ انْقَطَعَتْ عَنْهُ أَلْسُنُ الْمُعَانِدِينَ؛ وَلَكِنْ يُؤَخِّدُ مِنْ هَذَا ضِعْثٌ، وَمِنْ هَذَا ضِعْثٌ، فَيَمْرَجَانِ! فَهُنَالِكَ يَسْتَوِي الشَّيْطَانُ عَلَى أَوْلِيَائِهِ، وَيَنْجُو الَّذِينَ سَبَقَتْ لَهُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ الْحُسْنَى.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 50

- (1) *al-Barqi, al-Mahasin, I, 208;*
- (2) *al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, bab al-bida` wa al-ra'y wa al-maqayis;*
- (3) *Idem., Rawdat al-Kafi, 58;*
- (4) *al-Ya`qubi, Ta'rikh, II, 136;*
- (5) *al-Tawhidi, al-Basa'ir, 32.*

Sermon 51: They ask you to feed them ...

When in Siffin the men of Mu`awiyah overpowered the men of Amir al-mu`minin and occupied the bank of River Euphrates and prevented them from taking its water, Amir al-mu`minin said:

ومن كلامه (عليه السلام)

لما غلب أصحاب معاوية أصحابه عليه السلام على شريعة الفرات بصفين ومنعواهم الماء

They¹ are asking you morsels of battle. So either you remain in ignominy and the lowest position or drench your swords with blood and quench your thirst with water. Real death is in the life of subjugation while real life is in dying as subjugators. Beware, Mu`awiyah is leading a small group of insurgents and has kept them in dark about the true facts with the result that they have made their bosoms the targets of death.

قَدْ اسْتَطَعْمُوكُمُ الْقِتَالَ، فَأَقْرُوا عَلَى مَذَلَّةٍ، وَتَأْخِرِ مَحَلَّةً، أَوْ رَوْوَا السُّيُوفَ مِنَ الدِّمَاءِ تَرْوُوا مِنَ الْمَاءِ، فَالْمَوْتُ فِي حَيَاتِكُمْ مَفْهُورِينَ، وَالْحَيَاةُ فِي مَوْتِكُمْ قَاهِرِينَ. أَلَا وَإِنَّ مُعَاوِيَةَ قَادَ لَمَةً مِنَ الْعَوَاةِ وَعَمَّسَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْحَبْرَ، حَتَّى جَعَلُوا نُحُورَهُمْ أَعْرَاضَ الْمَنِيَّةِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 51

(1) *Nasr, Siffin, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh, I, 329.*

Notes

1. Amir al-mu'minin had not reached Siffin when Mu`awiyah posted forty thousand men on the bank of the River to close the way to the watering place, so that none except the Syrians could take the water. When Amir al-mu'minin's force alighted there they found that there was no watering place except this one for them to take water. If there was one it was difficult to reach there by crossing high hillocks. Amir al-mu'minin sent Sa'sa'ah ibn Suhan al-`Abdi to Mu`awiyah with the request to raise the control over water. Mu`awiyah refused. On this side Amir al-mu'minin's army was troubled by thirst. When Amir al-mu'minin noticed this position he said, "Get up and secure water by dint of sword." Consequently, these thirsty persons drew their swords out of sheaths, put arrows in their bows and dispersing Mu`awiyah's men went right down into the River and then hit these guards away and occupied the watering place themselves.

Now, Amir al-mu'minin's men also desired that just as Mu`awiyah had put restriction on water by occupation of the watering place, the same treatment should be accorded to him and his men and no Syrian should be allowed water and everyone of them should be made to die of thirst. But Amir al-mu'minin said, "Do you want to take the same brutal step which these Syrians had taken? Never prevent anyone from water. Whoever wants to drink, may drink and whoever wants to take away may take away." Consequently, despite occupation of the River by Amir al-mu'minin's army no one was prevented from the water and everyone was given full liberty to take water.

Sermon 52: Beware, the world is wrapping itself...

The downfall of the world and reward and punishment in the next world.

(This sermon has already appeared earlier but due to the difference between the two versions we have quoted it again here). Its subject is the downfall of the world and reward and punishment in the next world.

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

قد تقدّم مختارها برواية ونذكرها هاهنا برواية أخرى لتغاير الروایتين

Beware, the world is wrapping itself up and has announced its departure. Its known things have become strangers and it is speedily moving backward. It is advancing its inhabitants towards destruction and driving its neighbours towards death. Its sweet things (enjoyments) have become sour, and its clear things have become polluted. Consequently, what has remained of it is just like the remaining water in a vessel or a mouthful of water in the measure. If a thirsty person drinks it his thirst is not quenched.

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا قَدْ تَصَرَّمَتْ، وَأَذْنَتْ بِإِنْفِضَاءِ، وَتَنَكَّرَ مَعْرُوفُهَا، وَأَذْبَرَتْ حَدَاءَ، فَهِيَ تَخْفِرُ بِالْإِنْفَاءِ سُكَّانَهَا، وَتَخْدُو بِالْمَوْتِ حَيْرَانَهَا، وَقَدْ مَرَّمْنَا مَا كَانَ حُلُوءًا، وَكَدِرَ مِنْهَا مَا كَانَ صَفُوءًا، فَلَمْ يَبْقَ مِنْهَا إِلَّا سَمَلَةٌ كَسَمَلَةِ الْأَدَاوَةِ، أَوْ جُرْعَةٌ كَجُرْعَةِ الْمَقْلَةِ، لَوْ تَمَرَّزَهَا الصَّدْيَانُ لَمْ يَنْفَعُ.

O creatures of Allah, get ready to go out of this world for whose inhabitants decay is ordained, and (beware) heart's wishes should overpower you, nor should you take your stay (in life) to be long. By Allah, if you cry like the she-camel that has lost its young one, call out like the cooing of pigeons, make noise like devoted recluses and turn to Allah leaving your wealth and children as a means to secure His nearness and high position with Him or the forgiveness of sins which have been covered by His books and recorded by His angels, it would be less than His reward that I expect for you or His retribution that I fear about you.

فَأَرْمَعُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الرَّحِيلَ عَنْ هَذِهِ الدَّارِ الْمُقْدُورِ عَلَى أَهْلِهَا الزَّوَالِ، وَلَا يَغْلِبَنَّكُمْ فِيهَا الْأَمَلُ، وَلَا يَطُولَنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ الْأَمَدُ. فَوَاللَّهِ لَوْ حَنَنْتُمْ حِينَ الْوُلَّةِ الْعِجَالِ، وَدَعَوْتُمْ بِحَدِيدِ الْحَمَامِ، وَجَارْتُمْ جُؤَارَ مُتَبَتِّلِي الرُّهْبَانِ، وَخَرَجْتُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ، أَلْتَمَسَ الْفُرْبَةَ إِلَيْهِ فِي ارْتِفَاعِ دَرَجَةِ عِنْدَهُ، أَوْ عُفْرَانَ سِيِّئَةِ أَحْصَنَتَهَا كُتُبُهُ، وَحَفِظَتْهَا رُسُلُهُ، لَكَانَ قَلِيلًا فَيَمَا أَرْجُو لَكُمْ مِنْ ثَوَابِهِ، وَأَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ عِقَابِهِ .

By Allah, if your hearts melt down thoroughly and your eyes shed tears of blood either in hope for Him or for fear from Him and you are also allowed to live in this world all the time that it lasts even then your actions

cannot pay for His great bounties over you and His having guided you towards faith.

وَتَاللَّهِ لَوْ اَمْنَانَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ اَمْنِيَاثًا، وَسَالَتْ عُيُونُكُمْ مِنْ رَغْبَةِ اِلَيْهِ وَرَهْبَةِ مِنْهُ دَمًا، ثُمَّ عَمِرْتُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا، مَا الدُّنْيَا بَاقِيَةً، مَا جَزَتْ اَعْمَالُكُمْ [عَنْكُمْ] . وَلَوْ لَمْ تُبْغُوا شَيْئًا مِنْ جُهْدِكُمْ . اَنْعَمَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ الْعِظَامَ، وَهَدَاهُ اِيَّاكُمْ لِاِيْمَانٍ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 52

- (1) *al-Saduq, Man la yahduruh, I, 329;*
- (2) *al-Tusi, al-Misbah, 461;*
- (3) *Parts of it in Abu Nu`aym, al-Hilyah, I, 77;*
- (4) *al-Mufid, al-'Amali, 87.*

Sermon 53: The best kind of sacrifice ...

Description of the Day of Sacrifice (Id al-Adha)

ومنها: في ذكر يوم النحر وصفة الاضحية

For an animal to be fully fit for sacrifice it is necessary that both its ears should be raised upwards and its eyes should be healthy. If the ears and the eyes are sound the animal of sacrifice is sound and perfect, even though its horn be broken or it drags its feet to the place of sacrifice.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Here place of sacrifice means place of slaughter.

وَ مِنْ تَمَامِ الْأَضْحِيَّةِ اسْتِشْرَافُ أُذُنِهَا، وَ سَلَامَةُ عَيْنِهَا. فَإِذَا سَلِمَتِ الْأُذُنُ وَالْعَيْنُ سَلِمَتِ الْأَضْحِيَّةُ وَ تَمَّتْ، وَلَوْ كَانَتْ عَضْبَاءَ لُقْرَنٍ بَجُرُّ رِجْلِهَا إِلَى الْمَنَسَكِ. .

قال السيد الشريف: وَالْمَنَسَكُ هُنَا الْمَذْبَحُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 53

- (1) *Al-Saduq, Man la yahduruh, I, 461;*
- (2) *al-Tusi, Misbah, 429;*
- (3) *al-Khwarazmi, al-Manaqib, 108;*
- (4) *Nasr, Siffin, 201;*
- (5) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-'Imamah, 94;*
- (6) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-'Iqd, II, 108.*

Sermon 54: Rush towards me ...

On the swearing of allegiance

وَ مِنْ كَلَامِ لَهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ
فِي ذِكْرِ الْبَيْعَةِ

وفيه يصف أصحابه بصفين حين طال منعهم له من قتال أهل الشام

They leapt upon me as the camels leap upon each other on their arrival for drinking water, having been let loose after unfastening of their four legs till I thought they would either kill me or kill one another in front of me.

I thought over this matter in and out to the extent that it prevented me from sleeping. But I found no way except to fight them or else to reject whatever has been brought by Muhammad (S). I found that to face war was easier for me than to face the retribution, and the hardships of this world were easier than the hardships of the next world.

فَتَدَاكُّوا عَلَيَّ تَدَاكُّ الْأَيْلِ الْهَيْمِ يَوْمَ وِرْدِهَا، قَدْ أَرْسَلَهَا رَاعِيهَا، وَخُلِعَتْ مَتَانِيهَا، حَتَّى ظَنَنْتُ أَنَّهُمْ قَاتِلِي، أَوْ بَعْضُهُمْ قَاتِلُ بَعْضٍ لَدَيَّ، وَقَدْ قَلْبْتُ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ بَطْنُهُ وَظَهْرُهُ حَتَّى مَنَعَنِي النَّوْمَ، فَمَا وَجَدْتَنِي يَسْعَنِي إِلَّا قِتَالُهُمْ أَوْ الْجُحُودُ بِمَا جَاءَ بِهِ مُحَمَّدٌ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ)، فَكَانَتْ مُعَالَجَةُ الْقِتَالِ أَهْوَنَ عَلَيَّ مِنْ مُعَالَجَةِ الْعِقَابِ، وَمَوْتَاتُ الدُّنْيَا أَهْوَنَ عَلَيَّ مِنْ مَوْتَاتِ الْآخِرَةِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 54

- (1) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, IV;*
- (2) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, II, 128 (d.k.k);*
- (3) *Abu Mikhnaf, al-Jamal, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, I, 340;*
- (4) *also the sources mentioned under Sermon:26.*

Sermon 55: As to your statement that ...

When Amir al-mu'minin's men showed impatience on his delay in giving them permission to fight in Siffin, he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

وقد استبطأ أصحابه إذنه لهم في القتال بصفين

Well, as for your idea whether this (delay) is due to my unwillingness for death, then by Allah I do not care whether I proceed towards death or death advances towards me. As for your impression that it may be due to my misgivings about the people of Syria (ash-Sham), well by Allah, I did not put off war even for a day except in the hope that some group may join me, find guidance through me and see my light with their weak eyes. This is dearer to me than to kill them in the state of their misguidance although they would be bearing their own sins.

أَمَّا قَوْلُكُمْ: أَكَلَّ ذَلِكَ كَرَاهِيَةَ الْمَوْتِ؟ فَوَاللَّهِ مَا أُبَالِي دَخَلْتُ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ أَوْ حَرَجَ الْمَوْتُ إِلَيَّ.

وَأَمَّا قَوْلُكُمْ: شَكَّا فِي أَهْلِ الشَّامِ! فَوَاللَّهِ مَا دَفَعْتُ الْحَرْبَ يَوْمًا إِلَّا وَأَنَا أَطْمَعُ أَنْ تُلْحَقَ بِي طَائِفَةٌ فَتَهْتَدِيَ بِي، وَتَعُشُّوْا إِلَى صَوْتِي، فَهُوَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ أَقْتُلَهَا عَلَى ضَلَالَتِهَا، وَإِنْ كَانَتْ تَبُوءُ بِأَنَا مَهَا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 55

(1) *Nasr, Siffin, 209;*

(2) `Abd al-Zahra', *Masadir, II, 27, says that statements to this effect have been widely narrated from `Ali (A).*

Sermon 56: In the company of the Prophet (S)

About steadiness in the battlefield

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

يصف أصحاب رسول الله

وذلك يوم صفين حين أمر الناس بالصلح

In the company of the Prophet of Allah (S) we used to fight our parents, sons, brothers and uncles, and this continued us in our faith, in submission, in our following the right path, in endurance over the pangs of pain and in our fight against the enemy.

A man from our side and one from the enemy would pounce upon each other like energetic men contesting as to who would kill the other; sometime our man got over his adversary and some-time the enemy's man got over ours.

وَلَقَدْ كُنَّا مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، نَقْتُلُ آبَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاؤَنَا وَإِخْوَانَنَا وَأَعْمَامَنَا، مَا يَزِيدُنَا ذَلِكَ إِلَّا إِيمَانًا وَتَسْلِيمًا، وَمُضِيًّا عَلَى اللَّقْمِ، وَصَبْرًا عَلَى مَضَضِ الْأَلْمِ، وَجِدًّا عَلَى جِهَادِ الْعَدُوِّ، وَلَقَدْ كَانَ الرَّجُلُ مِنَّا وَالْآخَرُ مِنْ عَدُوِّنَا يَتَصَاوَلَانِ تَصَاوُلَ الْفَحْلَيْنِ، يَتَخَالَسَانِ أَنْفُسَهُمَا، أَيُّهُمَا يَسْقِي صَاحِبَهُ كَأْسَ الْمُنُونِ، فَمَرَّةً لَنَا مِنْ عَدُوِّنَا، وَمَرَّةً لِعَدُوِّنَا مِنَّا،

When Allah had observed our truth, He sent ignominy to our foe and sent His succour to us till Islam got established (like the camel) with neck on the ground and resting in its place. By my life, if we had also behaved like you, no pillar of (our) religion could have been raised, nor could the tree of faith have borne leaves. By Allah, certainly you will now milk our blood (instead of milk) and eventually you will face shame.¹

فَلَمَّا رَأَى اللَّهُ صِدْقَنَا أَنْزَلَ بِعَدُوِّنَا الْكِبْتَ، وَأَنْزَلَ عَلَيْنَا النَّصْرَ، حَتَّى اسْتَقَرَّ الْأَسْلَامُ مُلْقِيًا جِرَانَهُ وَمُتَبَوِّئًا أَوْطَانَهُ، وَلَعَمْرِي لَوْ كُنَّا نَأْتِي مَا أَتَيْتُمْ، مَا قَامَ لِلدِّينِ عَمُودٌ، وَلَا اخْضَرَّ لِلْإِيمَانِ عُودٌ، وَأَيْمُ اللَّهِ لَتَحْتَلِبَنَّهَا دَمًا، وَلَتَتَّبِعَنَّهَا نَدْمًا!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 56

(1) *Nasr, Siffin, 520;*

(2) *al-Zamakhshari, IV, Rabi`, bab al-qatl wa al-shahadah;*

(3) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat;*

(4) *al-Waqidi, al-Jamal; for (3) and (4) see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, I, 348-355.*

Notes

1. When Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr had been killed Mu`awiyah sent `Abdullah ibn `Amir al-Hadrami to Basrah to exhort the people of Basrah for avenging `Uthman's blood because the natural inclination of most of the inhabitants of Basrah and particularly of Banu Tamim was towards `Uthman. Consequently, he stayed with Banu Tamim. This was the time when `Abdullah ibn `Abbas, the governor of Basrah had gone to Kufah for condolence about Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, leaving Ziyad ibn `Ubayd (Abih) as his substitute. When the atmosphere in Basrah began to deteriorate Ziyad informed Amir al-mu'minin of all the facts. Amir al-mu'minin tried to get Banu Tamim of Kufah ready but they kept complete

silence and gave no reply. When Amir al-mu'minin saw this weakness and shamelessness on their part he gave this speech namely that "During the days of the Prophet (S) we did not see whether those killed at our hands were our kith and kin, but whoever collided with Right, we were prepared to collide with him. If we too had acted carelessly or been guilty of inaction like you then neither religion could have taken root nor could Islam prosper. "The result of this shaking was that A`yan ibn Dabi`ah al-Mujashi`i prepared himself but on reaching Basrah he was killed by the swords of the enemy. Thereafter, Amir al-mu'minin sent off Jariyah ibn Qudamah as-Sa`di with fifty men of Bani Tamim. First he tried his best to canvass his own tribe but instead of following the right path they stooped down to abusing and fighting. Then Jariyah called Ziyad and the tribe of Azd for his help. Soon on their arrival (Abdullah) Ibn al-Hadrami also came out with his men. Swords were used from both sides for some time but eventually Ibn al-Hadrami fled away with seventy persons and took refuge in the house of Sabil as-Sa`di. When Jariyah saw no other way he got this house set on fire. When fire rose into flames they came out in search of safety but could not succeed in running away. Some of them were crushed to death under the wall

Sermon 57: Soon after me, there would be put on you...

Amir al-mu'minin said to his companions about Mu`awiyah

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام) لاصحابه

في صفة رجل مذموم، ثم في فضله هو عليه السلام

Soon after me, there would be put on you a man with a broad mouth and a big belly. He would swallow whatever he gets and would crave for what he does not get. You should kill him but (I know) you would not kill him. He would command you to abuse me and to renounce me. As for abusing, you do abuse me because that would mean purification for me and salvation for you. As regards renunciation, you should not renounce me because I have been born on the natural religion (Islam) and was foremost in accepting it as well as in Hijrah (migrating from Mecca to Medina).¹

أما إِنَّهُ سَيَظْهَرُ عَلَيْكُمْ بَعْدِي رَجُلٌ رَحْبُ الْبُلْعُومِ، مُنْدَحِقُ الْبَطْنِ، يَأْكُلُ مَا يَجِدُ، وَيَطْلُبُ مَا لَا يَجِدُ، فَافْتُلُوهُ، وَلَنْ تَقْتُلُوهُ! أَلَا وَإِنَّهُ سَيَأْمُرُكُمْ بِسَيِّئِ الْبِرَاءَةِ مِنِّي؛ فَأَمَّا السَّبُّ فَسُبُّونِي، فَإِنَّهُ لِي زَكَاةٌ، وَلَكُمْ نَجَاةٌ؛ وَأَمَّا الْبِرَاءَةُ فَلَا تَتَبَرَّأُوا مِنِّي، فَإِنِّي وَلَدْتُ عَلَى الْفِطْرَةِ، وَسَبَقْتُ إِلَى الْإِيمَانِ وَالْهِجْرَةِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 57

- (1) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, I, 373;*
- (2) *al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi (1278) 207;*
- (3) *al-'Ayyashi, Tafsir, under verse 16:106;*
- (4) *al-Himyari, Qurb al-'asnad;*
- (5) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, II, 119;*
- (6) *al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak, II, 385;*
- (7) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, I, 214, II, 374;*
- (8) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, * 184.*

Notes

1. About the person to whom Amir al-mu'minin has alluded in this sermon some people hold that he is Ziyad ibn Abih; some hold that he is al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf ath-Thaqafi and some hold that he is Mughirah ibn Shu`bah. But most of the commentators have held him to be Mu`awiyah and this is correct because the qualities that Amir al-mu'minin has described prove true fully on him alone. Thus Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written about the gluttonous quality of Mu`awiyah that once the prophet sent for him and he was informed that Mu`awiyah was busy eating. Then a second and third time a man was sent to call him but he brought the same news. Thereupon the Prophet said, "May Allah never satisfy his belly." The effect of this curse was that when he felt tired of eating he would say, "Take away, for, by Allah I am not satiated but I am tired and disgusted." Similarly, his abusing Amir al-mu'minin and ordering his officers for it are such accepted facts of history about which there is no scope of denying. In this connection such words were used on the pulpit that even Allah and the Prophet were hit by them. Thus, Umm al-mu'minin Umm Salamah wrote to Mu`awiyah, "Certainly you people abuse Allah and the Prophet, and this is like this that you hurl abuses on `Ali and those who love him, while I do stand witness that Allah and the Prophet did love him." (al-'Iqd al-Farid, Vol. 3, p. 131)

Thanks to `Umar ibn `Abdil-`Aziz who put a stop to it, and introduced the following verse in place of abuse in the sermons: Verily Allah enjoineeth justice and benevolence (to others) and giving unto the kindred, and forbidden lewdness, and evil, and rebellion; He exhorteth you that ye may take heed (Qur'an 16:90)

In this sermon Amir al-mu'minin has ordered his killing on the basis of the Prophet's order that "When you (O' Muslims) see Mu`awiyah on my pulpit, kill him." (Kitab Siffin, pp. 243, 248; Sharh of Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Vol. 1, p.348; Ta'rikh Baghdad, Vol. 12, p. 181; Mizan al-Itidal, Vol. 2, p. 128; Tahdhib at-tahdhib, Vol. 2, p. 428; Vol. 5, p. 110; Vol. 7, p. 324)

Sermon 58: Storms may overtake you...

Addressing the Kharijites, Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن كلامه (عليه السلام)

كلم به الخوارج حين اعتزلوا الحكومة وتنادوا: أن لا حكم إلا لله

Storms may overtake you while there may be none to prick you (for reforms). Shall I be witness to my becoming heretic after acceptance of Faith and fighting in the company of the Prophet?!

"In that case I shall be misguided and I shall not be on the right path."
(*Qur'an, 6:56*).

So you should return to your evil places, and get back on the traces of your heels. Beware! Certainly you will meet, after me, overwhelming disgrace and sharp sword and tradition that will be adopted by the oppressors as a norm towards you.¹

أَصَابَكُمْ حَاصِبٌ، وَلَا بَقِيَّ مِنْكُمْ أَبْرٌ، أَبْعَدُ إِيمَانِي بِاللَّهِ وَجِهَادِي مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) أَشْهَدُ عَلَى نَفْسِي بِالْكَفْرِ! لَقَدْ ضَلَلْتُ إِذَا وَمَا أَنَا مِنَ الْمُهْتَدِينَ! (فَأَوْبُوا شَرَّ مَا ب، وَارْجِعُوا عَلَى أَثْرِ الْأَعْقَابِ، أَمَا إِنَّكُمْ سَتَلْقَوْنَ بَعْدِي ذُلًّا شَامِلًا، وَسِنْفًا قَاطِعًا، وَأَثْرَةً يَتَّخِذُهَا الظَّالِمُونَ فِيكُمْ سُنَّةً.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: In the words "wala baqiyah minkum abirun" used by Amir al-mu'minin the "abir" has been related with "ba" and "ra" and it has been taken from the Arab saying "rajulun abirun" which means the man who prunes the date-palm trees and improves them. In one version the word is "athir" and its meaning is "relator of good news."

In my view this is more appropriate, as though Amir al-mu'minin intends to say that there should remain none to carry news. In one version the word appears as "abiz" with "za" which means one who leaps. One who dies is also called "abiz".

قال الشريف: قوله عليه السلام: «ولا بقي منكم أبر» يُروى على ثلاثة أوجه: أحدها أن يكون كما ذكرناه، بالراء، من قولهم: رجلٌ أبرٌ: للذي يأبر النخل، أي: يصلحه. ويروى: «أثر»، يُراد به: الذي يَأثر الحديث، أي: يحكيه ويرويّه، وهو أصح الوجوه عندي، كأنه عليه السلام قال: لا بقي منكم مُحبر! ويروى: «أبز». بالزاي معجمة. وهو: الواثب، والهالك أيضاً يقال له: أبرٌ

Alternative Sources for Sermon 58

- (1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 48, 3378;*
- (2) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-'Imamah, I, 124;*
- (3) *Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, Tadhkirah, 100;*
- (4) *al-Tabari, al-Mustarshid, 162;*
- (5) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, under (a.b.r);*

(6) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, II, 369;*

(7) *al-Mubarrad, al-Kamil, II, 141.*

Notes

1. History corroborates that after Amir al-mu'minin, the Kharijites had to face all sorts of ignominy and disgrace and wherever they raised their heads for creating trouble, they were met with swords and spears. Thus Ziyad ibn Abih, `Ubaydullah ibn Ziyad, al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, Mus`ab ibn az-Zubayr and al-Muhallab ibn Abi Sufrah left no stone unturned in annihilating them from the surface of the globe, particularly al-Muhallab chased them for nineteen years, routed them thoroughly and rested only after completing their destruction.

At-Tabari writes that when ten thousand Kharijites collected in Silla wa sillibra (the name of a mountain in Ahwaz) then al-Muhallab faced them so steadfastly that he killed seven thousand Kharijites, while the remaining three thousand fled towards Kirman for life. But when the Governor of Persia noticed their rebellious activities he surrounded them in Sabur and killed a good number of them then and there. Those remained again fled to Isfahan and Kirman. From there they again formed a contingent and advanced towards Kufah via Basrah. Al-Harith ibn Abi Rabi`ah al-Makhzumi and `Abd ar-Rahman ibn Mikhnaf al-Azdi stood up with six thousand combatants to stop their advance, and turned them out of Iraq's boundaries. In this way successive encounters completely trampled their military power and turning them out of cities compelled them to roam about in the deserts. Afterwards also, when they rose in the form of groups they were crushed. (at-Ta'rikh, Vol. 2, pp. 580-591); Ibn al-Athir, Vol. 4, pp. 196-206).

Sermon 59: The place they shall fall ...

When Amir al-mu'minin showed his intention to fight the Kharijites he was told that they had crossed the bridge of Nahrawan and gone over to the other side. Amir al-mu'minin said:

وقال (عليه السلام)

لما عزم على حرب الخوارج

وقيل له: إن القوم قد عبروا جسر النهروان

Their falling place is on this side of the river. By Allah, not even ten of them will survive while from your side not even ten will be killed.¹

مَصَارِعُهُمْ دُونَ النَّطْفَةِ، وَاللَّهِ لَا يُقْلِتُ مِنْهُمْ عَشْرَةً، وَلَا يَهْلِكُ مِنْكُمْ عَشْرَةً.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: In this sermon "nutfah" implies the River Euphrates, and for water this is the nicest expression, even though water may be much. We have indicated that in an earlier sermon (48) where a similar expression was used.

قال الشريف: يعني بالنطفة: ماء النهر، وهي أفصح كناية عن الماء وإن كان كثيراً جمًّا،

وقد أشرنا إلى ذلك فيما تقدم عند مضي ما أشبهه.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 59

- (1) *Al-Bayhaqi, al-Mahasin, 385;*
- (2) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, II, 416;*
- (3) *al-Mubarrad, al-Kamil, II, 120.*

Notes

1. This prophecy cannot be attributed to wit and farsightedness, because farsighted eyes may forecast victory or defeat and preconceive the outcome of war but to tell about the correct figures of the killed on either side is beyond their capacity. This can be done only by one who can unveil the unknown future and see the coming scene with his eyes and who sees the sketches yet to appear on the page of the future with the help of the light of knowledge possessed by him as Imam. Consequently, events occurred just according to what this inheritor of the Prophet's knowledge had said, and from among the Kharijites all except nine persons were killed. Two of them fled away to `Uman, two to Sijistan, two to Kirman and two to al-Jazirah while one escaped to Tall Mawzan. Of Amir al-mu'minin's party only eight men fell as martyrs.

Sermon 60: By Allah! No, not yet...

When Amir al-mu'minin was told that the Kharijites had been totally killed, he said:

وقال (عليه السلام)

لما قتل الخوارج

فقبل له: يا أمير المؤمنين، هلك القوم بأجمعهم، فقال:

By Allah! No, not yet. They still exist in the loins of men and wombs of women. Whenever a chief would appear from among them, he would be cut down till the last of them would turn thieves and robbers. ¹

كَلَّا وَاللَّهِ، إِنَّهُمْ نُطِفُ فِي أَصْلَابِ الرِّجَالِ، وَقَرَارَاتِ النِّسَاءِ، كَلَّمَا نَجَمَ مِنْهُمْ قَرْنٌ قُطِعَ، حَتَّى يَكُونَ آخِرُهُمْ لُصُوصًا سَلَابِينَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 60

- (1) *Al-Bayhaqi, al-Mahasin, 385;*
- (2) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, II, 416;*
- (3) *al-Mubarrad, al-Kamil, II, 120.*

Notes

1. This prophecy of Amir al-mu'minin also proved true word by word. Every chief of Kharijites who rose was put to sword. A few of their chiefs who were badly put to death are mentioned here:

1) Nafi` ibn Azraq al-Hanafi: the largest group of the Kharijites namely al-Azariqah is named after him. He was killed by Salamah al-Bahili during encounter with the army of Muslim ibn `Ubays.

2) Najdah ibn `Amir: the an-Najadat al-`Adhiriyah sect of Kharijites is named after him. Abu Fudayk al-Khariji got him killed.

3) `Abdullah ibn Ibad at-Tamimi: the sect Ibadite (Ibadiyyah) is named after him. He was killed during encounter with `Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn `Atiyah.

4) Abu Bayhas Haysam ibn Jabir ad-Duba'i: the sect of al-Bayhasiyyah is named after him. `Uthman ibn Hayyan al-Murri the governor of Medina got his hands and feet severed and then killed him.

5) `Urwah ibn Udayyah at-Tamimi: Ziyad ibn Abih killed him during the reign of Mu`awiyah.

6) Qatari ibn al-Fuja'h al-Mazini at-Tamimi: when he encountered the army of Sufyan ibn al-Abrad al-Kalbi in Tabarastan then Sawrah ibn al-Hurr ad-Darimi killed him.

7) Abu Bilal Mirdas ibn Udayyah at-Tamimi: was killed in encounter with `Abbas ibn Akhdar al-Mazini.

8) Shawdhab al-Khariji al-Yashkuri: was killed during encounter with Sa'id ibn `Amr al-Harashi.

9) Hawtharah ibn Wada` al-Asadi: was killed at the hands of a man of Banu Tayyi'

10) al-Mustawrid ibn `Ullafah at-Taymi: was killed by Ma`qil ibn Qays ar-Riyahi in the reign of Mu`awiyah.

11) Shabib ibn Yazid ash-Shaybani: died by being drowned in river.

12) Imran ibn al-Harith ar-Rasibi: was killed in the battle of Dulab.

13, 14) Zahhaf at-Ta'i and Qurayb ibn Murrah al-Azdi: were killed in encounter with Banu Tahiyah.

15) az-Zubayr ibn `Ali as-Saliti at-Tamimi: was killed in encounter with `Attab ibn Warqa' ar-Riyahi.

- 16) `Ali ibn Bashir ibn al-Mahuz al-Yarbu`i: al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf ath-Thaqafi got him killed.
- 17) `Ubaydullah ibn Bashir: was killed in encounter with al-Muhallab ibn Abi Sufrah in the battle of Dulab.
- 18) Abu'l-Wazi` ar-Rasibi: a man in the graveyard of Banu Yashkur felled a wall on him and killed him.
- 19) `Abdu Rabbih as-Saghir: was killed in encounter with al-Muhallab ibn Abi Sufrah.
- 20) Al-Walid ibn Tarif ash-Shaybani: was killed in encounter with Yazid ibn Mazyad ash-Shaybani.
- 21-24) `Abdullah ibn Yahya al-Kindi, al-Mukhtar ibn `Awf al-Azdi (Abu Hamzah ash-Shari), Abrahah ibn as-Sabbah and Balj ibn `Uqbah al-Asadi: were killed by `Abd al-Malik ibn `Atiyyah as-Sa`di in the reign of Marwan ibn Muhammad (the last of the Umayyad caliphs).

Sermon 61: Do not fight the Khawarij after me ...

Amir al-mu'minin also said concerning the Kharijites:

وقال (عليه السلام) فيهم

Do not fight¹ the Kharijites after me, because one who seeks right but does not find it, is not like one who seeks wrong and finds it.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: (By "one who seeks wrong and finds it") Amir al-mu'minin means Mu`awiyah and his men.

لَا تَقْتُلُوا الْخَوَارِجَ بَعْدِي، فَلَيْسَ مَنْ طَلَبَ الْحَقَّ فَأَخْطَأَهُ، كَمَنْ طَلَبَ الْبَاطِلَ فَأَذْرَكَهُ.

قال السيد الشريف: يعني معاوية وأصحابه.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 61

(1) *Al-Saduq, `Ilal, 201;*

(2) *al-Tusi, al-Tahdhib, II, 48.*

Notes

1. The reason for stopping people from fighting the Kharijites was that Amir al-mu'minin was clearly perceiving that after him authority and power would devolve on people who would be ignorant of the proper occasion of jihad, and who will make use of sword only to maintain their sway. And there were those who excelled even Kharijites in holding and calling Amir al-mu'minin bad. So those who are themselves in the wrong have no right to fight others in the wrong. Again, those who are wilfully in the wrong can be allowed to fight those who are in the wrong by mistake. Thus, Amir al-mu'minin's words make this fact clear that the misguidance of Kharijites was not wilful but under Satan's influence. They mistook wrong as right and stuck to it. On the other hand, the position of misguidance of Mu`awiyah and his party was that they rejected right realising it as right and appropriated wrong as the code of their conduct fully knowing that it was wrong. Their audacity in the matter of religion reached the stage that it can neither be regarded as a result of misunderstanding nor can it be covered under the garb of error of judgement, because they openly transgressed the limits of religion and paid no heed to the Prophet's injunctions in comparison with their own view. Thus, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written (vol. 5, p. 130) that when the Prophet's companion Abu'd-Darda' saw utensils of gold and silver being used by Mu`awiyah he said he had heard the Prophet saying, "One who drinks in vessels of gold and silver will feel flames of the fire of Hell in his stomach" whereupon Mu`awiyah said, "As for me, I do not find any harm in it." Similarly, creating Ziyad ibn Abih's blood relationship with himself by his own opinion in total disregard of the Prophet's injunction, abusing the descendants of the Prophet over the pulpit, transgressing the limits of shari`ah, shedding blood of innocent persons and placing over Muslims (as so called Khalifah) a vicious individual and thus opening the way to disbelief and atheism are events that to attribute them to any misunderstanding is like wilfully closing eyes to facts.

Sermon 62: Surely, there is a strong protective shield of Allah...

When Amir al-mu'minin was warned of being killed by deceit, he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لما حُوِّفَ مِنَ الْغَيْلَةِ

Surely, there is a strong protective shield of Allah over me. When my day would come it would get away from me and hand me over to death. At that time neither an arrow would go amiss nor a wound would heal up.

وَإِنَّ عَلَيَّ مِنَ اللَّهِ جُنَّةً حَصِينَةً، فَإِذَا جَاءَ يَوْمِي انْفَرَجَتْ عَنِّي وَأَسْلَمْتَنِي؛ فَحِينَئِذٍ لَا يَطِيشُ

السَّهْمُ وَلَا يَبْرِأُ الْكَلْمُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 62

(1) Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidayah*, VIII, 12, from (2)

(2) Abu Dawud, *Kitab al-qadar*;

(3) al-'Amidi, *Ghurar*, 89;

(4) al-Zamakhshari, *Rabi`*, *bab al-qatl wa al-shahadah*.

Sermon 63: Beware! Surely this world is a place...

About the transience of the world

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يحذر من فتنة الدنيا

Beware! Surely this world is a place from which protection cannot be sought except while one is in it. The action which is performed only for this world cannot secure salvation. People are tested in it through calamities.

Those who have taken worldly pleasures here will be taken out from them (by death) and will be questioned about them. And whatever (good actions) they have achieved for the other world, they will get them there and stay in them. For the intelligent this world is like the shade - one moment it is spread out and extended but soon it shrinks and contracts.

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا دَارٌ لَا يُسَلَّمُ مِنْهَا إِلَّا فِيهَا، وَلَا يُنْجَى بِشَيْءٍ كَانَ هَا، ابْتُلِيَ النَّاسُ بِهَا
فِتْنَةً، فَمَا أَخَذُوهُ مِنْهَا لَهَا أُخْرِجُوا مِنْهُ وَحُوسِبُوا عَلَيْهِ، وَمَا أَخَذُوهُ مِنْهَا لِعَيْرِهَا قَدِمُوا عَلَيْهِ
وَأَقَامُوا فِيهِ؛ فَإِنَّهَا عِنْدَ دَوِي الْعُقُولِ كَفِيءِ الظِّلِّ، بَيْنَا تَرَاهُ سَابِغًا حَتَّى قَلَصَ وَزَائِدًا حَتَّى
نَقَصَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 63

(1) *Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, under inna, 10, 88, 199.*

Sermon 64: Fear Allah and anticipate your death by good actions ...

About decline and destruction of the world

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في المبادرة إلى صالح الاعمال

O creatures of Allah! Fear Allah and anticipate your death by good actions. Purchase everlasting joy by paying transitory things - pleasures of this world. Get ready for the journey, for you are being driven, and prepare yourselves for death, since it is hovering over you. Be a people who wake up when called, and who know that this world is not their abode, and so have it changed (with the next).

وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، وَبَادِرُوا آجَالَكُمْ بِأَعْمَالِكُمْ وَابْتَاغُوا مَا يَبْقَى لَكُمْ بِمَا يَزُولُ عَنْكُمْ، وَتَرَحَّلُوا فَقَدْ جَدَّ بِكُمْ وَاسْتَعِدُّوا لِلْمَوْتِ فَقَدْ أَظْلَكُكُمْ وَكُونُوا قَوْمًا صِيحَ بِهِمْ فَاَنْتَبَهُوا، وَعَلِمُوا أَنَّ الدُّنْيَا لَيْسَتْ لَهُمْ بَدَارٍ فَاسْتَبَدَّلُوا

Certainly, Allah has not created you aimlessly nor left you as useless. There is nothing between anyone of you and Paradise or Hell except death that must befall him. The life that is being shortened every moment and being dismantled every hour must be regarded very short.

The hidden thing namely death which is being driven (to you) by two over new phenomena, the day and the night, is certainly quick of approach. The traveller which is approaching with success or failure (namely death) deserves the best of provision. So acquire such provision from this world while you are here with which you may shield yourself tomorrow (on the Day of Judgement).

فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَخْلُقْكُمْ عَبَثًا، وَلَمْ يَتْرُكْكُمْ سُدىً وَمَا بَيْنَ أَحَدِكُمْ وَبَيْنَ الْجَنَّةِ أَوْ النَّارِ إِلَّا الْمَوْتُ أَنْ يَنْزَلَ بِهِ. وَإِنَّ غَايَةَ تَنْفُصِهَا اللَّحْظَةُ، وَتَهْدِمُهَا السَّاعَةُ، لَجْدِيرَةٌ بِقِصْرِ الْمُدَّةِ، وَإِنَّ غَايَةَ يَخْدُوهُ الْجَدِيدَانِ اللَّيْلُ وَالنَّهَارُ، لِحَرِيٍّ بِسُرْعَةِ الْأَوْتَةِ وَإِنَّ قَادِمًا يَقْدُمُ بِالْفَوْزِ أَوِ الشَّقْوَةِ لِمُسْتَحِقٍّ لِأَفْضَلِ الْعُدَّةِ، فَتَرَوُّدُوا فِي الدُّنْيَا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا مَا تَحْرُزُونَ بِهِ نُفُوسَكُمْ عَدَاً.

So everyone should fear Allah, should admonish himself, should send forward his repentance and should overpower his desire, because his death is hidden from him, his desires deceive him and Satan is posted on him and he beautifies for him sin so that he may commit it and prompts him to delay repentance till his desires make him the most negligent. Pity is for the negligent person whose life itself would be a proof against him and his own days (passed in sin) would lead him to punishment.

فَاتَّقَى عَبْدٌ رَبَّهُ، نَصَحَ نَفْسَهُ، قَدَّمَ تَوْبَتَهُ، غَلَبَ شَهْوَتَهُ، فَإِنَّ أَجَلَ مَسْتَوِرٍ عَنْهُ، وَأَمَلَهُ خَادِعٌ لَهُ، وَالشَّيْطَانُ مُوَكَّلٌ بِهِ، يُزَيِّنُ لَهُ الْمَعْصِيَةَ لِيَرْكَبَهَا، وَيُمْنِيهِ التَّوْبَةَ لِيُسَوِّفَهَا حَتَّى تَهْجُمَ

مَنِّيَّتُهُ عَلَيْهِ أَغْفَلُ مَا يَكُونُ عَنْهَا. فَيَاهَا حَسْرَةً عَلَى كُلِّ ذِي عَقْلٍ أَنْ يَكُونَ عُمُرُهُ عَلَيْهِ حُجَّةً،
وَأَنْ تُؤَدِّيَهُ أَيَّامُهُ إِلَى الشَّقْوَةِ !

We ask Allah, the Glorified, that He may make us and you like one whom bounty does not mislead, whom nothing can stop from obedience of Allah and whom shame and grief do not befall after death.

نَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَجْعَلَنَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ مِمَّنْ لَا تُبْطِرُهُ نِعْمَةٌ وَلَا تُقْصِرُ بِهِ عَنْ طَاعَةِ رَبِّهِ غَايَةً،
وَلَا تَحُلُّ بِهِ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ نَدَامَةً وَلَا كَابَةً .

Alternative Sources for Sermon 64

(1) *Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 105, 154, 155, 246;*

(2) *Sibt, Tadhkirah, 145.*

(3) *Nasr, Siffin, 7.*

Sermon 65: Praise be to Allah for Whom one condition does not proceed another...

About Allah's attributes

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها مباحث لطيفة من العلم الالهي

Praise be to Allah for Whom one condition does not proceed another so that He may be the First before being the Last or He may be Manifest before being Hidden. Everyone called one (alone) save Him is by virtue of being small (in number); and everyone enjoying honour other than Him is humble. Every powerful person other than Him is weak. Every master (owner) other than Him is slave (owned).

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ تَسْبِقْ لَهُ حَالٌ حَالًا، فَيَكُونُ أَوْلَىٰ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَكُونَ آخِرًا، وَيَكُونُ ظَاهِرًا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَكُونَ بَاطِنًا.

كُلُّ مُسَمَّىٰ بِالْوَحْدَةِ غَيْرُهُ قَلِيلٌ، وَكُلُّ عَزِيزٍ غَيْرُهُ ذَلِيلٌ، وَكُلُّ قَوِيٍّ غَيْرُهُ ضَعِيفٌ، وَكُلُّ مَالِكٍ غَيْرُهُ مَمْلُوكٌ،

Every knower other than Him is seeker of knowledge. Every controller other than Him is sometimes imbued with control and sometimes with disability. Every listener other than Him is deaf to light voices while loud voices make him deaf and distant voices also get away from him. Every onlooker other than Him is blind to hidden colours and delicate bodies. Every manifest thing other than Him is hidden, but every hidden thing other than Him is incapable of becoming manifest.

وَكُلُّ عَالِمٍ غَيْرُهُ مُتَعَلِّمٌ، وَكُلُّ قَادِرٍ غَيْرُهُ يَفْقِدُ وَيَعْجُزُ، وَكُلُّ سَمِيعٍ غَيْرُهُ يَصَمُّ عَنِ لَطِيفِ الْأَصْوَاتِ، وَيُصَمُّهُ كَبِيرَتُهَا، وَيَذْهَبُ عَنْهُ مَا بَعْدَ مِنْهَا، وَكُلُّ بَصِيرٍ غَيْرُهُ يَعْمَىٰ عَنِ خَفِيِّ الْأَلْوَانِ وَاللَّطِيفِ الْأَجْسَامِ، وَكُلُّ ظَاهِرٍ غَيْرُهُ غَيْرٌ بَاطِنٌ، وَكُلُّ بَاطِنٍ غَيْرُهُ غَيْرٌ ظَاهِرٌ.

He did not create what He created to fortify His authority nor for fear of the consequences of time, nor to seek help against the attack of an equal or a boastful partner or a hateful opponent. On the other hand all the creatures are reared by him and are His humbled slaves.

He is not conditioned in anything so that it be said that He exists therein, nor is He separated from anything so as to be said that He is away from it. The creation of what He initiated or the administration of what He controls did not fatigue Him. No disability overtook Him against what He created. No misgiving ever occurred to Him in what He ordained and resolved. But His verdict is certain, His knowledge is definite, His governance is overwhelming. He is wished for at time of distress and He is feared even in bounty.

لَمْ يَخْلُقْ مَا خَلَقَهُ لِتَشْدِيدِ سُلْطَانٍ، وَلَا تَخَوْفٍ مِنْ عَوَاقِبِ زَمَانٍ، وَلَا اسْتِعَانَةٍ عَلَى نِدَاءٍ
مُتَاوِرٍ وَلَا شَرِيكِ مُكَاتِرٍ وَلَا ضِدِّ مُنَافِرٍ وَلَكِنْ خَلَائِقُ مَرْبُوبُونَ وَعِبَادٌ دَاخِرُونَ
لَمْ يَخْلُقْ فِي الْأَشْيَاءِ فَيُقَالُ: هُوَ فِيهَا كَائِنٌ، وَلَمْ يَنْأَ عَنْهَا فَيُقَالُ: هُوَ مِنْهَا بَائِنٌ لَمْ يُوَدِّهِ
خَلْقٌ مَا ابْتَدَأَ، وَلَا تَدْبِيرٌ مَا دَرَأَ وَلَا وَقَفَ بِهِ عَجْرٌ عَمَّا خَلَقَ، وَلَا وَجَتْ عَلَيْهِ شُبُهَةٌ فَيَمَا
قَضَى وَقَدَّرَ، بَلْ قَضَاءٌ مُتَقَنَّ، وَعِلْمٌ مُحْكَمٌ، وَأَمْرٌ مُبْرَمٌ الْمَأْمُولُ مَعَ النِّقَمِ، الْمَرْهُوبُ مَعَ النِّعَمِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 65

- (1) *Al-Saduq, al-Tawhid*, 29, 62;
- (2) *al-Wasiti, `Uyun*;
- (3) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar*, 238.

Sermon 66: O Muslims! ...

In one of the days of Siffin Amir al-mu'minin said to his followers about ways of fighting

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في تعليم الحرب والمقاتلة

في بعض أيام صفين

O Muslims! Make fear of Allah the routine of your life. Cover yourselves with peace of mind and clench your teeth because this makes the sword slip off from the skull. Complete your armour and shake your swords in their sheathes before showing them out. Have your eyes on the enemy. Use your spears on both sides and strike (the enemy) with swords. Keep in mind that you are before Allah and in the company of the Prophet's cousin.

Repeat your attacks and feel ashamed of running away, because it is a shame for posterity and (cause of awarding you) fire on the Day of Judgement. Give your lives (to Allah) willingly and walk towards death with ease. Beware of this great majority, and the pitched tent and aim at its centre because Satan is hiding in its corner. He has extended his hand for assault and has kept back his foot for running away. Keep on enduring till the light of Truth dawns upon you.

While ye have the upper hand, and Allah is with you, and never will He depreciate your deeds. (Qur'an, 47:35)

مَعَاشِرَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ: اسْتَشْعِرُوا الْخَشْيَةَ وَتَجَلَّبَبُوا السَّكِينَةَ، وَعَضُّوا عَلَى النَّوَاجِدِ فَإِنَّهُ أَنْبَى لِلسُّيُوفِ عَنِ الْهَامِ وَأَكْمَلُوا اللَّامَةَ، وَقَلِّقُوا السُّيُوفَ فِي أَعْمَادِهَا قَبْلَ سَلِّهَا، وَالْحُظُوا الْخَزَرَ وَأَطْعِنُوا الشَّرَرَ وَنَافِحُوا بِالطُّبَا وَصَلُّوا السُّيُوفَ بِالْخَطَا وَعَلِّمُوا أَنْكُمْ بِعَيْنِ اللَّهِ، وَمَعَ ابْنِ عَمِّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، فَعَاوِدُوا الْكُرَّ، وَاسْتَحْيُوا مِنَ الْقَمْرِ فَإِنَّهُ عَاَزٌ فِي الْأَعْقَابِ وَنَازٌ يَوْمَ الْحِسَابِ، وَطَيَّبُوا عَنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ نَفْسًا، وَامْتَشُوا إِلَى الْمَوْتِ مَشْيًا سَجْحًا وَعَلَيْكُمْ بِهَذَا السَّوَادِ الْأَعْظَمِ، وَالرَّوَاقِ الْمَطْنَبِ، فَاضْرِبُوا تَبَجَّهُ فَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ كَامِنٌ فِي كِسْرِهِ قَدْ قَدَّمَ لِلْوَثْبَةِ يَدًا، وَأَخَّرَ لِلنُّكُوصِ رِجْلًا؛ فَصَمْدًا صَمْدًا! حَتَّى يَنْجَلِي لَكُمْ عَمُودُ الْحَقِّ . (وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَغْلُونَ وَاللَّهُ مَعَكُمْ وَلَنْ يَزِيْرَكُمْ أَعْمَالَكُمْ).

Alternative Sources for Sermon 66

- (1) Nasr, *Siffin*, see *Ibn Abi al-Hadid*, I, 479;
- (2) *Ibn Qutaybah*, `Uyun, I, 110, 133;
- (3) *al-Jahiz*, *al-Bayan*, II, 24;
- (4) *al-Bayhaqi*, *al-Mahasin*, 45;
- (5) *al-Tabari*, *Basharah*, 172;
- (6) *al-Quda'i*, *Dustur*, 124;
- (7) *Ibn `Asakir*, *Ta'rikh*, XII, 182;

- (8) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, II, 380;*
(9) *Furat, Tafsir al-Qur'an.*

Sermon 67: Why didn't you argue ...

When after the death of the Prophet, news reached Amir al-mu'minin about the happening in Saqifah of Bani Sa'idah,¹ he enquired what the Ansar said. People said that they were asking for one chief from among them and one from the others, Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في معنى الانصار

قالوا: لما انتهت إلى أمير المؤمنين (عليه السلام) أنباء السقيفة بعد وفاة رسول الله (صلى الله

عليه وآله)،

قال (عليه السلام): ما قالت الانصار؟

قالوا: قالت: منا أمير ومنكم أمير، قال عليه السلام.:

Why did you not argue against them (ansar) that the Prophet had left his will that whoever is good among Ansar should be treated well and whoever is bad should be forgiven.

People said: "What is the proof against them in it?"

Amir al-mu'minin said:

"If the Government was for them there should have been no will in their favour."

Then he said:

"What did the Quraysh plead?"

People said: "They argued that they belong to the lineal tree of the Prophet.

Then Amir al-mu'minin said:

"They defended themselves with the plea of the tree but neglected the fruit."

قال (عليه السلام): فَهَلَّا اَحْتَجَجْتُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ: بِأَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) وَصَّى

بِأَنْ يُحْسَنَ إِلَى مُحْسِنِهِمْ، وَيُتَجَاوَزَ عَنْ مُسِيئِهِمْ؟

قالوا: وما في هذا من الحجّة عليهم؟

فقال (عليه السلام): لَوْ كَانَتِ الْإِمَارَةُ فِيهِمْ لَمْ تَكُنِ الْوَصِيَّةُ بِهِمْ.

ثم قال: فَمَاذَا قَالَتْ قُرَيْشٌ؟

قالوا: احتجت بأنها شجرة الرسول (صلى الله عليه وآله).

فقال (عليه السلام): اَحْتَجُّوا بِالشَّجَرَةِ، وَأَضَاعُوا الثَّمَرَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 67

(1) *Al-Nuwayri, Nihayah, VIII, 168;*

(2) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 326;*

- (3) *al-Karajiki, al-Ta`ajjub, 13;*
- (4) *al-Jawhari, al-Saqifah, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, II, at the beginning;*
- (5) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 263;*
- (6) *Ibn `Abd al-Birr, al-'Isti`ab, in the account of `Awf ibn Athathah;*
- (7) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj;*
- (8) *al-Tawhidi, al-Basa'ir, 59;*
- (9) *al-Murtada, al-'Amali, I, 198.*

Notes

1. From what happened in the Saqifah of Bani Sa`idah it appears that the greatest argument of muhajirun against ansar and the basis of the former's success was this very point that since they were the kith and kin of the Prophet no one else could deserve the Caliphate. On this very ground the big crowd of ansar became ready to lay down their weapons before three muhajirun, and the latter succeeded in winning the Caliphate by presenting their distinction of descent. Thus in connection with the events of Saqifah at-Tabari writes that when the ansar assembled in Saqifah of Bani Sa`idah to swear allegiance on the hand of Sa`d ibn `Ubadah, somehow Abu Bakr, `Umar and Abu `Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah also got the hint and reached there. `Umar had thought out something for this occasion and he rose to speak but Abu Bakr stopped him, and he himself stood up. After praise of Allah and the immigration of the muhajirun and their precedence in Islam he said:

They are those who worshipped Allah first of all and accepted belief in Allah and his Prophet's friends and his Kith and Kin. These alone therefore must deserve the Caliphate. Whoever clashes with them commits excess.

When Abu Bakr finished his speech al-Hubab ibn al-Mundhir stood up and, turning to the ansar, he said: "O' group of ansar ! Do not give your reins in the hands of others. The populace is under your care. You are men of honour, wealth and tribe and gathering. If the muhajirun have precedence over you in some matters you too have precedence over them in other matters. You gave them refuge in your houses. You are the fighting arm of Islam. With your help Islam stood on its own feet. In your cities prayer of Allah was established with freedom. Save yourselves from division and dispersion and stick to your right unitedly. If the muhajirun do not concede to your right tell them there should be one chief from us and one from them."

No sooner al-Hubab sat down after saying this then `Umar rose and spoke thus:

This can't be that there be two rulers at one time. By Allah, the Arabs will never agree to have you as the head of the state since the Prophet was not from amongst you. Certainly, the Arabs will not care the least objection in that the Caliphate is allowed to one in whose house Prophethood rests so that the ruler should also be from the same house. For those who dissent clear arguments can be put forth. Whoever comes in conflict with us in the matter of the authority and rulership of Muhammad (S) he is leaning towards wrong, is a sinner and is falling into destruction.

After `Umar, al-Hubab again stood up and said to the ansar, "Look, stick to your point and do not pay heed to the views of this man or his supporters. They want to trample your right, if they do not consent turn him and them out of your cities and appropriate the Caliphate. Who else than you can deserve it more?"

When al-Hubab finished `Umar scolded him. There was use of bad words from that side also, and the position began to worsen. On seeing this Abu `Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah spoke with the intention of cooling down ansar and to win them over to his side and said: "O' ansar ! You are the people who supported us and helped us in every manner. Do not now change your ways and do not give up your behaviour." But the ansar refused to change their mind. They were prepared to swear allegiance to Sa`d and people just wanted to approach him when a man of Sa`d's tribe Bashir ibn `Amr al-Khazraji stood up and said:

"No doubt we came forward for jihad, and gave support to the religion, but our aim in doing thus was to please Allah and to obey His Prophet. It does not behove us to claim superiority and create trouble in the matter of the caliphate. Muhammad (S) was from Quraysh and they have a greater right for it, and are more appropriate for it." As soon as Bashir uttered these words division occurred among the ansar, and this was his aim, because he could not see a man of his own tribe rising so high. The muhajirun took the best

advantage of this division among the ansar, and `Umar and Abu `Ubaydah decided to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr. They had just got forward for the act when Bashir first of all put his hand on that of Abu Bakr and after that `Umar and Abu `Ubaydah swore the allegiance. Then the people of Bashir's tribe came and swore allegiance, and trampled Sa`d ibn `Ubadah under their feet.

During this time Amir al-mu'minin was occupied in the funeral bath and burial of the Prophet. When afterwards he heard about the assemblage at the Saqifah and he came to know that the muhajirun had won the score over ansar by pleading themselves to be from the tribe of the Prophet he uttered the fine sentence that then argued on the lineal tree being one but spoiled its fruits, who are the members of his family. That is, if muhajirun's claim was acceded for being from the lineal tree of the Prophet, how can those who are the fruits of this tree be ignored? It is strange that Abu Bakr who connects with the Prophet in the seventh generation above and `Umar who connects with him in the ninth generation above may be held of the tribe and family of the Prophet and he who was his first cousin, he is refused the status of a brother.

Sermon 68: I had intended to send ...

When Amir al-mu'minin appointed Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr¹ Governor of Egypt and he was overpowered and killed, Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لما قلد محمد بن أبي بكر مصر فملكته عليه وقتل

I had intended to send Hashim ibn `Utbah to Egypt and had I done so he would not have made way for the opponents nor given them time (to get hold of him). This is without reproach to Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr as I loved him and had brought him up.

وَقَدْ أَرَدْتُ تَوَلِيَةَ مِصْرَ هَاشِمِ بْنِ عُتْبَةَ، وَلَوْ وَوَلَيْتُهُ إِيَّاهَا لَمَا حَلَّى لَهُمُ الْعُرْصَةَ، وَلَا أَنْهَرَهُمُ
الْعُرْصَةَ، بَلَا ذَمٍّ لِمُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَبِي بَكْرٍ، فَلَقَدْ كَانَ إِلَيَّ حَبِيْبًا، وَكَانَ لِي رَيْبِيًّا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 68

- (1) *Al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat*;
- (2) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 63 (events of the year 36)*;
- (3) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, II, 404*.

Notes

1. Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr's mother was Asma' bint `Umays whom Amir al-mu'minin married after Abu Bakr's death. Consequently, Muhammad lived and was brought up under the care of Amir al-mu'minin and he imbibed his ways and manners. Amir al-mu'minin too loved him much and regarded him as his son, and used to say "Muhammad is my son from Abu Bakr." He was born in the journey for the last hajj (of the Prophet) and died as martyr in 38 A.H. at the age of twenty eight years.

On accession to the Caliphate Amir al-mu'minin had selected Qays ibn Sa`d ibn `Ubadah as the Governor of Egypt but circumstances so developed that he had to be removed and Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr had to be sent there as Governor. The policy of Qays there was that he did not want to take any serious step against the `Uthmani group but Muhammad's view was different. After the lapse of a month he sent them word that in case they did not obey him their existence there would be impossible. Upon this these people organised a front against him, and engaged themselves in secret wire-pullings, but became conspicuous soon. After arbitration they started creating trouble with the slogan of vengeance. This polluted the atmosphere of Egypt. When Amir al-mu'minin came to know these deteriorated conditions he gave the governorship of Egypt to Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar and sent him off there in order that he might suppress insurgent elements and save the administration from getting worse, but he could not escape the evil designs of the Umayyads and was killed by poison while on his way. Thus, the governorship of Egypt remained with Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr.

On this side, the performance of `Amr ibn al-`As in connection with the Arbitration made Mu`awiyah recall his own promise. Consequently, he gave him six thousand combatants and set him off to attack Egypt. When Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr knew of the advancing force of the enemy he wrote to Amir al-mu'minin for help. Amir al-mu'minin replied that he would be soon collecting help for him but in the meantime he should mobilise his own forces. Muhammad mobilised four thousand men under his banner and divided them into two parts. He kept one part with himself and on the other he placed Kinanah ibn Bishr at-Tujibi in command and ordered him to go forward to check the enemy's advance. When they settled down in camp before the enemy various parties of the

enemy began attacking them but they faced them with courage and valour. At last Mu`awiyah ibn Hudayj as-Sakuni al-Kindi made an assault with full force. These people did not turn away from the enemy's swords but faced them steadfastly and fell as martyrs in action. The effect of this defeat was that Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr's men got frightened and deserted him. Finding himself alone Muhammad fled away and sought refuge in a deserted place. The enemy however got news about him through someone and traced him out when he was dying with thirst. Muhammad asked for water but these cruel men refused and butchered him thirsty. Then they put his body in the belly of a dead ass and burnt it. Malik ibn Ka`b al-Arhabi had already left Kufah with two thousand men but before he could reach Egypt it had been occupied by the enemy.

Sermon 69: How long shall I accord to you the consideration

...

Admonishing his companions about careless behaviour Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في ذم أصحابه

How long shall I accord you consideration that is accorded to camels with hollow hump, or to worn clothes which when stitched on one side give way on the other. Whenever a vanguard force of Syria (ash-Sham) hovers over you, everyone of you shuts his door and hides himself like the lizard in its hole or a badger in its den.

By Allah, he whom people like you support must suffer disgrace and he who throws arrows with your support is as if he throws arrows that are broken both at head and tail. By Allah, within the courtyard you are quite numerous but under the banner you are only a few.

Certainly, I know what can improve you and how your crookedness can be straightened. But I shall not improve your condition by marring myself. Allah may disgrace your faces and destroy you. You do not understand the right as you understand the wrong and do not crush the wrong as you crush the right.

كَمْ أَدَارِيكُمْ كَمَا تُدَارَى الْبِكَارُ الْعَمِدَةُ وَالثِّيَابُ الْمَتَدَاعِيَةُ! كَلَّمَا حِصْنًا مِنْ جَانِبٍ تَهْتَكْتَ مِنْ آخَرَ، كَلَّمَا أَطَلَّ عَلَيْكُمْ مَنْسِرٌ مِنْ مَنْاسِرِ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ أَغْلَقَ كُلُّ رَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ بَابَهُ، وَأَنْجَحَرَ أَنْجَحَارَ الصَّبَّةِ فِي جُحْرِهَا، وَالضَّبْعِ فِي وَجَارِهَا. الدَّلِيلُ وَاللَّهُ مَنْ نَصَرْتُمُوهُ! وَمَنْ رَمَى بِكُمْ فَقَدْ رَمَى بِأَفْوَقِ نَاصِلٍ

إِنَّكُمْ . وَاللَّهِ . لَكَثِيرٌ فِي الْبَاحَاتِ قَلِيلٌ تَحْتَ الرَّايَاتِ، وَإِنِّي لَعَالِمٌ بِمَا يُصْلِحُكُمْ، وَيُقِيمُ أَوْدَكُمْ وَلِكِنِّي وَاللَّهِ لَا أَرَى إِصْلَاحَكُمْ بِإِفْسَادِ نَفْسِي . أَضَرَعَ اللَّهُ حُدُودَكُمْ وَأَتَعَسَ جُدُودَكُمْ لَا تَعْرِفُونَ الْحَقَّ كَمَعْرِفَتِكُمُ الْبَاطِلَ، وَلَا تُبْطِلُونَ الْبَاطِلَ كِبِطَالِكُمُ الْحَقَّ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 69

(1) *Al-Baladhuri, Ansab, II, 438, 458;*

(2) *al-Ya`qubi, Ta'rikh, II, 184;*

(3) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat;*

(4) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, * VI, 3444, 3445, chronicles of the year 39.*

Sermon 70: I was sitting when sleep overtook me...

Spoken on the morning of the day when Amir al-mu'minin was fatally struck with sword.

وقال (عليه السلام)

في سُحرة اليوم الذي ضرب فيه

I was sitting when sleep overtook me. I saw the Prophet of Allah appear before me, and I said: "O Prophet of Allah! What crookedness and enmity I had to face from the people. "The Prophet of Allah said: "Invoke (Allah) evil upon them," but I said, "Allah may change them for me with better ones and change me for them with a worse one".

مَلَكْتَنِي عَيْنِي وَأَنَا جَالِسٌ، فَسَنَحَ لِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله): يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، مَاذَا لَقَيْتَ مِنْ أُمَّتِكَ مِنَ الْأَوْدِ وَاللَّدَدِ؟ فَقَالَ: «ادْعُ عَلَيْهِمْ»، فَقُلْتُ: أَبَدَلْنِي اللَّهُ بِمِمْ خَيْرًا لِي مِنْهُمْ، وَأَبَدَهُمْ لِي بِشَرِّ هُمْ مَنِّي.

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "al-awad" means crookedness and "al-ladad" means enmity, and this is the most eloquent expression.

يعني(عليه السلام) بالآود: الاعوجاج، وباللدد: الخصام. وهذا من أفصح الكلام.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 70

- (1) *Ibn Sa`d, al-Tabaqat, III, 36;*
- (2) *Abu al-Faraj, Maqatil, 16;*
- (3) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, II, 298;*
- (4) *al-Qali, Dhayl al-'Amali, 190;*
- (5) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-'Imamah, I, 160;*
- (6) *Muhammad ibn Habib, al-Mughtalin, on the authority of Abu `Abd al-Rahman al-Salami;*
- (7) *Ibn `Abd al-Birr, al-'Isti`ab, III, 61;*
- (8) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 9;*
- (9) *al-Murtada, Ghurar, IV, 78;*
- (10) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, II, 495.*

Sermon 71: O people of Iraq ...

In condemnation of the people of Iraq

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في ذم أهل العراق

[وفيها يوتخهم على ترك القتال، والنصر يكاد يتّم، ثم تكذيبهم له]

Now then, O people¹ of Iraq! You are like the pregnant woman who, on completion of the period of pregnancy delivers a dead child and her husband is also dead and her period of widowhood is long while only remote relation inherits her. By Allah, I did not come to you of my own accord. I came to you by force of circumstances. I have come to know that you say `Ali speaks lie. May Allah fight you! Against whom do I speak lie?

Whether against Allah? But I am the first to have believed in him. Whether against His Prophet? But I am the first who testified to him. Certainly not. By Allah it was a way of expression which you failed to appreciate, and you were not capable of it. Woe to you. I am giving out these measures of nice expression free of any cost. I wish there were vessels good enough to hold them.

Certainly, you will understand it after some time. (Qur'an, 38:88)

أَمَّا بَعْدُ يَا أَهْلَ الْعِرَاقِ، فَإِنَّمَا أَنْتُمْ كَالْمَرْأَةِ الْحَامِلِ، حَمَلَتْ فَلَمَّا أَتَمَّتْ أَمْلَصَتْ، وَمَاتَ قَيْمُهَا، وَطَالَ تَأْيِمُهَا، وَوَرَّثَهَا أَبْعَدُهَا.

أَمَا وَاللَّهِ مَا أَتَيْتُكُمْ احْتِيَارًا، وَلَكِنْ جُنْتُ إِلَيْكُمْ سَوْقًا، وَلَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي أَنَّكُمْ تَقُولُونَ: [عَلِيٌّ] يَكْذِبُ، فَأَتَلَكُمُ اللَّهَ! فَعَلَى مَنْ أَكْذَبُ؟ أَعَلَى اللَّهِ؟ فَأَنَا أَوَّلُ مَنْ آمَنَ بِهِ! أَمْ عَلَى نَبِيِّهِ؟ فَأَنَا أَوَّلُ مَنْ صَدَّقَهُ! كَلَّا وَاللَّهِ، وَلَكِنَّهَا لَهْجَةٌ غِبْتُمْ عَنْهَا، وَمَنْ تَكُونُوا مِنْ أَهْلِهَا، وَنِلْ أَمِّهِ، كَثِيلًا بِغَيْرِ تَمَنٍّ! لَوْ كَانَ لَهُ وَعَاءٌ، (وَلَتَعْلَمَنَّ نَبَأَهُ بَعْدَ حِينٍ)

Alternative Sources for Sermon 71

- (1) *Ibn Da`b, al-'Ikhtisas, 155;*
- (2) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 161;*
- (3) *al-Tabarsi, al-'Ihtijaj, I, 254;*
- (4) *al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, II, 236;*
- (5) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, II, 301;*
- (6) *al-Mufid, al-Majalis, 105;*
- (7) *Sibt, Tadhkirah, 137.*

Notes

1. When after Arbitration the Iraqis displayed lethargy and heartlessness in retaliating the continuous attacks of Mu`awiyah, Amir al-mu'minin delivered this sermon abusing and admonishing them. Herein he has referred to their being deceived at Siffin and has likened them to a woman who has five qualities:

i) Firstly, she is pregnant. This implies that these people had full capability to fight, and were not like a barren woman from whom nothing is expected

ii) Secondly, she has completed the period of pregnancy. That is they had passed over all difficult stages and had approached near the final goal of victory.

iii) Thirdly, she wilfully miscarries her child. That is after coming close to victory they came down to settlement and instead of achieving the coveted goal faced disappointment.

iv) Fourthly, her period of widowhood is long. That is they fell in such a state as though they had no protector or patron and they were roaming about without any ruler.

v) Fifthly, her successors would be distant persons. That is the people of Syria who had no relationship with them would occupy their properties.

Sermon 72: My God, the Spreader of the surfaces...

**Herein Amir al-mu'minin tells people how to pronounce "as-salawat"
(to invoke Divine blessing) on the Prophet.**

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

علم فيها الناس الصلاة على رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وآله)

[وفيها بيان صفات الله سبحانه وصفة النبي والدعاء له]

My God, the Spreader of the surfaces (of earth) and Keeper (intact) of all skies, Creator of hearts on good and evil nature, send Thy choicest blessings and growing favours on Muhammad Thy servant and Thy Prophet who is the last of those who preceded (him) and an opener for what is closed, proclaimer of truth with truth, repulser of the forces of wrong and crusher of the onslaughts of misguidance.

As he was burdened (with responsibility of prophethood) so he bore it standing by Thy commands, advancing towards Thy will, without shrinking of steps of weakness of determination, listening to Thy revelation, preserving Thy testament, proceeding forward in the spreading of Thy commands till he lit fire for its seeker and lighted the path for the groper in the dark.

اللَّهُمَّ دَاخِيَ الْمَدْحُوتَاتِ، وَدَاعِمِ الْمَسْمُوكَاتِ، وَجَابِلِ الْقُلُوبِ عَلَى فِطْرَتِهَا: شَقِيهَا وَسَعِيدِهَا. اجْعَلْ شَرَائِفَ صَلَوَاتِكَ، وَنَوَامِي بَرَكَاتِكَ، عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدِكَ وَرَسُولِكَ، الْخَاتَمِ لِمَا سَبَقَ، وَالْفَاتِحِ لِمَا انْعَلَقَ، وَالْمُعَلِّمِ الْحَقِّ بِالْحَقِّ، وَالِدَّافِعِ جَيْشَاتِ الْإِبَاطِيلِ، وَالِدَّامِغِ صَوْلَاتِ الْأَضَالِيلِ، كَمَا حُمِلَ فَاضْطَلَعَ، فَائِماً بِأَمْرِكَ، مُسْتَوْفِراً فِي مَرْضَاتِكَ، غَيْرَ نَاكِلٍ عَنْ قُدَمِ، وَلَا وَاهٍ فِي عِزِّمِ، وَاعِيّاً لَوْحِيكَ، حَافِظاً لِعَهْدِكَ، مَا ضِيّاً عَلَى نَفَاذِ أَمْرِكَ; حَتَّى أَوْزَى قَبَسَ الْقَابِسِ، وَأَضَاءَ الطَّرِيقِ لِلْحَابِطِ

Hearts achieved guidance through him after being ridden with troubles. He introduced clearly guiding signs and shining injunctions. He is Thy trusted trustee, the treasurer of Thy treasured knowledge, Thy witness on the Day of Judgement, Thy envoy of truth and Thy Messenger towards the people.

وَهَدَيْتَ بِهِ الْقُلُوبَ بَعْدَ خَوْضَاتِ الْفِتَنِ، وَأَقَامَ مُوضِحَاتِ الْأَعْلَامِ، وَنَبَّرَاتِ الْأَحْكَامِ، فَهُوَ أَمِينُكَ الْمَأْمُونُ، وَخَازِنُ عِلْمِكَ الْمُخْزُونِ، وَشَهِيدُكَ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ، وَبَعِيثُكَ بِالْحَقِّ، وَرَسُولُكَ إِلَى الْخَلْقِ.

My God prepare large place for him under Thy shade and award him multiplying good by Thy bounty. My God, give height to his construction above all other constructions, heighten his position with Thee, grant perfection to his effulgence and perfect for him his light. In reward for his

discharging Thy prophetship, grant him that his testimony be admitted and his speech be liked for his speech is just, and his judgements are clear-cut. My God put us and him together in the pleasures of life, continuance of bounty, satisfaction of desires, enjoyment of pleasures. ease of living, peace of mind and gifts of honour.

اللَّهُمَّ افسَحْ لَهُ مَفْسَحاً فِي ظِلِّكَ، واجزِهِ مُضَاعَفَاتِ الْخَيْرِ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ . اللَّهُمَّ اَعْلِ عَلَيَّ
بِنَاءَ الْبَانِيْنَ بِنَاءَهُ، وَأَكْرِمْ لَدَيْكَ مَنْزِلَتَهُ، وَأَتِمِّمْ لَهُ نُورَهُ، واجزِهِ مِنْ اِثْتِغَاثِكَ لَهُ مَقْبُولَ الشَّهَادَةِ،
مَرْضِيَّ الْمَقَالَةِ، ذا مَنْطِقِ عَدْلٍ، وَحُطَّةِ فَصْلِ.

اللَّهُمَّ اجمَعْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُ فِي بَرْدِ الْعَيْشِ، وَفَرَارِ النِّعْمَةِ، وَمُتَى الشَّهَوَاتِ، وَأَهْوَاءِ اللَّذَاتِ،
وَرَحَاءِ الدَّعَةِ وَمُنْتَهَى الطُّمَأْنِينَةِ، وَتُحْفِ الْكِرَامَةِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 72

- (1) *Ibn Qutaybah, Gharib al-hadith, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, IV, 364;*
- (2) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, I, 159;*
- (3) *al-Qali, Dhayl al-'Amali, 173;*
- (4) *al-'Azhari, Tahdhib;*
- (5) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah;*
- (6) *al-Quda'i, Dustur, 119;*
- (7) *Sibt, Tadhkirah, 136;*
- (8) *al-Samahiji, al-Sahifat al-'Alawiyyah,*
- (9) *al-Zamakhshari, al-Fa'iq; for the asnad of this Khutbah see al-Mahmudi, Nahj al-sa`adah, 286.*

Sermon 73: Didn't he swear me his allegiance after ...

Amir al-mu'minin said about Marwan ibn al-Hakam at Basrah. When Marwan was taken on the day of Jamal, he asked Hasan and Husayn (p.b.u.t.) to intercede on his behalf before Amir al-mu'minin. So they spoke to Amir al-mu'minin about him and he released him. Then they said, "O' Amir al-mu'minin he desires to swear you allegiance"

Whereupon Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

قال لمروان بن الحكم بالبصرة

قالوا: أُخِذَ مروان بن الحكم أسيراً يوم الجمل، فاستشفع الحسن والحسين (عليهما السلام)

إلى أمير المؤمنين (عليه السلام)، فكلّمناه فيه، فخلّى سبيله، فقالا له: يبايعك يا أمير المؤمنين؟

فقال:

Did he not swear me allegiance after the killing of `Uthman? Now I do not need his allegiance, because his is the hand of a Jew. If he swears me allegiance with his hand he would violate it after a short while. Well, he is to get power for so long as a dog licks his nose. He is the father of four rams (who will also rule). The people will face days through him and his sons. ¹

أَفَلَمْ يُبَايِعْنِي بَعْدَ قَتْلِ عُثْمَانَ؟ لَا حَاجَةَ لِي فِي بَيْعَتِهِ! إِنَّهَا كَفُّ يَهُودِيَّةٍ لَوْ بَايَعَنِي بِيَدِهِ لَعَدَرَ بِسَبْتَيْهِ. أَمَا إِنَّ لَهُ إِمْرَةً كَلَعَقَةَ الْكَلْبِ أَنْفَهُ، وَهُوَ أَبُو الْأَكْبُشِ الْأَرْبَعَةِ، وَسَتَلْفَى الْأُمَّةَ مِنْهُ وَمِنْ وَلَدِهِ يَوْمَ أَحْمَرَ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 73

- (1) *Ibn Sa`d, al-Tabaqat, I, in the account of Marwan;*
- (2) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, II, 361;*
- (3) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, 37;*
- (4) *Sibt, Tadhkirah, 78;*
- (5) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 67; see al-Damiri, Hayat al-hayawan and Ibn Abi al-Hadid, II, 54.*

Notes

1. Marwan ibn al-Hakam was the nephew (brother's son) and son-in-law of `Uthman. Due to thin body and tall stature he was known with the nickname "Khayt Batil" (the thread of wrong). When `Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan killed `Amr ibn Sa`id al-Ashdaq, his brother Yahya ibn Sa`id said:

O' sons of Khayt Batil (the thread of the wrong) you have played deceit on `Amr and people like you build their houses (of authority) on deceit and treachery.

Although his father al-Hakam ibn Abi al-`As had accepted Islam at the time of the fall of Mecca but his behaviour and activities were very painful to the Prophet. Consequently, the Prophet cursed him and his descendants and said, "Woe will befall my people from the progeny of this man." At last in view of his increasing intrigues the Prophet externed him from Medina towards the valley of Wajj (in Ta'if) and Marwan also went with him. Prophet did not thereafter allow them entry in Medina all his life. Abu Bakr and `Umar did likewise, but `Uthman sent for both of them during his reign, and raised Marwan to such height as

though the reins of caliphate rested in his hands. Thereafter his circumstances became so favourable that on the death of Mu`awiyah ibn Yazid he became the Caliph of the Muslims. But he had just ruled only for nine months and eighteen days that death overtook him in such a way that his wife sat with the pillow on his face and did not get away till he breathed his last.

The four sons to whom Amir al-mu'minin has referred were the four sons of `Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan namely al-Walid, Sulayman, Yazid and Hisham, who ascended the Caliphate one after the other and coloured the pages of history with their stories. Some commentators have regarded this reference to Marwan's own sons whose names are `Abd al-Malik, `Abd al-`Aziz, Bishr and Muhammad. Out of these `Abd al-Malik did become Caliph of Islam but `Abd al-`Aziz became governor of Egypt, Bishr of Iraq and Muhammad of al-Jazirah.

Sermon 74: You have certainly known that...

When the Consultative Committee (or Shura) decided to swear allegiance to `Uthman, Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لما عزموا على بيعة عثمان

You have certainly known that I am the most rightful of all others for the Caliphate. By Allah, so long as the affairs of Muslims remain intact and there is no oppression in it save on myself I shall keep quiet seeking reward for it (from Allah) and keeping aloof from its attractions and allurements for which you aspire.

لَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ أَيُّ أَحَقُّ بِهَا مِنْ غَيْرِي، وَوَاللَّهِ لَأَسْلِمَنَّ مَا سَلِمَتْ أُمُورُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَمَنْ يَكُنْ فِيهَا جُورٌ إِلَّا عَلَيَّ خَاصَّةً، التَّمَسَّاسَ لِأَجْرِ ذَلِكَ وَفَضْلِهِ، وَزُهْدًا فِيمَا تَنَافَسْتُمُوهُ مِنْ زُخْرُفِهِ وَزِينَتِهِ

Alternative Sources for Sermon 74

- (1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, chronicles of the year 23;*
- (2) *al-'Azhari, Tahdhib, I, 341;*
- (3) *al-Harawi, al-Jam`;*
- (4) *al-Shaykh Warram, Tanbih;*
- (5) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, events of the year 23.*

Sermon 75: The Umayyads's knowledge about me...

When Amir al-mu'minin learnt that the Umayyads blamed him for killing `Uthman, he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لما بلغه اتهام بني أمية له بالمشاركة في دم عثمان

The Umayyads's knowledge about me did not restrain them from accusing me, nor did my precedence (in accepting Islam) keep off these ignorant people from blaming me. Allah's admonitions are more eloquent than my tongue. I am the contestor against those who break away from Faith and the opposer of those who entertain doubts. Uncertainties should be placed before Qur'an, the Book of Allah (for clarification). Certainly, people will be recompensed according to what they have in their hearts.

أَوَّلُ يَنَّةِ بَنِي أُمَيَّةَ عَلِمَهَا بِي عَنْ قَرْنِي أَوْ مَا وَرَعَ الْجَهْلُ سَابِقِي عَنْ تُهْمَتِي؟! وَلَمَّا وَعَظَهُمُ
اللَّهُ بِهِ أَبْلَغُ مِنْ لِسَانِي. أَنَا حَجِيجُ الْمَارِقِينَ وَخَصِيمُ الْمُرتَابِينَ، عَلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ تُعْرَضُ
الْأَمْثَالُ، وَمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ يُجَازَى الْعِبَادُ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 75

(1) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, under (q.r.f);*

(2) *al-Turayhi, Majma`, under (q.r.f).*

Sermon 76: May Allah bless whoever listens to a point of wisdom and retains it...

About preaching and counseling

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في الحث على العمل الصالح

May Allah bless whoever listens to a point of wisdom and retains it, when he is invited to the right path he approaches it, he follows a leader (by catching his waist band) and finds salvation, keeps Allah before his eyes and fears his sins, performs actions sincerely and acts virtuously, earns treasure of heavenly rewards, avoids vice, aims at (good) objectives and reaps recompense, faces his desires and rejects (fake) hopes, makes endurance the means to his salvation and piety the provision for his death, rides on the path of honour and sticks to the highway of truth, makes good use of his time and hastens towards the end and takes with him the provision of (good) actions.

رَحِمَ اللهُ عَبْدًا سَمِعَ حُكْمًا فَوَعَى وَدُعِيَ إِلَى رَشَادٍ فَدَنَا وَأَخَذَ بِحُجْرَةِ هَادٍ فَتَجَا، رَاقِبَ رَبَّهُ، وَخَافَ ذَنْبَهُ، قَدَّمَ خَالِصًا، وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا، اِكْتَسَبَ مَذْخُورًا وَاجْتَنَبَ مَحْذُورًا، رَمَى غَرَضًا، وَأَحْرَزَ عَوْضًا، كَابَرَ هَوَاهُ، وَكَذَّبَ مُنَاهُ، جَعَلَ الصَّبْرَ مَطِيَّةَ نَجَاتِهِ، وَالتَّقْوَى عُدَّةَ وَفَاتِهِ، رَكِبَ الطَّرِيقَةَ الْعَرَاءَ وَلَزِمَ الْمَحِجَّةَ الْبَيْضَاءَ، اغْتَنَمَ الْمَهْلَ وَبَادَرَ الْأَجَلَ، وَتَزَوَّدَ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 76

- (1) *Al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 151;*
- (2) *al-Karajiki, Kanz, 162;*
- (3) *Ibn Talhah, Matalib, I, 59;*
- (4) *Ibn Shakir, `Uyun al-hikam;*
- (5) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, 231;*
- (6) *al-Husari, Zahr, I, 42;*
- (7) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar;*
- (8) *Sibt, Tadhkirah, 145.*

Sermon 77: The Banu Umayyah ...

About Umayyads (when Sa'id b. al-'As withheld Amir al-mu'minin's right from him, peace be upon him)

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

وذلك حين منعه سعيد بن العاص حقه

The Banu Umayyah (Umayyads) are allowing me the inheritance of Muhammad (S) bit (by bit). By Allah, if I live I would throw them away as the butcher removes the dust from the dust-covered piece of flesh.

إِنَّ بَنِي أُمَيَّةَ لَيُفَوِّقُونِي تُرَاثَ مُحَمَّدٍ تَفْوِيْقًا، وَاللَّهِ لَئِنْ بَقِيْتُ لَهُمْ لَأَنْفُضَنَّاهُمْ نَفْضَ اللَّحْمِ
الْوَدَّامِ الرَّيَّةِ!

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: In one version for “al-widhamu't-taribah” (dust covered piece of flesh) the words “at-turabu'l-wadhimah” (the soil sticking on a piece of flesh) have been shown. That is, for the adjective the qualified noun and for the qualified noun the adjective has been placed. And by the word “layufawwiququnani” Amir al-mu'minin implies that they allow him bit by bit just as a she-camel may be milked a little and then its young one may be made to suck milk so that it may be ready to be milked. And “al-widham” is the plural of “wadhamah” which means the piece of stomach or of liver which falls on the ground and then the dust is removed from it.

قال الشريف: ويروى: «التراب الوذمة»، وهو على القلب .

و قوله (عليه السلام): «لَيُفَوِّقُونِي» أي: يعطونني من المال قليلاً قليلاً كُفُوقِ الناقة، وهو

الحلبة الواحدة من لبنها. والوذام: جمع وذمة، وهي: الحزة من الكرش أو الكبد تقع في التراب فتتنفض.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 77

- (1) Abu al-Faraj, al-'Aghani, XI, 29, II, 29;
- (2) al-'Azharī, Tahdhib, XV, 27;
- (3) Ibn Salam, Gharib al-hadith;
- (4) Ibn Durayd, al-Mu'talif;
- (5) Al-'Isfahani, al-Jam` bayn al-Gharibayn;
- (6) Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 186;
- (7) al-'Askari, Jamharat al-'amthal, I, 165.

Sermon 78: My God, forgive me ...

Supplications of Amir al-mu'minin

ومن كلمات له (عليه السلام) كان يدعوها

O My God! Forgive me what Thou knowest about me more than I do. If I return (to the sins) Thou return to forgiveness. My God forgive me what I had promised to myself but Thou didst not find its fulfilment with me. My God forgive me that with what I sought nearness to Thee with my tongue but my heart opposed and did not perform it. My God forgive me winkings of the eye, vile utterances, desires of the heart and errors of speech.

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي مَا أَنْتَ أَعْلَمُ بِهِ مِنِّي، فَإِنْ عُدْتُ فَعُدْ لِي بِالْمَعْفُورَةِ.

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي مَا وَأَيْتُ مِنْ نَفْسِي، وَمَنْ يَجِدْ لَهُ وَفَاءً عِنْدِي.

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي مَا تَقَرَّبْتُ بِهِ إِلَيْكَ [بِلِسَانِي]، ثُمَّ خَالَفَهُ قَلْبِي.

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي رَمَزَاتِ الْأَحْاطِ وَسَقَطَاتِ الْأَلْفَاظِ وَشَهَوَاتِ الْجَنَانِ، وَهَفَوَاتِ اللِّسَانِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 78

(1) *Al-Jahiz, al-Mi'at al-mukhtarah.*

Sermon 79: Do you think you can tell

When ¹ Amir al-mu'minin decided to set out for the battle with the Kharijites someone said, "If you set out at this moment then according to astrology I fear you will not be successful in your aim," whereupon Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لبعض أصحابه لما عزم على المسير إلى الخوارج، فقال له: يا أمير المؤمنين إن سرت في هذا الوقت، خشيتُ ألاّ تظفر بمرادك، من طريق علم النجوم، فقال (عليه السلام):

Do you think you can tell the time when a man goes out and no evil befall him or can warn of the time at which if one goes out harm will accrue? Whoever testifies to this falsifies the Qur'an and becomes unmindful of Allah in achieving his desired objective and in warding off the undesirable. You cherish saying this so that he who acts on what you say should praise you rather than Allah because according to your misconception you have guided him about the hour in which he would secure benefit and avoid harm.

أَتَزَعُمُ أَنَّكَ تَهْدِي إِلَى السَّاعَةِ الَّتِي مِنْ سَارَ فِيهَا صُرِفَ عَنْهُ السُّوءُ؟ وَتُخَوِّفُ مِنَ السَّاعَةِ الَّتِي مِنْ سَارَ فِيهَا حَاقَ بِهِ الضُّرُّ؟ فَمَنْ صَدَّقَكَ بِهَذَا فَقَدْ كَذَّبَ الْقُرْآنَ، وَاسْتَعْنَى عَنِ الْإِسْتِعَانَةِ بِاللَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ فِي نَيْلِ الْمَحْبُوبِ وَدَفْعِ الْمَكْرُوهِ، وَتَبَتَّعِي فِي قَوْلِكَ لِلْعَامِلِ بِأَمْرِكَ أَنْ يُؤَلِّقَ الْحَمْدَ دُونَ رَبِّهِ، لِإِنَّكَ . بِزَعْمِكَ . أَنْتَ هَدَيْتَهُ إِلَى السَّاعَةِ الَّتِي نَالَ فِيهَا النِّفْعَ، وَأَمِنَ الضُّرَّ!!

Then Amir al-mu'minin advanced towards the people and said:

O People! Beware of learning the science of stars except that with which guidance is sought on land or sea, because it leads to divining and an astrologer is a diviner, while the diviner is like the sorcerer, the sorcerer is like the unbeliever and the unbeliever would be in Hell. Get forward in the name of Allah.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنِّي أُنذِرُكُمْ وَتَعَلَّمِ النُّجُومَ، إِلَّا مَا يُهْتَدَى بِهِ فِي بَرٍّ أَوْ بَحْرٍ، فَإِنَّهَا تَدْعُو إِلَى الْكُهَانَةِ، وَالْمَنْجَمِ كَالكَاهِنِ، وَالْكَاهِنُ كَالسَّاحِرِ، وَالسَّاحِرُ كَالْكَافِرِ! وَالْكَافِرُ فِي النَّارِ! سِيرُوا عَلَى اسْمِ اللَّهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 79

- (1) Ibrahim ibn al-Hasan, *Siffin*, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, I, 203;
- (2) al-Saduq, `Uyun akhbar al-Rida, I, 138;
- (3) al-Saduq, al-'Amali, 249;
- (4) al-Saduq, `Uyun al-jawahir, see (5)
- (5) Ibn Tawus, *Faraj al-mahmum*, 57-59;
- (6) al-Baladhuri, *Ansab*, II, 368.

Notes

1. When Amir al-mu'minin decided to march towards Nahrawan to suppress the rising of the Kharijites, `Afif ibn Qays al-Kindi said to him, "This hour is not good. If you set out at this time. then instead of victory and success you will face defeat and vanquishment." But Amir al-mu'minin paid no heed to his view and ordered the army to march that very moment. In the result the Kharijites suffered such a clear defeat that out of their nine thousand combatants only nine individuals saved their lives by running away while the rest were killed.

Amir al-mu'minin has argued about astrology being wrong or incorrect in three ways, firstly, that if the view of an astrologer is accepted as correct it would mean falsification of the Qur'an, because an astrologer claims to ascertain hidden things of the future by seeing the stars while the Qur'an says:

Say: "None (either) in the heavens or in the earth knoweth the unseen save Allah... " (27:65)

Secondly that under his misconception the astrologer believes that he can know his benefit or harm through knowing the future. In that case he would be regardless of turning to Allah and seeking His help, while this indifference towards Allah and self-reliance is a sort of heresy and atheism, which puts an end to his hope in Allah. Thirdly, that if he succeeds in any objective, he would regard this success to be the result of his knowledge of astrology, as a result of which he would praise himself rather than Allah, and will expect that whomever he guides in this manner he too should be grateful to him rather than to Allah . These points do not apply to astrology to the extent it may be believed that the astrological findings are in the nature of effect of medicines which are subject to alteration at the will of Allah. The competence achieved by most of our religious scholars in astrology is correct in this very ground that they did not regard its findings as final.

Sermon 80: O people, women are ...

After the Battle of Jamal,¹ Concerning Women and their Shortcomings.

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

بعد فراغه من حرب الجمل، في ذم النساء

O people! Women are deficient in Faith, deficient in shares and deficient in intelligence. As regards the deficiency in their Faith, it is their abstention from prayers and fasting during their menstrual period.

As regards deficiency in their intelligence it is because the evidence of two women is equal to that of one man. As for the deficiency of their shares that is because of their share in inheritance being half of men. So beware of the evils of women. Be on your guard even from those of them who are (reportedly) good. Do not obey them even in good things so that they may not attract you to evils.

مَعَاشِرَ النَّاسِ، إِنَّ النِّسَاءَ نَوَاقِصُ الْإِيمَانِ، نَوَاقِصُ الْحُطُوطِ، نَوَاقِصُ الْعُقُولِ: فَأَمَّا نُقْصَانُ
إِيمَانِهِنَّ فَفَعُوذُهُنَّ عَنِ الصَّلَاةِ وَالصِّيَامِ فِي أَيَّامِ حَيْضِهِنَّ، وَأَمَّا نُقْصَانُ عُقُولِهِنَّ فَشَهَادَةُ امْرَأَتَيْنِ
مِنْهُنَّ كَشَهَادَةِ الرَّجُلِ الْوَاحِدِ، وَأَمَّا نُقْصَانُ حُطُوطِهِنَّ فَمَوَارِيثُهُنَّ عَلَى الْأَنْصَابِ مِنْ مَوَارِيثِ
الرِّجَالِ؛ فَاتَّقُوا شِرَارَ النِّسَاءِ، وَكُونُوا مِنْ خِيَارِهِنَّ عَلَى حَذَرٍ، وَلَا تُطِيعُوهُنَّ فِي الْمَعْرُوفِ حَتَّى لَا
يَطْمَعَنَّ فِي الْمُنْكَرِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 80

- (1) *Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, Tadhkirah, 85;*
- (2) *Abu Talib al-Makki, Qut, I, 282;*
- (3) *al-Kulayni, Furu` al-Kafi, V;*
- (4) *al-Saduq, al-'Amali, Majlis 50;*
- (5) *al-Mufid, al-'Ikhtisas.*

Notes

1. Amir al-mu'minin delivered this sermon after the devastation created by the Battle of Jamal. Since the devastation resulting from this battle was the outcome of blindly following a woman's command, in this sermon he has described women's physical defects and their causes and effects. Thus their first weakness is that for a few days in every month they have to abstain from prayer and fasting, and this abstention from worship is a proof of their deficiency in Faith. Although the real meaning of `iman (belief) is heart-felt testimony and inner conviction yet metaphorically it also applies to action and character. Since actions are the reflection of Belief they are also regarded as part of Belief. Thus, it is related from Imam `Ali ibn Musa ar-Rida (p.b.u.t.) that:

`iman (belief) is testimony at heart, admission by the tongue and action by the limbs.

The second weakness is that their natural propensities do not admit of full performance of their intelligence. Therefore, nature has given them the power of intelligence only in accordance with the scope of their activities which can guide them in pregnancy, delivery, child nursing, child care and house-hold affairs. On the basis of this weakness of mind and intelligence their evidence has not been accorded the status of man's evidence, as Allah says: . . . then call to witness two witnesses from among your men and if there not be two men then (take) a man and two women, of those ye approve of the witnesses, so that should

one of the two (women) forget the (second) one of the two may remind the other... (Qur'an, 2:282)

The third weakness is that their share in inheritance is half of man's share in inheritance as the Qur'an says: Allah enjoineeth you about your children. The male shall have the equal of the shares of two females...(4:11)

This shows woman's weakness because the reason for her share in inheritance being half is that the liability of her maintenance rests on man. When man's position is that of a maintainer and care taker the status of the weaker sex who is in need of maintenance and care-taking is evident.

After describing their natural weakness, Amir al-mu'minin points out the mischief of blindly following them and wrongly obeying them. He says that not to say of bad things but even if they say in regard to some good things it should not be done in a way that these should feel as if it is being done in pursuance of their wish, but rather in a way that they should realise that the good act has been performed because of its being good and that their pleasure or wish has nothing to do with it. If they have even the doubt that their pleasures has been kept in view in it they would slowly increase in their demands and would wish that they should be obeyed in all matters however evil, the inevitable consequence whereof will be destruction and ruin. ash-Shaykh Muhammad `Abduh writes about this view of Amir al-mu'minin as under: Amir al-mu'minin has said a thing which is corroborated by experiences of centuries.

Sermon 81: O people, zuhd lies in ...

About Abstinence

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في الزهد

O people! Abstinence (zuhd) is to shorten desires, to thank for bounties and to keep away from what is prohibited. If (all of) this is not possible then (at least) what is prohibited should not overpower your patience; and do not forget gratitude when receiving blessings For Allah has exhausted the excuses before you through clear, shining arguments and open, bright books.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، الزَّهَادَةُ قِصْرُ الْأَمَلِ، وَالشُّكْرُ عِنْدَ النِّعَمِ، وَالْوَرَعُ عِنْدَ الْمَحَارِمِ، فَإِنْ عَزَبَ ذَلِكَ عَنْكُمْ فَلَا يَغْلِبِ الْحَرَامُ صَبْرَكُمْ، وَلَا تَنْسُوا عِنْدَ النِّعَمِ شُكْرَكُمْ، فَقَدْ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لِإِيكُمْ بِحُجَجٍ مُسْفِرَةٍ ظَاهِرَةٍ، وَكُتُبٍ بَارِرَةٍ الْعُدْرِ وَاضِحَةٍ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 81

- (1) *Al-Saduq, Ma`ani al-'akhbar, 251;*
- (2) *Idem., al-Khisal, I, 11;*
- (3) *al-Barqi, al-Mahasin, 234;*
- (4) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 119;*
- (5) *al-Fattal, Rawdah, 434;*
- (6) *al-Tabarsi, Mishkat, 106.*

Sermon 82: How should I describe this house ...

About the world and its people

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في صفة الدنيا

In what way shall I describe this world whose beginning is grief and whose end is destruction?¹ The lawful actions performed here have to be accounted for, while for the forbidden ones there is punishment. Whoever is rich here faces mischief and whoever is poor gets grief. One who hankers after it does not get it. If one keeps away from it then it advances towards him. If one sees through it, it would bestow him sight, but if one has his eye on it then it would blind him.

مَا أَصِفُ مِنْ دَارٍ أَوْ لَهَا عَنَاءٌ وَآخِرُهَا فَنَاءٌ! فِي خَلْقِهَا حِسَابٌ، وَفِي حَرَامِهَا عِقَابٌ. مَنْ اسْتَعْنَى فِيهَا فُتِنَ، وَمَنْ افْتَقَرَ فِيهَا حَزِنَ، وَمَنْ سَاعَاهَا فَاتَتْهُ، وَمَنْ قَعَدَ عَنْهَا وَاتَتْهُ، وَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ بِهَا بَصَرْتَهُ، وَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ إِلَيْهَا أَعْمَتْهُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: If a thinker thinks over this phrase of Amir al-mu'minin "waman absara biha bassarat'hu" ("If one sees through it, it would bestow him sight") he would find thereunder very amazing meaning and far-reaching sense whose purpose cannot be appreciated and whose aim cannot be understood particularly when he joins it with Amir al-mu'minin's phrase "waman absara ilayha a`mat'hu" ("If one, has his eye on it, then it would blind him) he would find the difference between "absara biha" and "absara laha", clear, bright, wonderful and shining.

قال الشريف: أقول: وإذا تأمل المتأمل قوله (عليه السلام): «وَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ بِهَا بَصَرْتَهُ» وجد تحته من المعنى العجيب، والغرض البعيد، ما لا يُبلِّغ غايته ولا يدرك غوره، لا سيما إذا قرن إليه قوله: «وَمَنْ أَبْصَرَ إِلَيْهَا أَعْمَتْهُ»، فإنه يجد الفرق بين «أبصر بها» و«أبصر إليها» واضحاً نيراً عجباً باهراً!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 82

- (1) *Al-Mubarrad, al-Kamil, I, 88;*
- (2) *al-Qali, al-'Amali, II, 117;*
- (3) *Ibn Durayd, al-Mujtana, 31;*
- (4) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 138;*
- (5) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-'Iqd, III, 172;*
- (6) *al-Murtada, al-'Amali, 153;*
- (7) *Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, Tadhkirah, 136;*
- (8) *al-Tabarsi, Mishkat, 243;*
- (9) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 86;*
- (10) *al-Karajiki, Kanz, 160.*

Notes

1. "The beginning of the world is grief and its end is destruction." This sentence contains the same truth which the Qur'an has presented in the verse: Indeed We have created man (to dwell) amidst hardship. (90:4)

It is true that right from the narrow womb of the mother upto the vastness of the firmament the changes of human life do not come to an end. When man first tastes life he finds himself closed in such a dark prison where he can neither move the limbs nor change the sides. When he gets rid of this confinement and steps in this world he has to pass through innumerable troubles. In the beginning he can neither speak with the tongue so as to describe his difficulty or pain nor possesses energy in the limbs so as to accomplish his needs himself. Only his suppressed sobs and flowing tears express his needs and translate his grief and sorrow. When after the lapse of this period he enters the stage of learning and instruction, then on every step voices of admonition and abuse welcome him. All the time he seems frightened and terrified. When he is relieved of this period of subjugation he finds himself surrounded by the worries of family life and livelihood, where sometimes, there is clash with comrades in profession, sometimes collision with enemies, sometimes confrontation with vicissitudes of time, sometimes attack of ailments and sometimes shock of children, till old age approaches him with the tidings of helplessness and weakness, and eventually he bids farewell to this world with mortification and grief in the heart.

Thereafter Amir al-mu'minin says about this world, that in its lawful actions there is the question of reckoning and in its forbidden acts there are hardships of punishment, as a result of which even pleasant joys also produce bitterness in his palate. If there is plenty of wealth and money in this world then man finds himself in such a whirlpool (of worries) that he loses his joy and peace of mind. But if there is want and poverty, he is ever crying for wealth. He who hankers after this world there is no limit for his desires. If one wish is fulfilled the desire for fulfilment of another wish crops up. This world is like the reflection. If you run after it then it will itself run forward but if you leave it and run away from it then it follows you. In the same way, if a person does not run after the world, the world runs after him. The implication is that if a person breaks the clutches of greed and avarice and keeps aloof from undesirable hankering after the world, he too gets (pleasures of) the world and he does not remain deprived of it. Therefore, he who surveys this world from above its surface and takes lesson from its chances and happenings, and through its variation, and alterations gains knowledge about Allah's Might, Wisdom and Sagacity, Mercy, Clemency and Sustaining power, his eyes will gain real brightness and sight. On the other hand the person who is lost only in the colourfulness of the world and its decorations, he loses himself in the darkness of the world that is why Allah has forbidden to view the world thus: And strain not thine eyes unto that which We have provided (different) parties of them, (of) the splendour of the life of this world, so that We may try them in it; for the provision of thy Lord is better and more abiding. (Qur'an, 20:131)

Sermon 83: Praise belongs to God, Who is high ...

This sermon is called the al-Gharra' and it is one of the most wonderful sermons of Amir al-mu'minin.

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وهي من الخطب العجيبة تسمى "الغراء"

وفيها نعوت الله جل شأنه، ثم الوصية بتقواه، ثم التنفير من الدنيا، ثم ما يلحق من دخول

القيامة، ثم تنبيه الخلق إلى ما هم فيه من الاعراض، ثم فضله (عليه السلام) في التذكير

Praise be to Allah who is High above all else, and is Near (the creation) through His bounty. He is the Giver of all reward and distinction, and Dispeller of all calamities and hardships. I praise Him for His continuous mercy and His copious bounties.

I believe in Him as He is the First of all and He is Manifest. I seek guidance from Him as He is Near and is the Guide. I seek His succour as He is Mighty and Subduer. I depend upon Him as He is Sufficer and Supporter. And I stand witness that Muhammad (blessing of Allah be on him and his progeny) is His slave and His Prophet. He sent him for enforcement of His commands, for exhausting His pleas and for presenting warnings (against eternal punishment).

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي عَلَا بِحَوْلِهِ وَدَنَا بِطَوْلِهِ مَانِحٌ كُلِّ غَنِيمَةٍ وَفَضْلٍ، وَكَاشِفٌ كُلِّ عَظِيمَةٍ وَأَزَلٌّ
أَحْمَدُهُ عَلَى عَوَاطِفِ كَرَمِهِ، وَسَوَابِغِ نِعَمِهِ وَأَوْمِنُ بِهِ أَوْلَىٰ بَادِيًّا وَأَسْتَهْدِيهِ قَرِيبًا هَادِيًّا، وَأَسْتَعِينُهُ
قَاهِرًا قَادِرًا، وَأَتَوَكَّلُ عَلَيْهِ كَافِيًّا نَاصِرًا. وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ،
أَرْسَلَهُ لِإِنْفَازِ أَمْرِهِ، وَإِنْهَاءِ عُذْرِهِ وَتَقْدِيمِ نُذْرِهِ

Enjoining people to Piety

الْوَصِيَّةُ بِالتَّقْوَى

O creatures of Allah I advise you to have fear of Allah Who has furnished illustrations and Who has timed for you your lives. He has given you covering of dress¹ and He has scattered for you livelihood. He has surrounded you with His knowledge. He has ordained rewards. He has bestowed upon you vast bounties and extensive gifts. He has warned you through far reaching arguments, and He has counted you by numbers. He has fixed for you ages (to live) in this place of test and house of instruction.

You are on test in this world and have to render account about it.

أَوْصِيكُمْ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ الَّذِي ضَرَبَ لَكُمْ الْأَمْثَالَ وَوَقَّتَ لَكُمْ الْأَجَالَ، وَأَلْبَسَكُمْ
الرِّيَاسَ وَأَرْفَعَ لَكُمْ الْمَعَاشَ وَأَحَاطَ بِكُمْ الْأَحْصَاءَ وَأَرْصَدَ لَكُمْ الْجَزَاءَ وَأَتَرَكُكُمْ بِالنِّعَمِ السَّوَاعِغِ،

وَالرَّفْدِ الرَّوَافِعِ، وَأَنْدَرَكُمْ بِالْحَجَجِ الْبَوَالِغِ فَأَخْصَاكُمْ عَدَدًا، وَوُظِّفَ لَكُمْ مُدَدًا فِي قَرَارِ خِبْرَةٍ
وَدَارِ عِبْرَةٍ، أَنْتُمْ مُحْتَبَرُونَ فِيهَا، وَمُحَاسِبُونَ عَلَيْهَا.

Caution against this world

التنغير من الدنيا

Certainly this world is a dirty watering place and a muddy source of drinking.

Its appearance is attractive and its inside is destructive. It is a deception, a vanishing reflection and a bent pillar. When its despiser begins to like it and he who is not acquainted with it feels satisfied with it, then it raises and puts down its feet (in joy), entraps him in its trap, makes him the target of its arrows and puts round his neck the rope of death taking him to the narrow grave and fearful abode in order to show him his place of stay and the recompense of his acts. This goes on from generation to generation. Neither death stops from cutting them asunder nor do the survivors keep aloof from committing of sins.

فَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا رِنَقٌ مَشْرُوبٌ، رَدَعٌ مَشْرُوبٌ، يُؤْنِقُ مَنْظَرَهَا، وَيُوبِقُ مَخْبِرَهَا، عُزُورٌ حَائِلٌ، وَضَوْءٌ
أَفْلٌ، وَظِلٌّ زَائِلٌ، وَسِنَادٌ مَائِلٌ، حَتَّى إِذَا أَنْسَ نَافِرَهَا، وَاطْمَأَنَّ نَاكِرَهَا، فَمَصَّتْ بِأَرْجُلِهَا،
وَقَنَصَتْ بِأَحْبِلِهَا، وَأَقْصَدَتْ بِأَسْهُمِهَا، وَأَعْلَقَتْ الْمَرْءَ أَوْهَاقَ الْمَنِيَّةِ قَائِدَةً لَهُ إِلَى ضَنْكَ
الْمَضْجَعِ، وَوَحْشَةَ الْمَرْجِعِ، وَمُعَايِنَةَ الْمَحَلِّ، وَتَوَابِ الْعَمَلِ، وَكَذَلِكَ الْخَلْفُ بِعَقِبِ السَّلْفِ،
لَا تُفْلِعُ الْمَنِيَّةُ اخْتِرَامًا، وَلَا يَرْعَوِي الْبَاقُونَ اخْتِرَامًا،

Death and Resurrection

بعد الموت البعث

They are emulating each other and proceeding in groups towards the final objective and the rendezvous of death, till when matters come to a close, the world dies and resurrection draws near. Allah² would take them out from the corners of the graves, the nests of birds, the dens of beasts and the centres of death. They hasten towards His command and run towards the place fixed for their final return group by group, quiet, standing and arrayed in rows. They will be within Allah's sight and will hear every one who would call them.

يَخْتَدُونَ مِثَالًا، وَيَمْضُونَ أَرْسَالًا، إِلَى غَايَةِ الْاِنْتِهَاءِ، وَصَيُورِ الْفَنَاءِ. حَتَّى إِذَا تَصَرَّمَتِ
الْأُمُورُ، وَتَقَضَّتِ الدُّهُورُ، وَأَزِفَ النُّشُورُ، أَخْرَجَهُمْ مِنْ ضَرَائِحِ الْقُبُورِ، وَأَوْكَارِ الطُّيُورِ، وَأَوْجِرَةِ
السَّبَاعِ، وَمَطَارِحِ الْمَهَالِكِ، سِرَاعًا إِلَى أَمْرِهِ، مُهْطِعِينَ إِلَى مَعَادِهِ، رَعِيلاً صُمُوتًا، قِيَامًا صُفُوفًا،
يَنْفُذُهُمُ الْبَصَرُ وَيُسْمِعُهُمُ الدَّاعِي،

They will have the dress of helplessness and covering of submission and indignity. (At this time) contrivances would disappear, desires would be cut, hearts would sink quietly, voices would be curbed down, sweat would choke the throat, fear would increase and ears would resound with the thundering

voice of the announcer calling towards the final judgement, award of recompense, striking of punishment and paying of reward.

عَلَيْهِمْ لَبُوسُ الْاسْتِكَانَةِ، وَضُرْعُ الْاسْتِسْلَامِ وَالذَّلَّةِ، قَدْ ضَلَّتِ الْحَيْلُ، وَأَنْقَطَعَ الْأَمَلُ، وَهَوَتْ الْأَفئِدَةُ كَأَطْمَةِ، وَخَشَعَتِ الْأَصْوَاتُ مُهَيَّبَةً، وَأَلْجَمَ الْعَرْقُ، وَعَظُمَ الشَّقْفُ، وَأُزْعِدَتِ الْأَسْمَاعُ لِزَيْرَةِ الدَّاعِي إِلَى فَصْلِ الْخِطَابِ، وَمُقَايَصَةِ الْجَزَاءِ، وَنِكَالِ الْعِقَابِ، وَنَوَالِ الثَّوَابِ.

The limitations of life

تنبيه الخلق

People have been created as a proof of (His) power, have been brought up with authority, they are made to die through pangs, and placed in graves where they turn into crumbs. Then they would be resurrected one by one, awarded their recompense and would have to account for their actions, each one separately.

They had been allowed time to seek deliverance, had been shown the right path and had been allowed to live and seek favours, the darkness of doubts had been removed, and they had been let free in this period of life as a training place in order to make preparation for the race on the Day of Judgement, to search for the objective with thoughtfulness, to get time necessary to secure benefits and provide for the next place of stay.

عِبَادٌ مَخْلُوقُونَ اِفْتِدَارًا، وَمَرْبُوبُونَ اِفْتِسَارًا وَمَقْبُوضُونَ اِحْتِصَارًا وَمُضْمَنُونَ اَجْدَانًا وَكَائِنُونَ رُفَاتًا وَمَبْعُوثُونَ اَفْرَادًا، وَمَدِينُونَ جَزَاءً، وَمُمَيِّزُونَ حِسَابًا قَدْ اُمِّهَلُوا فِي طَلَبِ الْمَخْرَجِ، وَهُدُوا سَبِيلَ الْمَنْهَجِ، وَعَمَرُوا مَهَلِ الْمُسْتَعْتَبِ وَكُشِفَتْ عَنْهُمْ سُدْفُ الرِّيبِ وَخُلُوا لِمِضْمَارِ الْحِيَادِ وَرَوِيَّةِ الْاِرْتِيَادِ وَأَنَاةِ الْمُقْتَبِسِ الْمُرْتَادِ فِي مُدَّةِ الْأَجْلِ، وَمُضْطَرِبِ الْمَهَلِ.

No happiness without Piety

فضل التذكير

How appropriate are these illustrations and effective admonitions provided they are received by pure hearts, open ears, firm views and sharp wits. Fear Allah like him who listened (good advice) and bowed before it, when he committed sin he admitted it, when he felt fear he acted virtuously, when he apprehended he hastened (towards good acts), when he believed he performed virtuous acts, when he was asked to take lesson (from the happenings of this world) he did take the lesson, when he was asked to desist he abstained (from evil), when he responded to the call (of Allah) he leaned (towards him), when he turned back (to evil) he repented, when he followed he almost imitated and when he was shown (the right path) he saw it.

فَيَا لَهَا أُمَّالًا صَائِبَةً وَمَوَاعِظَ شَافِيَةً، لَوْ صَادَفَتْ قُلُوبًا زَاكِيَةً، وَأَسْمَاعًا وَاِعِيَةً، وَآرَاءَ عَازِمَةً، وَأَلْبَابًا حَازِمَةً! فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ تَقِيَّةً مَنْ سَمِعَ فَخَشَعُ، وَاقْتَرَفَ فَاعْتَرَفَ، وَوَجَلَ فَعَمِلَ، وَحَادَرَ فَبَادَرَ

وَأَيْقَنَ فَأَحْسَنَ، وَعُيِّرَ فَأَعْتَبَرَ وَخُدِّرَ فَحَذِرَ، وَزُجِرَ فَازْدَجَرَ، وَأَجَابَ فَأَنَابَ وَرَاجَعَ فَتَابَ،
وَاقْتَدَى فَاحْتَدَى وَأَرَى فَرَأَى،

Such a man was busy in search of truth and got rid (of the worldly evils) by running away. He collected provision (of good acts) for himself, purified his inner self, built for the next world, and took with himself provision for the day of his departure, keeping in view his journey, his requirement and the position of his need. He sent ahead of him for the abode of his stay (in the next world).

O creatures of Allah, fear Allah keeping in view the reason why He created you and be afraid of Him to the extent He has advised you to do. Make yourself deserve what He has promised you, by having confidence in the truth of His promise and entertaining fear for the Day of Judgement.

فَأَسْرَعَ طَالِبًا، وَنَجَا هَارِبًا، فَأَقَادَ ذَخِيرَةَ وَأَطَابَ سَرِيرَةً، وَعَمَّرَ مَعَادًا، وَاسْتَظْهَرَ زَادًا لِيَوْمِ
رَحِيلِهِ وَوَجَّهَ سَبِيلَهُ وَحَالَ حَاجَتِهِ، وَمَوَظِنَ فَاقَتِهِ، وَقَدَّمَ أَمَامَهُ لِدَارِ مُقَامِهِ. فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ
جِهَةً مَا خَلَقَكُمْ لَهُ، وَاحْذَرُوا مِنْهُ كُنْهَ مَا حَذَّرَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ، وَاسْتَحْضُوا مِنْهُ مَا أَعَدَّ لَكُمْ
بِالتَّنَجُّزِ لِصِدْقِ مِيعَادِهِ، وَالْحَذَرِ مِنْ هَوْلِ مَعَادِهِ

A part of the same sermon Reminding people of Allah's bounties

منها: [في التذكير بضروب النعم]

He has made for you ears to preserve what is important, eyes to have sight in place of blindness and limbs which consist of many (smaller) parts, whose curves are in proportion with the moulding of their shapes and lengths of their ages, and also bodies that are sustaining themselves and hearts that are busy in search of their food, besides other big bounties, obliging bestowings and fortresses of safety. He has fixed for you ages that are not known to you. He has retained for you remains of the past people for your instruction.

Those people enjoyed themselves fully and were completely unhampered. Death overtook them before (satisfaction of) their desires, from which the hands of death separated them. They did not provide for themselves during health of their bodies, and did not take lesson during their youth.

جَعَلَ لَكُمْ أَسْمَاعًا لَتَعِيَ مَا عَنَاهَا، وَأَبْصَارًا لَتَنجُلُوَ عَنْ عَشَاهَا، وَأَشْلَاءَ جَامِعَةً لِأَعْضَائِهَا،
مَلَائِمَةً لِإِحْنَائِهَا فِي تَرْكِيْبِ صُورِهَا، وَمُدَدِ عُمْرِهَا، بِأَبْدَانِ قَائِمَةٍ بِأَرْفَاقِهَا، وَقُلُوبِ رَائِدَةٍ
لِإِرْزَاقِهَا، فِي مُجَلِّلَاتِ نَعِيمِهِ، وَمُوجِبَاتِ مَنَنِهِ، وَخَوَاجِرِ عَافِيَتِهِ. وَقَدَّرَ لَكُمْ أَعْمَارًا سَتَرَهَا عَنْكُمْ،
وَخَلَّفَ لَكُمْ عِبْرًا مِنْ آثَارِ الْمَاضِيْنَ قَبْلِكُمْ، مِنْ مُسْتَمْتَعِ خَلَاقِهِمْ، وَمُسْتَمْسِحِ خَنَاقِهِمْ.
أَرْهَقْتُهُمْ الْمَنَايَا دُونَ الْأَمَالِ، وَشَدَّبْتَهُمْ عَنْهَا تَحْرُمُ الْأَجَالِ، لَمْ يَمْهَدُوا فِي سَلَامَةِ الْأَبْدَانِ، وَلَمْ
يَعْتَبِرُوا فِي أَنْفِ الْأَوَانِ.

Are these people who are in youth waiting for the backbending old age, and those enjoying fresh health waiting for ailments, and these living persons looking for the hour of death? When the hour of departure will be close and the journey at hand, with pangs of grief and trouble, suffering of sorrows and suffocation of saliva, and the time would arrive for calling relations and friends for help and changing sides on the bed.

فَهَلْ يَنْتَظِرُ أَهْلُ بَصَاظَةِ الشَّبَابِ إِلَّا حَوَائِيِ الْهَرَمِ؟ وَأَهْلُ غَضَارَةِ الصِّحَّةِ إِلَّا نَوَازِلَ السَّقَمِ؟
وَأَهْلُ مُدَّةِ الْبَقَاءِ إِلَّا آوَنَةَ الْفَنَاءِ؟ مَعَ قُرْبِ الرِّيَالِ، وَأُرُوفِ الْإِنْتِقَالِ، وَعَظْرِ الْقَلْقِ، وَالْمِ
الْمَضْضِ، وَعُصْصِ الْجَرَضِ، وَتَلْقُفِ الْإِسْتِعَاثَةِ بِنُصْرَةِ الْحَفْدَةِ وَالْأَقْرَبَاءِ، وَالْأَعْرَةِ وَالْقُرْنَاءِ!

Could then the near ones stop death, or the mourning women do any good? Rather, he will be left in the graveyard, a hostage (to his sins) and alone in his constricted grave, his skin pierced all over by reptiles, and his freshness destroyed by these tribulations. Storms have removed his traces and calamities have obliterated even his signs. Fresh bodies have turned thin and withered and bones have become rotten. The spirits are burdened with the weight of sins and have become conscious of the unknown things.

But now neither the good acts can be added to nor can evil acts be atoned for by repentance. Are you not sons, fathers, brothers and relations of these dead? Are you not to follow their footsteps and pass by their paths? But hearts are still unmoved, heedless of guidance and moving on wrong lines, as though the addressee is someone else, and as though the correct way is to amass worldly gains.

فَهَلْ دَفَعَتِ الْأَقَارِبُ، أَوْ نَفَعَتِ النَّوَاحِبُ؟ وَقَدْ عُودِرَ فِي مَحَلَّةِ الْأَمْوَاتِ رَهِينًا، وَفِي ضَيْقِ
الْمَضْجَعِ وَحِيدًا، قَدْ هَتَكَتِ الْهُوَامُ جِلْدَتَهُ، وَأَبْلَتِ النَّوَاهِكُ جِدَّتَهُ، وَعَقَتِ الْعَوَاصِفُ آثَارَهُ،
وَحَا الْحَدَثَانَ مَعَالِمَهُ، وَصَارَتِ الْأَجْسَادُ شَحِبَةً بَعْدَ بَضَّتِيهَا، وَالْعِظَامُ نُحْرَةً بَعْدَ قُوَّتِهَا، وَالْأَرْوَاحُ
مُرْتَهَنَةً بِثِقَلِ أَعْبَائِهَا مُوقِنَةً بِعَيْبِ أَنْبَائِهَا، لَا تُسْتَرَاذُ مِنْ صَالِحِ عَمَلِهَا، وَلَا تُسْتَعْتَبُ مِنْ
سَيِّئِ زَلِيلِهَا! أَوْلَسْتُمْ أَبْنَاءَ الْقَوْمِ وَالْآبَاءِ، وَإِخْوَانَهُمْ وَالْأَقْرَبَاءِ؟ تَحْتَدُونَ أَمْثَلَتَهُمْ، وَتَرْكَبُونَ
قِدَّتَهُمْ، وَتَطْفُونَ جَادَتَهُمْ! فَالْقُلُوبُ قَاسِيَةٌ عَنِ حَظِّهَا، لَاهِيَةٌ عَنِ رُشْدِهَا، سَالِكَةٌ فِي غَيْرِ
مِضْمَارِهَا! كَأَنَّ الْمَعْنِيَّ سِوَاهَا، وَكَأَنَّ الرُّشْدَ فِي إِحْرَازِ دُنْيَاهَا.

Preparation for the Day of Judgement

التحذير من هول الصراط

And know that you have to pass over the pathway (of Sirat) where steps waver, feet slip away and there are fearful dangers at every step. O creatures of Allah, fear Allah, like the fearing of wise man whom the thought (of next world) has turned away from other matters, fear (of Allah) has afflicted his body with trouble and pain, his engagement in the night prayer has turned even his short sleep into awakening, hope (of eternal recompense) keeps him thirsty in the day, abstention has curbed his desires, and remembrance of Allah is ever moving his tongue. He entertains fear before dangers.

He avoids uneven ways in favour of clear ones. He follows the shortest route to secure his purpose, wishfulness does not twist his thinking and ambiguities do not blind his eyes. He enjoys deep sleep and passes his day happily because of the happiness of good tidings and pleasure of (eternal bounties).

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ مَجَارِكُمْ عَلَى الصِّرَاطِ وَمَزَالِي دَخُضِهِ، وَأَهَاوِيلِ زَلِيلِ هـ، وَتَارَاتِ أَهْوَالِهِ؛ فَاتَّقُوا
اللَّهَ تَقِيَّةَ ذِي لُبِّ شَعَلِ التَّفَكُّرِ قَلْبُهُ، وَأَنْصَبِ الْخَوْفِ بَدَنُهُ، وَأَسْهَرَ التَّهَجُّدِ غِرَارَ نَوْمِهِ، وَأَظْمَأَ
الرَّجَاءِ هَوَاجِرَ يَوْمِهِ، وَظَلَفَ الرُّهُدِ شَهَوَاتِهِ، وَأَوْجَفَ الدِّكْرِ بِلِسَانِهِ، وَقَدَّمَ الْخَوْفَ لِأَمَانِهِ،
وَتَنَكَّبَ الْمُخَالَجَ عَنِ وَضَحِ السَّبِيلِ، وَسَلَّكَ أَقْصَدَ الْمَسَالِكِ إِلَى النَّهْجِ الْمَطْلُوبِ؛ وَلَمْ تَفْتَلُهُ
فَاتِلَاثُ الْعُرُورِ، وَلَمْ تَعْمَ عَلَيْهِ مُشْتَبِهَاتُ الْأُمُورِ، ظَافِرًا بِفَرَحَةِ الْبُشْرَى، وَرَاحَةَ التُّعْمَى، فِي أَنْعَمِ
نَوْمِهِ، وَأَمِنَ يَوْمِهِ.

He passes the pathway of this world in praiseworthy manner. He reaches the next world with virtues. He hastens (towards virtue) out of fear (for vice). He moves briskly during the short time (of life in this world). He devotes himself in seeking (eternal good), he runs away from evil. During today he is mindful of tomorrow, and keeps the future in his view. Certainly Paradise is the best reward and achievement, while hell is appropriate punishment and suffering. Allah is the best Avenger and Helper and the Qur'an is the best argument and confronter.

قَدْ عَبَّرَ مَعْبَرَ الْعَاجِلَةِ حَمِيدًا، وَقَدَّمَ زَادَ الْأَجَلَةِ سَعِيدًا، وَبَادَرَ مِنْ وَجَلِ، وَأَكْمَشَ فِي مَهَلِ،
وَوَرَعَبَ فِي طَلَبِ، وَذَهَبَ عَنْ هَرَبِ، وَرَاقَبَ فِي يَوْمِهِ عَدُوَّهُ، وَنَظَرَ قُدَمَا أَمَامَهُ. فَكَفَى بِالْجَنَّةِ
ثَوَابًا وَنَوَالًا، وَكَفَى بِالنَّارِ عِقَابًا وَوَبَالًا! وَكَفَى بِاللَّهِ مُنْتَقِمًا وَنَصِيرًا! وَكَفَى بِالْكِتَابِ حَجِيجًا
وَخَصِيمًا

Warning against Satan

الوصية بالتقوى

I enjoin upon you fear of Allah Who has left no excuse against what He has warned, has exhausted argument (of guidance) about the (right) path He has shown. He has warned you of the enemy that steals into hearts and stealthily speaks into ears, and thereby misguides and brings about destruction, makes (false) promises and keeps under wrong impression, he represents evil sins in attractive shape, and shows as light even serious crimes.

When he has deceived his comrades and exhausted the pledge he begins to find fault with what he presented as good, and considers serious what he had shown as light, and threatens from what he had shown as safe.

أَوْصِيكُمْ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَعْدَرَ بِمَا أُنْدَرَ، وَاحْتَجَّ بِمَا نَهَجَّ، وَحَدَّرَكُمْ عَدُوًّا نَفَدَ فِي الصُّدُورِ
حَفِيًّا، وَنَفَثَ فِي الْأَذَانِ نَجِيًّا، فَأَضَلَّ وَأَرْدَى، وَوَعَدَ فَمَعَى، وَزَيَّنَ سَيِّئَاتِ الْجَرَائِمِ، وَهَوَّنَ

مُوبِقَاتِ الْعِظَائِمِ، حَتَّى إِذَا اسْتَدْرَجَ قَرِينَتَهُ، وَاسْتَعْلَقَ رَهِيْنَتَهُ، أَنْكَرَ مَا رَزَى، وَاسْتَعْظَمَ مَا هَوَى،
وَحَدَّرَ مَا أَمَّنَ.

Part of the same sermon dealing with creation of man

منها: في صفة خلق الانسان

Or look at man whom Allah has created in the dark wombs and layers of curtains from what was overflowing semen, then shapeless clot, then embryo, then suckling infant, then child and then fully grown up young man. Then He gave him heart with memory, tongue to talk and eye to see with, in order that he may take lesson (from whatever is around him) and understand it and follow the admonition and abstain from evil.

أَمْ هَذَا الَّذِي أَنْشَأَهُ فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْأَرْحَامِ، وَشُعْفِ الْأَسْتَارِ، نُطْفَةً دِفَاقًا، وَعَلَقَةً مِحَافًا،
وَجَنِينًا وَرَاضِعًا، وَوَلِيدًا وَيَافِعًا ثُمَّ مَنَحَهُ قَلْبًا خَافِظًا، وَلِسَانًا لَافِظًا، وَبَصْرًا لَاحِظًا، لِيَفْهَمَ
مُعْتَبِرًا، وَيُقْصِرَ مُزْدَجِرًا؛

When he attained the normal growth and his structure gained its average development he fell in self-conceit and got perplexed. He drew bucketfuls of his desires, got immersed in fulfilling his wishes for pleasures of the world and his (sordid) aims. He did not fear any evil nor got frightened of any apprehension. He died infatuated with his vices. He spent his short life in rubbish pursuits. He earned no reward nor did he fulfil any obligation.

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.

حَتَّى إِذَا قَامَ اغْتِدَالُهُ، وَاسْتَوَى مِثَالُهُ، نَفَرَ مُسْتَكْبِرًا، وَحَبَطَ سَادِرًا، مَا تَحَا فِي غَرْبِ هَوَاهُ،
كَادِحًا سَعِيًّا لِدُنْيَاهُ، فِي لَدَاتِ طَرْبِهِ، وَبَدَوَاتِ أَرْبِهِ؛ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ رِزْيَهُ، وَلَا يَخْشَعُ تَقِيْبَهُ؛ فَمَاتَ
فِي فِتْنَتِهِ غَرِيْرًا، وَعَاشَ فِي هَفْوَتِهِ أُسِيْرًا، لَمْ يَفِدْ عَوْضًا، وَلَمْ يَفِضْ مُفْتَرَضًا. دَهَمَتْهُ فَجَعَاتُ الْمَنِيْبَةِ
فِي غَيْرِ جِمَاحِهِ، وَسَنَنِ مِرَاحِهِ، فَظَلَّ سَادِرًا، وَبَاتَ سَاهِرًا فِي غَمَرَاتِ الْأَلَامِ، وَطَوَارِقِ الْأَوْجَاعِ
وَالْأَسْقَامِ، بَيْنَ أَخٍ شَقِيْقٍ، وَوَالِدِ شَقِيْقٍ، وَدَاعِيَةِ بِالْوَيْلِ جَزَعًا، وَوَالِدَةِ اللَّصْدْرِ قَلَقًا. وَالْمَرْءُ فِي
سَكْرَةِ مُلْهِمِيَّةٍ، وَعَمْرَةٍ كَارِثَةٍ، وَأَنَّةٍ مُوجِعَةٍ، وَجَذْبَةٍ مُكْرِبَةٍ وَسَوْفَةٍ مُتْعِبَةٍ.

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 wailing for him returned and then he was made to sit in his grave for terrifying questioning and slippery examination. The great calamity of that

place is the hot water and entry into Hell, flames of eternal Fire and intensity of blazes.

There is no resting period, no gap for ease, no power to intervene, no death to bring about solace and no sleep to make him forget pain. He rather lies under several kinds of deaths and moment-to-moment punishment. We seek refuge with Allah.

ثُمَّ أُدْرَجَ فِي أَكْفَانِهِ مُبْلِسًا، وَجَذِبَ مُنْقَادًا سَلِسًا، ثُمَّ أُلْقِيَ عَلَى الْأَعْوَادِ رَجِيعٌ وَصِيبٌ، وَنَضُو سَقَمٍ، تَحْمِلُهُ حَقْدَةُ الْوِلْدَانِ، وَحَشْدَةُ الْأَخْوَانِ، إِلَى دَارِ غُرْبَتِهِ، وَمُنْقَطَعِ زُورَتِهِ؛ حَتَّى إِذَا انْصَرَفَ الْمَشِيعُ، وَرَجَعَ الْمَتَفَجِّعُ أَقْعَدَ فِي حُفْرَتِهِ نَحِيًّا لِبَهْتَةِ السُّؤَالِ، وَعَثْرَةِ الْاِمْتِحَانِ. وَأَعْظَمُ مَا هُنَالِكَ بَلِيَّةٌ نُزِلَ الْحَمِيمِ، وَتَصْلِيَةُ الْجَحِيمِ، وَفَوْرَاتُ السَّعِيرِ، وَسُورَاتُ السَّعِيرِ، لَا فِتْرَةَ مُرِيحَةٍ، وَلَا دَعَا مُرِيحَةٍ، وَلَا قُوَّةَ حَاجِزَةٍ، وَلَا مَوْتَةَ نَاجِزَةٍ، وَلَا سِنَّةَ مُسَلِّيَّةٍ، بَيْنَ أَطْوَارِ الْمَوْتَاتِ، وَعَذَابِ السَّاعَاتِ! إِنَّا بِاللَّهِ عَائِدُونَ!

The lesson to be learnt from those who have passed away

O creatures of Allah! Where are those who were allowed (long) ages to live and they enjoyed bounty? They were taught and they learnt; they were given time and they passed it in vain; they were kept healthy and they forgot (their duty). They were allowed long period (of life), were handsomely provided, were warned of grievous punishment and were promised big rewards. You should avoid sins that lead to destruction and vices that attract wrath (of Allah).

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، أَيْنَ الَّذِينَ عَمَّرُوا فَتَعَمُّوا، وَعَلِمُوا فَفَهَّمُوا، وَأَنْظَرُوا فَلَهَّوْا، وَسَلَّمُوا فَتَسَوَّأُوا؟ أَمْ هَلُّوا طَوِيلًا، وَمُنِحُوا جَمِيلًا، وَحُدِّرُوا أَيْمًا، وَوُعِدُوا جَسِيمًا! اخْذَرُوا الذُّنُوبَ الْمُوَرِّطَةَ، وَالْعُيُوبَ الْمُسْخِطَةَ.

O people who possess eyes and ears and health and wealth! Is there any place of protection, any shelter of safety, or asylum or haven, or occasion to run away or to come back (to this world)? If not,

“How are you then turned away” (Qur’an, 6:95; 10:34; 35:3; 40:62)

and whither are you averting? By what things have you been deceived? Certainly, the share of every one of you from this earth is just a piece of land equal to his own stature and size where he would lie on his cheeks covered with dust.

أُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ وَالْأَسْمَاعِ، وَالْعَافِيَةِ وَالْمِتَاعِ، هَلْ مِنْ مَنَاصٍ أَوْ خَلَاصٍ، أَوْ مَعَاذٍ أَوْ مَلَاذٍ، أَوْ فِرَارٍ أَوْ مَجَازٍ أَوْ مَحَارٍ! أَمْ لَا؟ (فَأَيُّ نُوْفُكُونَ!) أَمْ أَيْنَ تُصْرَفُونَ! أَمْ بِمَاذَا تَعْتَرُونَ؟ وَإِنَّمَا حَطُّ أَحَدِكُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ، ذَاتِ الطُّوْلِ وَالْعَرْضِ، فَيَدُ قَدِهِ، مُتَعَقِّرًا عَلَى حَدِّهِ!

The present is an opportune moment for acting, O creatures of Allah, since the neck is free from the loop, and spirit is also unfettered, now you have time for seeking guidance: you are in ease of body; you can assemble in crowds, the rest of life is before you; you have opportunity of acting by will; there is opportunity for repentance, and peaceful circumstances. (But

you should act) before you are overtaken by narrow circumstances and distress, or fear and weakness, before the approach of the awaited death and before seizure by the Almighty, the Powerful.

الآن عبادَ الله والخِنَاقُ مُهْمَلٌ، والرُّوحُ مُرْسَلٌ، فِي فَيْنَةِ الإِرْشَادِ، وَرَاحَةِ الأَجْسَادِ، وَبَاحَةِ
الاحْتِشَادِ، وَمَهْلِ البَقِيَّةِ، وَأُنْفِ المَشِيَّةِ، وَإِنظَارِ التَّوْبَةِ، وَأَنْفِاسِ الحُوبَةِ قَبْلَ الصَّنَنِ
وَأَمْصِيقِ، والرُّوعِ والرُّهوقِ، وَقَبْلَ قُدُومِ العَائِبِ المِيتَظَرِّ، وَإِحْدَةِ العَزِيزِ المُتَمَدِّدِ.

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: It is related that when Amir al-mu'minin delivered this sermon people began to tremble, tears flowed from their eyes and their hearts were frightened. Some people call this sermon the Brilliant Sermon (al-Khutbatu'l-Gharra')

قال الشريف: وفي الخبر: أنه (عليه السلام) لما خطب بهذه الخطبة اقشعرت لها الجلود،

وبكت العيون، ورجفت القلوب. ومن الناس من يسمي هذه الخطبة: «الغراء.»

Alternative Sources for Sermon 83

- (1) *Al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 146;*
- (2) *al-Quda'i, Dustur, 59,*
- (3) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar;*
- (4) *al-Wasiti, `Uyun al-hikam;*
- (5) *Abu Nu`aym, Hilyah, I, 77;*
- (6) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 132 (b.d.d), II, 287 (`a.a.z).*

Notes

1. Allah has furnished every creature with natural dress, which is the means of protecting it from cold and heat. Thus, some animals are covered in feathers and some carry apparels of wool on their bodies. But the high degree of intelligence of man and the quality of shame and modesty in him demands distinction from other creatures. Consequently, to maintain this distinction he has been taught the ways of covering his body. It was this natural impulse that when Adam was made to give up his dress he began to cover his body with leaves. The Qur'an says: So when they tested (of) the tree their shameful things got displayed unto them and they began covering themselves with leaves of the garden ... (Qu'ran, 7:22)

This was the punishment awarded for his committing what was better for him to omit. When removal of dress is punishment its putting on would be a favour, and since this is peculiar to man it has been particularly mentioned.

2. The intention is that Allah would resurrect all the dead, even though they had been eaten by beasts and been merged in their bodies. Its aim is to refute the view of the philosophers who hold that the resurrection of the non-existent is impossible and who do not therefore believe in the physical resurrection. Their argument briefly is that a thing which has lost existence by death cannot return to life. Consequently, after the destruction of this world the return of any of its beings to life is out of question. But this belief is not correct because dispersal of the parts does not mean its non-existence, so as to say that putting these parts together again would involve resurrection of the non-existent. On the other hand separated and dispersed parts continue to exist in some form or the other. Of course, in this connection this objection has some force that when every person is to be resurrected in his own form, then in case one person has eaten the other, then in such a case it would be impossible to resurrect either of them with his own constituent parts, since this would involve creating deficiency of parts in that who had eaten the other.

To this metaphysicians have replied that in everybody there are some constituents which are essential and others which are non-essential. The essential constituents remain constant from the beginning till end of life and suffer no change or alteration, and

resurrection with regard to such constituents would not create any deficiency in the man who ate the other.

Sermon 84: I am surprised at the son of al-Nabighah ...

About `Amr ibn al-`As

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في ذكر عمرو بن العاص

I am surprised at the son of an-Nabighah that he says about me among the people of Syria (ash-Sham) that I am a jester and that I am engaged in frolics and fun. He said wrong and spoke sinfully. Beware, the worst speech is what is untrue. He speaks and lies. He promises and breaks the promise. He begs and beseeches, but when someone begs from him he withholds miserly. He betrays the pledge and ignores kinship.

عَجَبًا لِابْنِ النَّابِغَةِ! يَزْعُمُ لِأَهْلِ الشَّامِ أَنَّ فِيَّ دُعَابَةً، وَأَيُّ امْرُؤٍ تَلْعَابَةٌ: أَعَافِسُ وَأَمَارِسُ!
لَقَدْ قَالَ بَاطِلًا، وَنَطَقَ آثِمًا. أَمَا . وَشَرُّ الْقَوْلِ الْكَذِبُ . إِنَّهُ لَيَقُولُ فَيَكْذِبُ، وَيَعِدُّ فَيُخْلِفُ،
وَيُسْأَلُ فَيَبْخُلُ، وَيَسْأَلُ فَيُلْحِفُ، وَيُخُونُ الْعَهْدَ، وَيَقْطَعُ الْإِلَّ

When in a battle, he commands and admonishes but only until the swords do not come into action. When such a moment arrives his great trick is to turn naked¹ before his adversary. By Allah, surely the remembrance of death has kept me away from fun and play while obliviousness about the next world has prevented him from speaking truth. He has not sworn allegiance to Mu`awiyah without purpose; but has beforehand got him to agree that he will have to pay its price, and gave him an award for forsaking religion.

فَإِذَا كَانَ عِنْدَ الْحَرْبِ فَأَيُّ رَاجِرٍ وَأَمْرٍ هُوَ مَا لَمْ تَأْخُذِ السُّيُوفُ مَا أَخَذَهَا! فَإِذَا كَانَ ذَلِكَ
كَانَ أَكْبَرَ مَكِيدَتِهِ أَنْ يَمْنَحَ الْقَوْمَ سُبَّتَهُ. أَمَا وَاللَّهِ إِنِّي لَيَمْنَعُنِي مِنَ اللَّعِبِ ذِكْرُ الْمَوْتِ، وَإِنَّهُ
لَيَمْنَعُهُ مِنْ قَوْلِ الْحَقِّ نَسْيَانُ الْآخِرَةِ، إِنَّهُ لَمْ يُبَايِعْ مُعَاوِيَةَ حَتَّى شَرَطَ لَهُ أَنْ يُؤْتِيَهُ أُتِيَّةً، وَيَرْضَخَ
لَهُ عَلَى تَرْكِ الدِّينِ رَضِيخَةً .

Alternative Sources for Sermon 84

- (1) Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, III, 10, I, 164;
- (2) Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, II, 287;
- (3) al-Tawhidi, al-`Imta`, III, 183;
- (4) al-Bayhaqi, al-Mahasin, 54;
- (5) al-Baladhuri, Ansab, II, 145, 151;
- (6) al-`Tusi, al-`Amali, I, 131;
- (7) Ibn al-`Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 117, III, 59, 110, IV, 59, 89;
- (8) al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, 513; al-Tusi narrates from Muhammad ibn `Imran al-Marzbani (d.384/994), Ibn `Uqdah (d.333/944) and al-Zubayr ibn Bakkar (d.255/869).

Notes

1. Amir al-mu'minin here refers to the incident when the 'Conqueror of Egypt' `Amr ibn al-`As exhibited the feat of his courage by displaying his private parts. What happened was

that when in the battlefield of Siffin he and Amir al-mu'minin had an encounter, he rendered himself naked in order to ward off the blow of the sword. At this Amir al-mu'minin turned his face away and spared him his life. The famous Arab poet al-Farazdaq said about it:

There is no good in warding off trouble by ignominy as was done one day by `Amr ibn al-`As by display of his private parts.

Even in this ignoble act `Amr ibn al-`As had not the credit of doing it himself, but had rather followed another one who had preceded him, because the man who first adopted this device was Talhah ibn Abi Talhah who had saved his life in the battle of Uhud by becoming naked before Amir al-mu'minin, and so he showed this way to the others. Thus, besides `Amr ibn al-`As this trick was played by Busr ibn Abi Artat also to save himself from the sword of Amir al-mu'minin. When after the performance of this notable deed Busr went to Mu`awiyah the latter recalled `Amr ibn al-`As's act as precedent in order to remove this man's shamefulfulness and said, "O' Busr, no matter. There is nothing to feel shameful about it in view of `Amr ibn al-`As's precedent before you."

Sermon 85: I bear witness that there is no god except Allah ...

About the perfection of Allah and counselling

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها صفات ثمان من صفات الجلال

I stand witness that there is no god except Allah, He is One and there is no partner with Him. He is the First, such that nothing was before Him. He is the Last, such that there is not limit for Him. Imagination cannot catch any of His qualities. Hearts cannot entertain belief about His nature. Analysis and division cannot be applied to Him. Eyes and hearts cannot encompass Him.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ: الْأَوَّلُ لَا شَيْءَ قَبْلَهُ، وَالْآخِرُ لَا غَايَةَ لَهُ، لَا تَفْعُ الْأَوْهَامُ لَهُ عَلَى صِفَةٍ، وَلَا تُعْفِدُ الْقُلُوبُ مِنْهُ عَلَى كَيْفِيَّةٍ، وَلَا تَنَالُهُ التَّجَرُّؤُةُ وَالتَّبَعِيضُ، وَلَا تُحِيطُ بِهِ الْأَبْصَارُ وَالْقُلُوبُ.

A part of the same sermon

منها:

O creatures of Allah! Take lesson from useful items of instruction and shining indications. Be cautioned by effective items of warning. Get benefit from preaching and admonition. It is as though the claws of death are pressed in you, the connection of hope and desires has been cut asunder, hard affairs have befallen you and your march is towards the place where everyone has to go, namely death. Hence, "with every person there is a driver and a witness" (Qur'an, 50:21). The driver drives him towards resurrection while the witness furnishes evidence about his deeds.

فَاتَّعِظُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ بِالْعِبَرِ النَّوَافِعِ، وَاعْتَبِرُوا بِالْأَيِّ السَّوَاطِعِ، وَارْذَجِرُوا بِالنُّذُرِ الْبَوَالِغِ، وَانْتَفِعُوا بِالذِّكْرِ وَالْمَوَاعِظِ، فَكَأَنَّ قَدْ عَلِقْتُمْ مَخَالِبَ الْمَنِيَّةِ، وَانْقَطَعَتْ مِنْكُمْ عِلَائِقُ الْأَمْنِيَّةِ، وَدَهَمَتْكُمْ مُفْطِعَاتُ الْأُمُورِ، وَالسِّيَاقَةُ إِلَى الْوَرْدِ الْمُزْرُودِ، (وَكُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَعَهَا سَائِقٌ وَشَهِيدٌ): سَائِقٌ يَسُوقُهَا إِلَى مَحْشَرِهَا; وَشَاهِدٌ يَشْهَدُ عَلَيْهَا بِعَمَلِهَا.

A part of the same sermon about Paradise

منها: في صفة الجنة

In Paradise there are various degrees of excellence and different places of stay. Its blessings never end. He who stays in it will never depart from it. He who is endowed with everlasting abode in it will not get old, and its resident will not face want.

دَرَجَاتٌ مُتَفَاضِلَاتٌ، وَمَنَازِلٌ مُتَفَاوِتَاتٌ، لَا يَنْقَطِعُ نَعِيمُهَا، وَلَا يَطْعُنُ مُقِيمُهَا، وَلَا يَهْرُمُ خَالِدُهَا، وَلَا يَبْأَسُ سَاكِنُهَا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 85

- (1) *Abu Nu`aym, Hilyah, I, 77;*
- (2) *al-Wasiti, `Uyun al-hikam;*
- (3) *Sibt, Tadhkirah, 131;*
- (4) *Ibn Talhah, Matalib, I, 140.*

Sermon 86: Allah knows hidden secrets...

About getting ready for the next world and following Allah's commandments

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيهما بيان صفات الحق جلّ جلاله ثمّ عظة الناس بالتقوى والمشورة

Allah knows hidden secrets and is aware of inner feelings. He encompasses everything. He has control over everything and power over everything. Everyone of you should do whatever he has to do during his days of life before the approach of death, in his leisure before his occupation, and during the breathing of his breath before it is overtaken by suffocation, should provide for himself and his journey and should collect provision from his place of halt for his place of stay.

قَدْ عَلِمَ السَّرَائِرَ، وَخَبَرَ الضَّمَائِرَ، لَهُ الْأَحَاطَةُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ، وَالْعَبَثُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ، وَالْقُوَّةُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ. فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعَامِلُ مِنْكُمْ فِي أَيَّامِ مَهَلِهِ، قَبْلَ إِزْهَاقِ أَجَلِهِ، وَفِي فَرَغِهِ قَبْلَ أَوَانِ شُغْلِهِ، وَفِي مُتَنَفِّسِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُؤْخَذَ بِكَطْمِهِ، وَلِيْمَهْدَ لِنَفْسِهِ وَقَدَمِهِ، وَلِيَتَرَوِّدَ مِنْ دَارٍ طَعْنَهُ لِدَارِ إِقَامَتِهِ.

So remember Allah, O people, about what He has asked you in His Book to take care of, and about His rights that He has entrusted to you. Verily, Allah has not created you in vain nor left you unbridled nor left you alone in ignorance and gloom. He has defined what you should leave behind, taught you your acts, ordained your death, sent down to you. "the Book (Qur'an) explaining everything" (Qur'an, 16:89) and made His Prophet live among you for a long time till He completed for him and for you the message sent through the Qur'an namely the religion liked by Him, and clarified through him the acts liked and disliked by Him, His prohibitions and His commands.

فَاللَّهُ اللَّهُ أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، فِيمَا اسْتَحْفَظَكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابِهِ، وَاسْتَوَدَّكُمْ مِنْ حُفُوقِهِ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ لَمْ يَخْلُقْكُمْ عَبَثًا، وَلَمْ يَتْرُكْكُمْ سُدىً، وَلَمْ يَدْعُكُمْ فِي جَهَالَةٍ وَلَا عَمَى، قَدْ سَمَى آثَارَكُمْ، وَعَلِمَ أَعْمَالَكُمْ، وَكَتَبَ آجَالَكُمْ، وَأَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ (الْكِتَابَ نَبِيَانًا)، وَعَمَّرَ فِيكُمْ نَبِيَّهُ أَرْمَانًا، حَتَّى أَكْمَلَ لَهُ وَلَكُمْ. فِيمَا أَنْزَلَ مِنْ كِتَابِهِ. دِينَهُ الَّذِي رَضِيَ لِنَفْسِهِ، وَأَنْهَى إِلَيْكُمْ. عَلَى لِسَانِهِ. مَحَابَّةً مِنَ الْأَعْمَالِ وَمَكَارِهِ، وَنَوَاهِيَهُ وَأَوَامِرَهُ،

He placed before you His arguments and exhausted his excuses upon you. He put forth to you His promises and warned you of severe retribution. You should therefore make full atonement during your remaining days and let yourselves practice endurance in these days. These days are fewer as against the many days during which you have shown obliviousness and heedlessness towards admonition. Do not allow time to yourselves because

it will put you on the path of wrong-doers and do not be easy-going because this will push you towards sinfulness.

فَأَلْقَى إِلَيْكُمُ الْمِغْدِرَةَ، وَاتَّخَذَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْحِجَّةَ، وَقَدَّمَ إِلَيْكُم بِالْوَعِيدِ، وَأَنْذَرَكُم بَيْنَ يَدَيْ عَذَابٍ شَدِيدٍ.

فَاسْتَدْرِكُوا بَقِيَّةَ أَيَّامِكُمْ، وَاصْبِرُوا لَهَا أَنْفُسَكُمْ، فَإِنَّهَا قَلِيلٌ فِي كَثِيرِ الْأَيَّامِ الَّتِي تَكُونُ مِنْكُمْ فِيهَا الْعَقْلَةُ وَالشَّاعُلُ عَنِ الْمُوعِظَةِ؛ وَلَا تُرْحَصُوا لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ، فَتَذْهَبَ بِكُمْ الرَّحْصُ مَذَاهِبَ الظَّلْمَةِ، وَلَا تُدَاهِنُوا فِيهَجْمَ بِكُمْ الْأَذْهَانُ عَلَى الْمُعْصِيَةِ.

O creatures of Allah! The best adviser for himself is he who is the most obedient to Allah, and the most deceiving for himself is he who is the most disobedient to Allah. Deceived is he who deceived his own self. Envious is he whose Faith is safe. Fortunate is he who takes lesson from others, while unfortunate is he who fell victim to his desires. You should know that even the smallest hypocrisy is like believing in more than one God, and keeping company of people who follow their desires is the key to obliviousness from religion, and is the seat of Satan.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ أَنْصَحَ النَّاسِ لِنَفْسِهِ أَطْوَعُهُمْ لِرَبِّهِ، وَإِنَّ أَعَشَّهُمْ لِنَفْسِهِ أَعْصَاهُمْ لِرَبِّهِ؛ وَالْمَعْبُودُ مَنْ عَبَنَ نَفْسَهُ، وَالْمَعْبُودُ مَنْ سَلِمَ لَهُ دِينُهُ، وَالسَّعِيدُ مَنْ وَعِظَ بَعِيرَهُ، وَالشَّقِيُّ مَنْ اتَّخَذَ لَهْوَاهُ وَعُرُورَهُ. وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ يَسِيرَ الرَّيِّ شَرُّكَ، وَمُجَالَسَةُ أَهْلِ الْهَوَى مَنَسَاةٌ لِلْإِيمَانِ، وَخَضْرَةُ لِلشَّيْطَانِ.

Be on your guard against falsehood because it is contrary to Faith. A truthful person is on the height of salvation and dignity, while the liar is on the edge of ignominy and degradation. Do not be jealous because jealousy eats away Faith just as fire eats away dried wood. Do not bear malice because, it is a scraper (of virtues). And know that desires make wit forgetful and make memory oblivious. You should falsify desire because it is a deception, and he who has desires is in deceit.

جَانِبُوا الْكُذِبَ فَإِنَّهُ مُجَانِبٌ لِلْإِيمَانِ، الصَّادِقُ عَلَى شَفَا مَنْجَاةٍ وَكَرَامَةٍ، وَالْكَاذِبُ عَلَى شَرَفٍ مَهْوَاةٍ وَمَهَانَةٍ.

لَا تَحَاسَدُوا، فَإِنَّ الْحَسَدَ يَأْكُلُ الْإِيمَانَ كَمَا تَأْكُلُ النَّارُ الْحَطَبَ، وَلَا تَبَاعِضُوا فَإِنَّهَا الْحَالِقَةُ، وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ الْأَمَلَ يُسْهِبُ الْعَقْلَ، وَيُنْسِي الذِّكْرَ، فَأَكْذِبُوا الْأَمَلَ فَإِنَّهُ عُرُورٌ، وَصَاحِبُهُ مَعْرُورٌ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 86

- (1) Al-Dinawari, Akhbar, 145;
- (2) al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 100, 101;
- (3) al-Barqi, al-Mahasin, 233-4;
- (4) al-Mufid, al-Majalis, 120;
- (5) al-Tabarsi, Mishkat, 156;

(6) *al- 'Amidi, Ghurar.*

Sermon 87: The most beloved of Allah is he whom...

The Qualities Of A Faithful Believer

ومن خطبة له عليه السلام

وهي في بيان صفات المتقين وصفات الفساق والتنبيه إلى مكان العترة الطيبة والظن

الخاطيء لبعض الناس

O creatures of Allah! The most beloved of Allah is he whom Allah has given power (to act) against his passions, so that his inner side is (submerged in) grief and the outer side is covered with fear. The lamp of guidance is burning in his heart. He has provided entertainment for the day that is to befall him. He regards what is distant to be near himself and takes the hard to be light. He looks at and perceives; he remembers (Allah) and enhances (the tempo of his) actions.

He drinks sweet water to whose source his way has been made easy. So he drinks to satisfaction and takes the level path. He has put off the clothes of desires and got rid of worries except one worry peculiar to him. He is safe from misguidance and the company of people who follow their passions. He has become the key to the doors of guidance, and the lock for the doors of destruction.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ مِنْ أَحَبِّ عِبَادِ اللَّهِ إِلَيْهِ عَبْدًا أَعَانَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ، فَاسْتَشَعَرَ الْحُزْنَ، وَجَلَّ بَ الْحُوفَ فَزَهَرَ مِصْبَاحُ الْهُدَى فِي قَلْبِهِ، وَأَعَدَّ الْقَرَى لِيَوْمِهِ النَّازِلِ بِهِ، فَقَرَّبَ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الْبَعِيدَ، وَهَوَّنَ الشَّدِيدَ، نَظَرَ فَأَبْصَرَ، وَذَكَرَ فَاسْتَكْتَرَ، وَارْتَوَى مِنْ عَذْبِ فُرَاتٍ سَهَّلَتْ لَهُ مَوَارِدَهُ، فَشَرِبَ نَهْلًا وَسَلَكَ سَبِيلًا جَدَدًا قَدْ خَلَعَ سَرَابِيلَ الشَّهَوَاتِ، وَتَخَلَّى مِنَ الْهُمُومِ، إِلَّا هَمًّا وَاحِدًا انْفَرَدَ بِهِ، فَحَرَجَ مِنْ صِفَةِ الْعَمَى، وَمُشَارَكَةِ أَهْلِ الْهُوَى، وَصَارَ مِنْ مَفَاتِيحِ أَبْوَابِ الْهُدَى، وَمَعَالِيْقِ أَبْوَابِ الرَّدَى.

He has seen his way and is walking on it. He knows his pillar (of guidance) and has crossed over his deep water. He has caught hold of the most reliable supports and the strongest ropes. He is on that level of conviction which is like the brightness of the sun. He has set himself for Allah, the Glorified, for performance of the most sublime acts of facing all that befalls him and taking every step needed for it. He is the lamp in darkness. He is the dispeller of all blindness, key to the obscure, remover of complexities, and a guide in vast deserts. When he speaks he makes you understand whereas when he remains silent then it is safe to do so. He did everything only for Allah and so Allah also made him His own. Consequently, he is among the mines of His faith and stakes in His earth.

قَدْ أَبْصَرَ طَرِيقَهُ، وَسَلَكَ سَبِيلَهُ، وَعَرَفَ مَنَارَهُ، وَقَطَعَ غِمَارَهُ وَاسْتَمْسَكَ مِنَ الْعُرَى بِأَوْثِقِهَا، وَمِنَ الْحِيَالِ بِأَمْتِنِهَا، فَهُوَ مِنَ الْيَقِينِ عَلَى مِثْلِ ضَوْءِ الشَّمْسِ، قَدْ نَصَبَ نَفْسَهُ لِلَّهِ . سُبْحَانَهُ . فِي أَرْفَعِ الْأُمُورِ، مِنْ إِصْدَارِ كُلِّ وَارِدٍ عَلَيْهِ، وَتَصْيِيرِ كُلِّ فَرْعٍ إِلَى أَصْلِهِ . مِصْبَاحُ

ظُلُمَاتٍ، كَشَفَاتُ عَشَوَاتٍ، مِفْتَاحُ مُبَهَمَاتٍ، دَفَاعُ مُعْضَلَاتٍ، دَلِيلُ فَلَوَاتٍ يَفْعُولُ فَيُفْهِمُ،
وَيَسْكُتُ فَيَسْلَمُ. قَدْ أَحْلَصَ لِلَّهِ فَاسْتَحْلَصَهُ فَهُوَ مِنْ مَعَادِنِ دِينِهِ، وَأَوْتَادِ أَرْضِهِ.

He has enjoined upon himself (to follow) justice. The first step of his justice is the rejection of desires from his heart. He describes right and acts according to it. There is no good which he has not aimed at or any likely place (of virtue) to which he has not proceeded. He has placed his reins in the hands of the Qur'an. Therefore the Qur'an is his guide and leader. He gets down when the Qur'an puts down its weight and he settles where the Qur'an settles down.

قَدْ أَلَزَمَ نَفْسَهُ الْعَدْلَ، كَانَ أَوَّلَ عَدْلِهِ نَفْيُ الْهَوَى عَنِ نَفْسِهِ، يَصِفُ الْحَقَّ وَيَعْمَلُ بِهِ، لَا
يَدْعُ لِلْخَيْرِ غَايَةً إِلَّا أَمَّهَا وَلَا مَظْنَةً إِلَّا قَصَدَهَا، قَدْ أَمَكَّنَ الْكِتَابَ مِنْ زِمَامِهِ فَهُوَ قَائِدُهُ
وَأَمَامُهُ، يَحُلُّ حَيْثُ حَلَّ تَقْلَهُ وَيَنْزِلُ حَيْثُ كَانَ مَنْزِلُهُ.

The Characteristics of an unfaithful believer

صفات الفساق

While the other (kind of) man is he who calls himself learned but he is not so. He has gleaned ignorance from the ignorant and misguidance from the misguided. He has set for the people a trap (made) of the ropes of deceit and untrue speech. He takes the Qur'an according to his own views and right after his passions.

He makes people feel safe from big sins and takes light the serious crimes. He says that he is waiting for (clarification of) doubts but he remains plunged therein, and that he keeps aloof from innovations but actually he is immersed in them. His shape is that of a man, but his heart is that of a beast. He does not know the door of guidance to follow nor the door of misguidance to keep aloof therefrom. These are living dead bodies.

وَأَخْرَجَ قَدْ تَسَمَّى عَالِمًا وَلَيْسَ بِهِ، فَاقْتَبَسَ جَهَائِلَ مِنْ جُهَّالٍ وَأَضَالِيلَ مِنْ ضَلَّالٍ، وَنَصَبَ
لِلنَّاسِ أَشْرَاكَاً مِنْ حَبَالِ غُرُورٍ، وَقَوْلِ زُورٍ، قَدْ حَمَلَ الْكِتَابَ عَلَى آرَائِهِ، وَعَطَفَ الْحَقَّ عَلَى
أَهْوَائِهِ، يُؤْمِنُ مِنَ الْعُظَائِمِ، وَبُهْوُونُ كَبِيرِ الْجَرَائِمِ، يَقُولُ: أَفَفُ عِنْدَ الشُّبُهَاتِ، وَفِيهَا وَقَعَ،
وَيَقُولُ: أَعْتَرِلُ الْبِدْعَ، وَبَيْنَهَا اضْطَجَعَ فَالْصُّورَةُ صُورَةُ إِنْسَانٍ، وَالْقَلْبُ قَلْبُ حَيَوَانٍ، لَا يَعْرِفُ
بَابَ الْهُدَى فَيَتَّبِعُهُ، وَلَا بَابَ الْعَمَى فَيَصُدُّ عَنْهُ، فَذَلِكَ مَيْتٌ الْأَحْيَاءِ!

About the Descendants (Itrah) of the Holy Prophet

عترة النبي

"So whither are you going to" (Qur'an, 81:26)

and

"how are you then turned away?" (Qur'an, 6:95; 10:34; 35:3; 40:62).

Ensigns (of guidance) are standing, indications (of virtue) are clear, and the minarets (of light) have been fixed. Where are you being taken astray and how are you groping while you have among you the descendants of the

Prophet? They are the reins of Right, ensigns of Faith and tongues of truth. Accord to them the same good position as you accord to the Qur'an, and come to them (for quenching the thirst of guidance) as the thirsty camels approach the water spring.

فَأَيْنَ تَذْهَبُونَ؟ و (أَلَيْسَ تُؤْفَكُونَ)؟ وَالْأَعْلَامُ قَائِمَةٌ، وَالْأَيَاتُ وَاصِحَّةٌ، وَالْمَنَارُ مَنْصُوبَةٌ،
فَأَيْنَ يُتَاهُ بِكُمْ؟ بَلْ كَيْفَ تَعْمَهُونَ وَبَيْنَكُمْ عِثْرَةٌ نَبِيِّكُمْ؟ وَهُمْ أَرْزَمَةُ الْحَقِّ، و أعلام الدّين
وَأَلْسِنَةُ الصِّدْقِ! فَأَنْزِلُوهُمْ بِأَحْسَنِ مَنَازِلِ الْقُرْآنِ، وَرُدُّوهُمْ وَرُودَ الْهَيْمِ الْعِطَاشِ

O people learn this saying¹ of the last of the Prophets: “He who dies from among us is not dead, and he who decays (after dying) from among us does not really decay”. Do not say what you do not understand, because most of the Right is in what you deny. Accept the argument of one against whom you have no argument. It is I. Did I not act before you on the greater thaqal (ath-thaqal al-akbar, i.e. the Qur'an) and did I not retain among you the smaller thaqal (ath-thaqal-al-asghar, i.e. the descendants of the Prophet)²? I fixed among you the standard of faith, and I taught you the limits of lawful and unlawful. I clothed you with the garments of safety with my justice and spread for you (the carpet of) virtue by my word and deed.

I showed you high manners through myself. Do not exercise your imagination about what the eye cannot see or the mind cannot conceive.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، خُذُوهَا عَنْ حَاتِمِ النَّبِيِّينَ (صلى الله عليه وآله): «إِنَّهُ يَمُوتُ مَنْ مَاتَ مِنَّا
وَأَيْسَ بِمَيِّتٍ، وَيَبْلَى مَنْ بَلِيَ مِنَّا وَلَيْسَ بِبَالٍ»، فَلَا تَقُولُوا بِمَا لَا تَعْرِفُونَ، فَإِنَّ أَكْثَرَ الْحَقِّ فِيمَا
تُنْكِرُونَ، وَاعْذِرُوا مَنْ لَا حُجَّةَ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِ . وَأَنَا هُوَ . أَلَمْ أَعْمَلْ فِيكُمْ بِالثَّقَلِ الْأَكْبَرِ! وَأَتْرَكَ
فِيكُمْ الثَّقَلَ الْأَصْغَرَ! وَرَكَّزْتُ فِيكُمْ رَايَةَ الْإِيمَانِ، وَوَقَفْتُكُمْ عَلَى خُدُودِ الْحَلَالِ وَالْحَرَامِ،
وَأَلْبَسْتُكُمْ الْعَافِيَةَ مِنْ عَدْلِي، وَفَرَشْتُكُمْ الْمَعْرُوفَ مِنْ قَوْلِي وَفِعْلِي، وَأَرَبَيْتُكُمْ كَرَامَةَ الْأَخْلَاقِ مِنْ
نَفْسِي؟ فَلَا تَسْتَعْمِلُوا الرَّأْيَ فِيمَا لَا يُدْرِكُ قَعْرَهُ الْبَصَرُ، وَلَا تَتَعَلَّلْهُ إِلَيْهِ الْفِكْرُ.

A part of the same sermon: erroneous ideas about Banu Umayyah

منها: في الظنّ الخاطي

Till people begin thinking that the world is attached to the Umayyads, showering its benefits on them, and leading them to its clear spring for watering, and that their whip and sword will not be removed from the people. Whoever thinks so is wrong. There are rather a few drops from the joys of life which they would suck for a while and then vomit out the whole of it.

حَتَّى يَظُنُّ الظَّانُّ أَنَّ الدُّنْيَا مَعْفُودَةٌ عَلَى بَنِي أُمَيَّةَ، تَمْنَحُهُمْ دَرَهَا، وَتُورِدُهُمْ صَفْوَهَا، وَلَا
يُرْفَعُ عَنْ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ سَوْطُهَا وَلَا سَيْفُهَا، وَكَذَبَ الظَّانُّ لِذَلِكَ. بَلْ هِيَ بَحَّةٌ مِنْ لَدِيدِ الْعَيْشِ
يَتَطَعَّمُونَهَا بِرُهْنِهِ، ثُمَّ يَلْفِظُونَهَا جُمْلَةً!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 87

(1) *Al-Zamakhshari, Rabi` , bab al-`izz wa al-sharaf; see also Ibn Abi al-Hadid, II, 132.*

Notes

1. This saying of the Prophet is a definite proof of the view that the life of any one from among the Ahlul Bayt (Household of the Holy Prophet) does not come to an end and that apparent death makes no difference in their sense of living, although human intelligence is unable to comprehend the conditions and happenings of that life. There are many truths beyond this world of senses which human mind cannot yet understand. Who can say how in the narrow corner of the grave where it is not possible even to breathe, replies will be given to the questions of the angels Munkar and Nakir? Similarly, what is the meaning of life of the martyrs in the cause of Allah, who have neither sense nor motion, can neither see nor hear? Although to us they appear to be dead, yet the Qur'an testifies to their life.

And say not of those who are slain in the path of Allah that they are dead; Nay, (they are) living, but ye perceive not. (2:154)

At another place it says about their life:

Reckon not those who are slain in the way of Allah, to be dead; Nay! alive they are with their Lord being sustained. (3:169)

When restriction has been placed on mind and tongue even in respect of the common martyrs that they should not be called dead nor considered dead, how would not those individuals whose necks were reserved for sword and palate for poison be living for all times to come.

About their bodies Amir al-mu'minin has said that by passage of time no signs of ageing or decay occur in them, but they remain in the same state in which they fell as martyrs. There should be nothing strange in it because dead bodies preserved through material means still exist. When it is possible to do so through material means will it be out of the Power of the Omnipotent Creator to preserve against change and decay the bodies of those upon whom He has bestowed the sense of everlasting life? Thus about the martyrs of Badr, the Holy Prophet said: "Shroud them even with their wounds and flowing blood because when they would rise on the Day of Judgement blood would be pushing out of their throats".

2. "ath-thaqal al-akbar" implies the Qur'an and "ath-thaqal al-asghar" means Ahlul Bayt (the Household of the Holy Prophet) as in the Prophet's saying: "Verily, I am leaving among you (the) two precious things (of high estimation and of care)," the reference is to Qur'an and Ahlul Bayt. There are several reasons for using this word Firstly, "thaqal" means the kit of a traveller, and since the kit is much in need, it is protected carefully. Secondly, it means a precious thing; and since this is of great importance, one is bound to follow the injunctions of the Qur'an and the actions of Ahlul Bayt. So they have been called 'precious things'. Since Allah has made arrangements for the protection of the Qur'an and Ahlul Bayt till doomsday so they have been called "thaqalayn" . So the Prophet before leaving this world for the next, declared them to be his valuable possessions and ordered people to preserve them. Thirdly, then have been called "Thaqalayn" (precious things) in view of their purity and high value. Thus Ibn Hajar al-Haytami writes:

The Prophet has called the Qur'an and his Descendants as "thaqalayn" (two precious things) because "thaqal" means a pure, chaste and preserved thing, and either of these two were really so, each of them is the treasure of Divine knowledge and a source of scholarly secrets and religious commandments. For that reason the Prophet desired the people to follow them and to stick to them and to secure knowledge from them. Among them the most deserving of attachment is the Imam and Scholar of the family of the Prophet namely `Ali ibn Abi Talib (Allah may honour his face) because of his great insight and copiousness of knowledge which we have already described. (as-Sawa`iq al-muhriqah, p. 90)

Since the Prophet has with regard to apparent implication attributed the Qur'an to Allah and the descendants to himself, therefore in keeping with the natural status the Qur'an has been called the bigger weight while the descendants, the smaller weight. Otherwise from the point of view of being followed both are equal and from the point of view of utility in the development of character there can be no question in the status of the speaking party (the Ahlul Bayt) being higher than the silent one (the Qur'an).

Sermon 88: Allah did not crush any unruly tyrant...

About the division of the community into factions (causes of people's destruction)

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها بيان للاسباب التي تهلك الناس

Indeed, Allah did not crush any unruly tyrant in this world except after allowing him time and opportunity and did not join the broken bone of any people (ummah) until He did not inflict calamity and distress upon them. Even less than what sufferings and misfortunes have yet to fall upon you or have already befallen you are enough for giving lessons. Every man with a heart is not intelligent, every ear does not listen and every eye does not see.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ لَمْ يَفْصِمِ جَبَّارِي دَهْرٍ قَطُّ إِلَّا بَعْدَ تَمْهِيلٍ وَرَحَاءٍ، وَلَمْ يَجْزِرْ عَظَمَ أَحَدٍ مِنَ الْأُمَمِ إِلَّا بَعْدَ أَزْلِ وَبِلَاءٍ، وَفِي ذُنُونِ مَا اسْتَقْبَلْتُمْ مِنْ خَطْبٍ وَاسْتَدْبَرْتُمْ مِنْ خَطْبٍ مُعْتَبِرٍ! وَمَا كُلُّ ذِي قَلْبٍ بَلَيْبٍ، وَلَا كُلُّ ذِي سَمْعٍ بِسَمِيعٍ، وَلَا كُلُّ ذِي نَاطِرٍ بِبَصِيرٍ.

I wonder, and there is no reason why I should not wonder, about the faults of these groups who have introduced alterations in their religious pleas, who do not move on the footsteps of their Prophet nor follow the actions of the vicegerent. They do not believe in the unknown and do not avoid the evil. They act on the doubts and tread in (the way of) their passions. For them good is whatever they consider good and evil is whatever they consider evil.

Their reliance for resolving distresses is on themselves. Their confidence in regard to dubious matters is on their own opinions as if every one of them is the Leader (Imam) of himself. Whatever he has decided himself he considers it to have been taken through reliable sources and strong factors.

فَيَا عَجَبًا! وَمَا لِي لَا أَعْجَبُ مِنْ خَطِيئَةِ هَذِهِ الْفِرْقِ عَلَى اخْتِلَافِ حُجَجِهَا فِي دِينِهَا! لَا يَفْتَضُونَ أَثَرَ نَبِيِّ، وَلَا يَفْتَتِدُونَ بَعْمَلِ وَصِيِّ، وَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ بِعَيْبِ، وَلَا يَعْفُونَ عَنْ عَيْبِ، يَعْمَلُونَ فِي الشُّبُهَاتِ، وَيَسِيرُونَ فِي الشَّهَوَاتِ، الْمَعْرُوفُ فِيهِمْ مَا عَرَفُوا، وَالْمُنْكَرُ عِنْدَهُمْ مَا أَنْكَرُوا، مَفْزَعُهُمْ فِي الْمَعْضَلَاتِ إِلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ، وَتَعْوِيلُهُمْ فِي الْمُبْهَمَاتِ عَلَى آرَائِهِمْ، كَأَنَّ كُلَّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ إِمَامٌ نَفْسِهِ، قَدْ أَخَذَ مِنْهَا فِيمَا يَرَى بَعْرَى ثِقَاتٍ، وَأَسْبَابَ مُحْكَمَاتٍ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 88

- (1) *Al-Kulayni, Rawdah*, 62;
- (2) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad*, 173;
- (3) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah*, I, 46 (a.z.l.).

Sermon 89: Allah sent the Prophet after...

About the Holy Prophet

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في الرسول الاعظم (ﷺ) وبلاغ الامام عنه

Allah sent the Prophet after the mission of other Prophets had stopped and the peoples were in slumber for a long time. Evils were raising heads, all matters were under disruption and in flames of wars, while the world was devoid of brightness, and full of open deceitfulness. Its leaves had turned yellow and there was absence of hope about its fruits and its water had gone underground. The minarets of guidance had disappeared and signs of destruction had appeared. It was stern to its people and frowned in the face of its seeker. Its fruit was vice and its food was carcass. Its inner dress was fear and outer cover was sword.

أَرْسَلَهُ عَلَى حِينِ فِتْرَةٍ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ، وَطُولِ هَجْعَةٍ مِنَ الْأُمَمِ، وَاعْتِرَافٍ مِنَ الْفِتَنِ، وَأَنْتِشَارٍ مِنَ الْأُمُورِ، وَتَلْظِيمِ الْحُرُوبِ، وَالذُّنْيَا كَاسِفَةَ النُّورِ، ظَاهِرَةَ الْعُرُورِ، عَلَى حِينِ اصْفِرَارٍ مِنْ وَرَقِهَا، وَإِيَّاسٍ مِنْ ثَمَرِهَا، وَأَعْوَارٍ مِنْ مَائِهَا، قَدْ دَرَسَتْ أَعْلَامُ الْهُدَى، وَظَهَرَتْ أَعْلَامُ الرِّدَى، فَهِيَ مُتَّحِمَةٌ لِإِهْلِهَا، غَابِسَةٌ فِي وَجْهِ طَالِبِهَا، تَمْرُهَا الْفِتْنَةُ وَطَعَامُهَا الْحَيْفَةُ وَشِعَارُهَا الْحَوْفُ، وَدِنَارُهَا السَّيْفُ.

So take lesson, O creatures of Allah, and recall that (evil doing) with which your fathers and brothers are entangled, and for which they have to account. By my life, your time is not much behind theirs, nor have long periods or centuries lapsed between you and them, nor are you much distant from when you were in their loins.

فَاعْتَبِرُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، وَادْكُرُوا تِيكَ الَّتِي آبَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ بِهَا مُرْتَهِنُونَ، وَعَلَيْهَا مُحَاسِبُونَ. وَلَعَسْرِي مَا تَقَادَمَتْ بِكُمْ وَلَا يَهُمُّ الْعُهُودُ، وَلَا خَلَّتْ فِيمَا بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمُ الْأَحْقَابُ وَالْقُرُونُ، وَمَا أَنْتُمْ الْيَوْمَ مِنْ يَوْمٍ كُنْتُمْ فِي أَصْلَابِهِمْ يَبْعِيدُ.

By Allah, whatever the Prophet told them, I am here telling you the same and whatever you hear today is not different from what they heard yesterday. The eyes that were opened for them and the hearts that were made for them at that time, just the same have been given to you at this time.

By Allah, you have not been told anything that they did not know and you have not been given anything which they were deprived. Certainly you have been afflicted by a calamity (which is like a she-camel) whose nose-string is moving about and whose strap is loose So in whatever condition these deceitful people are should not deceive you, because it is just a long shadow whose term is fixed.

وَاللّٰهُ مَا أَسْمَعُكُمُ الرَّسُولُ (صلى الله عليه وآله) شَيْئاً إِلَّا وَهَذَا أَنَا ذَا الْيَوْمِ مُسْمِعُكُمْوهُ، وَمَا
أَسْمَعُكُمْ الْيَوْمَ بِدُونِ أَسْمَاعِكُمْ بِالْأَمْسِ، وَلَا شَقَّتْ لَهُمُ الْأَبْصَارُ، وَجُعِلَتْ لَهُمُ الْأَفْئِدَةُ فِي ذَلِكَ
الْأَوَانِ، إِلَّا وَقَدْ أُعْطِيتُمْ مِثْلَهَا فِي هَذَا الزَّمَانِ. وَوَاللّٰهُ مَا بُصِرْتُمْ بَعْدَهُمْ شَيْئاً جَهْلُوهُ، وَلَا
أُصْفِيْتُمْ بِهِ وَحُرْمُوهُ، وَلَقَدْ نَزَلَتْ بِكُمْ الْبَلِيَّةُ جَائِلاً خِطَامُهَا، رِخْواً بَطَانُهَا، فَلَا يَعْرِضُكُمْ مَا
أَصْبَحَ فِيهِ أَهْلُ الْعُرُورِ، فَإِنَّمَا هُوَ ظِلٌّ مَّمْدُودٌ، إِلَى أَجَلٍ مَّعْدُودٍ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 89

(1) *Al-Kulayni, `Usul al-Kafi, I, 60;*

(2) *al-Sayyid al-Yamani, al-Taraz, I, 342;*

(3) *`Ali ibn Ibrahim, Tafsir, p.3.*

Sermon 90: Praise be to Allah who is well-known without being seen...

Allah's attributes and some advice

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وتشتمل على قِدم الخالق وعظم مخلوقاته، ويختمها بالوعظ

Praise be to Allah who is well-known without being seen, Who creates without pondering over, Who has ever been existent when there was no sky with domes, nor curtains with lofty doors, nor gloomy night, nor peaceful ocean, nor mountains with broad pathways, nor curved mountain roads, nor earth of spread floors, nor self-reliant creatures. He is the Originator of creation and their Master. He is the God of the creation and its feeder. The sun and the moon are steadily moving in pursuit of His will. They make every fresh thing old and every distant thing near.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْمَعْرُوفِ مِنْ غَيْرِ رُؤْيَةٍ، الْخَالِقِ مِنْ غَيْرِ رُؤْيَةٍ، الَّذِي لَمْ يَزَلْ قَائِمًا دَائِمًا؛ إِذْ لَا سَمَاءَ ذَاتَ أَبْرَاجٍ، وَلَا حُجُبَ ذَاتَ إِزْتِاجٍ، وَلَا لَيْلًا دَاجٍ، وَلَا بَحْرًا سَاجٍ، وَلَا جَبَلًا دُوفَجَاجٍ، وَلَا فَجًّا دُوعُوجَاجٍ، وَلَا أَرْضَ ذَاتَ مِهَادٍ، وَلَا حَلْقًا دُوعْتِمَادٍ: ذَلِكَ مُبْتَدِعُ الْخَلْقِ وَوَارِثُهُ، وَالْهَلْخُ وَرَازِقُهُ، وَالشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرُ دَائِبَانِ فِي مَرَضَاتِهِ: يُبْلِيَانِ كُلَّ جَدِيدٍ، وَيُقَرِّبَانِ كُلَّ بَعِيدٍ.

He distributed their sustenance and has counted their deeds and acts, the number of their breaths, their concealed looks, and whatever is hidden in their bosoms. He knows their places of stay and places of last resort in the loins and wombs till they reach their end.

فَسَمَ أَرْزَاقَهُمْ، وَأَحْصَى آثَارَهُمْ وَأَعْمَاهُمْ، وَعَدَدَ أَنْفَاسَهُمْ، وَحَائِنَةَ أَعْيُنِهِمْ وَمَا تُخْفِي صُدُورُهُمْ مِنَ الضَّمِيرِ، وَمُسْتَقَرَّهُمْ وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهُمْ مِنَ الْأَرْحَامِ وَالظُّهُورِ، إِلَى أَنْ تَتَنَاهَى بِهِمُ الْعَايَاتُ.

His punishment on enemies is harsh despite the extent of His Mercy, and His compassion on His friends is vast despite His harsh punishment. He overpowers one who wants to overcome Him, and destroys one who clashes with Him. He disgraces one who opposes Him and gains sway over one who bears Him hostility. He is sufficient for one who relies on Him. He gives one who asks Him. He repays one who lends to Him. He rewards one who thanks Him.

هُوَ الَّذِي اشْتَدَّتْ نِقْمَتُهُ عَلَى أَعْدَائِهِ فِي سَعَةِ رَحْمَتِهِ، وَاتَّسَعَتْ رَحْمَتُهُ لِأَوْلِيَائِهِ فِي شِدَّةِ نِقْمَتِهِ، فَاهِرٌ مِنْ عَارِزِهِ، وَمُدْمَرٌ مِنْ شَاقِقِهِ، وَمُذِلٌّ مِنْ نَاوَاهِ، وَعَالِبٌ مِنْ عَادَاهِ. مَنْ تَوَكَّلَ عَلَيْهِ كَفَاهُ، وَمَنْ سَأَلَهُ أُعْطَاهُ، وَمَنْ أَفْرَضَهُ قَضَاهُ، وَمَنْ شَكَرَهُ جَزَاهُ.

O creatures of Allah, weigh yourselves before you are weighed and assess yourselves before you are assessed. Breathe before suffocation of the

throat. Be submissive before you are harshly driven. Know that if one does not help himself in acting as his own adviser and warner then no one else can (effectively) be his adviser or warner.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، زِنُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تُوزَنُوا، وَحَاسِبُوا مَا مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تُحَاسَبُوا، وَتَنْفَسُوا قَبْلَ ضَيْقِ الْحِنَاقِ، وَأَنْفَادُوا قَبْلَ عُنْفِ السِّيَاقِ، وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ مَنْ لَمْ يُعِنْ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ حَتَّى يَكُونَ لَهُ مِنْهَا وَاعِظٌ وَرَاجِرٌ، لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ مِنْ غَيْرِهَا رَاجِرٌ وَلَا وَاعِظٌ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 90

- (1) *Al-Wasiti, `Uyun al-hikam;*
- (2) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 185;*
- (3) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, II, 345.*

Sermon 91: Praise belongs to God, Who is ...

This sermon is known as the Sermon of Skeletons¹ (Khutbatu'l-Ashbah) and it holds one of the highest positions among the sermons of Amir al-mu'minin.

Mas`adah ibn Sadaqah has related from al-Imam Ja`far ibn Muhammad as-Sadiq (p.b.u.t.) saying: "Amir al-mu'minin delivered this sermon from the pulpit of (the mosque of) Kufah when someone asked him, 'O Amir al-mu'minin! Describe Allah for us in such a way that we may imagine that we see Him with eyes so that our love and knowledge may increase about Him.'

Amir al-mu'minin became angry at this (request of the questioner) and ordered the Muslims to gather in the mosque. So many Muslims gathered in the mosque that the place was over-crowded. Then Amir al-mu'minin ascended the pulpit while he was still in a state of anger and his colour was changed. After he had praised Allah and extolled Him and sought His blessings on the Prophet he said:

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

تعرف بخطبة الاشباح وهي من جلائل الخطب

روى مسعدة بن صدقة عن الصادق جعفر بن محمد (عليهما السلام) أنه قال:

خطب أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام والصلاة بهذه الخطبة على منبر الكوفة، وذلك أن رجلاً أتاه فقال له: يا أمير المؤمنين! صف لنا ربنا مثلما نراه عياناً لنزداد له حباً وبه معرفة. فغضب (عليه السلام) ونادى: الصلاة جامعة، فاجتمع الناس حتى غص المسجد بأهله. فصعد المنبر وهو مغضب متغيّر اللون، فحمد الله سبحانه وصلّى على النبي (صلى الله عليه وآله)، ثم قال:

Description of Allah

وصف الله تعالى

Praise be to Allah Who is not enriched by the refusal to give away and stinginess, and Who is not impoverished by munificence and generosity, although everyone who gives away loses (to that extent) except He, and everyone who withholds is blamed for his niggardliness but He. He obliges through beneficial bounties and plentiful gifts and grants. The whole creation is His dependants (in sustenance).²

He has guaranteed their livelihood and ordained their sustenance. He has prepared the way for those who turn to Him and those who seek what is with Him. He is as generous about what He is asked as He is about that for which He is not asked. He is the First for whom there was no 'before' so that there could be anything before Him.

He is the Last for whom there is no 'after' so that there could be anything after Him. He prevents the pupils of the eyes from seeing Him or perceiving

Him. Time does not change over Him, so as to admit of any change of condition about Him. He is not in any place so as to allow Him movement (from one place to another).

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَفِرُّهُ الْمَنَعُ وَالْجُمُودُ، وَلَا يُكْدِيهِ الْأَعْطَاءُ وَالْجُودُ؛ إِذْ كُلُّ مُعْطٍ مُنْتَقِصٌ سِوَاهُ، وَكُلُّ مَانِعٍ مَدْمُومٌ مَا خَلَاهُ، وَهُوَ الْمَنَّانُ بِفَوَائِدِ الْبَيْعِ، وَعَوَائِدِ الْمَرْيَدِ وَالْقِسْمِ، عِيَالُهُ الْخَلَائِقُ، ضَمِنَ أَرْزَاقَهُمْ، وَقَدَّرَ أَقْوَاتَهُمْ، وَنَهَجَ سَبِيلَ الرَّاعِبِينَ إِلَيْهِ، وَالطَّالِبِينَ مَا لَدَيْهِ، وَلَيْسَ بِمَا سُئِلَ بِأَجْوَدَ مِنْهُ بِمَا لَمْ يُسْأَلْ. الْأَوَّلُ الَّذِي لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ قَبْلُ فَيَكُونُ شَيْءٌ قَبْلَهُ، وَالْآخِرُ الَّذِي لَيْسَ لَهُ بَعْدُ فَيَكُونُ شَيْءٌ بَعْدَهُ، وَالرَّادِعُ أَنْاسِيَّ الْأَبْصَارِ عَنْ أَنْ تَنَالَهُ أَوْ تُدْرِكَهُ، مَا اخْتَلَفَ عَلَيْهِ دَهْرٌ فَيُخْتَلَفَ مِنْهُ الْحَالُ، وَلَا كَانَ فِي مَكَانٍ فَيَجُوزُ عَلَيْهِ الْإِنْتِقَالُ،

If He gives away all that the mines of the mountains emit out or the gold, silver, pearls and cuttings of coral which the shells of the ocean vomit out, it would not affect his munificence, nor diminish the extent of what He has. (In fact) He would still have such treasures of bounty as would not decrease by the demands of the creatures, because He is that generous Being Whom the begging of beggars cannot make poor nor the pertinacity of beseechers make miser.

وَأَلُو وَهَبَ مَا تَنَقَّسَتْ عَنْهُ مَعَادِنُ الْجِبَالِ، وَصَحِيكَتْ عَنْهُ أَصْدَافُ الْبِحَارِ، مِنْ فِلِزِّ اللَّبَجِينَ وَالْعَقِيَانِ، وَنُقَارَةِ الدَّرِّ وَحَصِيدِ الْمَرْجَانِ، مَا أَثَّرَ ذَلِكَ فِي جُودِهِ، وَلَا أَنْفَدَ سَعَةً مَا عِنْدَهُ، وَلَكَانَ عِنْدَهُ مِنْ دَحَائِرِ الْأَنْعَامِ مَا لَا تُنْفِدُهُ مَطَالِبُ الْأَنْعَامِ، لِأَنَّهُ الْجَوَادُّ الَّذِي لَا يَغِيضُهُ سُؤَالُ السَّائِلِينَ، وَلَا يُبْخِلُهُ الْخَائِجُ الْمَلْحِينَ.

Attributes of Allah as described in the Holy Qur'an

صفاته تعالى في القرآن

Then look on, questioner; be confined to those of His attributes which the Qur'an had described and seek light from the effulgence of its guidance. Leave to Allah that knowledge which Satan has prompted you to seek and which neither the Qur'an enjoins you to seek nor is there any trace of it in the actions or sayings of the Prophet and other leaders (A`immah) of guidance. This is the extreme limit of Allah's claim upon you.

Know that firm in knowledge are those who refrain from opening the curtains that lie against the unknown, and their acknowledgement of ignorance about the details of the hidden unknown prevents them from further probe. Allah praises them for their admission that they are unable to get knowledge not allowed to them. They do not go deep into the discussion of what is not enjoined upon them about knowing Him and they call it firmness. Be content with this and do not limit the Greatness of Allah after the measure of your own intelligence, or else you will be among the destroyed ones.

فَانظُرْ أَيُّهَا السَّائِلُ: فَمَا ذَلِكَ الْقُرْآنُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ صِفَتِهِ فَأَنْتَمَّ بِهِ وَاسْتَضَىءَ بِنُورِ هِدَايَتِهِ، وَمَا كَلَّفَكَ الشَّيْطَانُ عِلْمَهُ بِمَا لَيْسَ فِي الْكِتَابِ عَلَيْكَ فَرَضُهُ، وَلَا فِي سُنَّةِ النَّبِيِّ (صلى الله عليه وآله) وَأَيَّمَّةِ الْهُدَى أَثَرُهُ، فَكِلَ عِلْمُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ، فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مُنْتَهَى حَقِّ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ. وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الرَّاسِخِينَ فِي الْعِلْمِ هُمُ الَّذِينَ أَعْنَاهُمْ عَنِ اقْتِحَامِ السُّدَدِ الْمَضْرُوبَةِ دُونَ الْعُيُوبِ، الْأَقْرَارِ بِجُمْلَةٍ مَا جَهِلُوا تَفْسِيرَهُ مِنَ الْعَيْبِ الْمَحْجُوبِ، فَمَدَحَ اللَّهُ . تَعَالَى . اعْتَرَفَهُمْ بِالْعَجْزِ عَنِ تَنَاوُلِ مَا لَمْ يُحِيطُوا بِهِ عِلْمًا، وَسَمَّى تَرَكَّهُمُ التَّعَمُّقَ فِيمَا لَمْ يَكْلِفَهُمُ الْبَحْثَ عَنْ كُنْهِهِ رُسُوحًا، فَاقْتَصَرَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ، وَلَا تُفَدِّرْ عَظَمَةَ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ عَلَى قَدْرِ عَقْلِكَ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الْهَالِكِينَ.

He is Powerful, such that when imagination shoots its arrows to comprehend the extremity of His power, and mind, making itself free of the dangers of evil thoughts, tries to find Him in the depth of His realm, and hearts long to grasp realities of His attributes and openings of intelligence penetrate beyond description in order to secure knowledge about His Being, crossing the dark pitfalls of the unknown and concentrating towards Him He would turn them back. They would return defeated admitting that the reality of His knowledge cannot be comprehended by such random efforts, nor can an iota of the sublimity of His Honour enter the understanding of thinkers.

هُوَ الْقَادِرُ الَّذِي إِذَا ارْتَمَتِ الْأَوْهَامُ لِتُدْرِكَ مُنْقَطِعَ قُدْرَتِهِ، وَحَاوَلَ الْفِكْرُ الْمُبَرِّأُ مِنْ خَطَرَاتِ الْوَسَاوِسِ أَنْ يَقَعَ عَلَيْهِ فِي عَمِيقَاتِ عُيُوبِ مَلَكُوتِهِ، وَتَوَهَّتِ الْقُلُوبُ إِلَيْهِ لِتَجْرِيَ فِي كَيْفِيَّةِ صِفَاتِهِ، وَعَمَضَتْ مَدَاخِلُ الْعُقُولِ فِي حَيْثُ لَا تَبْلُغُهُ الصِّفَاتُ لِتَنَالَ عِلْمَ ذَاتِهِ، رَدَعَهَا وَهِيَ تَجُوبُ مَهَاوِي سُدَفِ الْعُيُوبِ، مُتَحَلِّصَةً إِلَيْهِ . سُبْحَانَهُ . فَرَجَعَتْ إِذْ جُيِبَتْ، مُعْرِفَةً بِأَنَّهُ لَا يُنَالُ بِجُورِ الْاِعْتِسَافِ كُنْهُ مَعْرِفَتِهِ، وَلَا تُحْطَرُ بِبَالِ أُولِي الرُّوِيَّاتِ خَاطِرَةٌ مِنْ تَقْدِيرِ جَلَالِ عِزَّتِهِ.

About Allah's creation

He originated the creation without any example which He could follow and without any specimen prepared by any known creator that was before Him. He showed us the realm of His Might, and such wonders which speak of His Wisdom. The confession of the created things that their existence owes itself to Him made us realise that argument has been furnished about knowing Him (so that there is no excuse against it). The signs of His creative power and standard of His wisdom are fixed in the wonderful things He has created. Whatever He has created is an argument in His favour and a guide towards Him. Even a silent thing is a guide towards Him as though it speaks, and its guidance towards the Creator is clear.

الَّذِي ابْتَدَعَ الْخَلْقَ عَلَى غَيْرِ مِثَالٍ امْتَثَلَهُ، وَلَا مِقْدَارٍ اخْتَدَى عَلَيْهِ، مِنْ خَالِقٍ مَعْبُودٍ كَانَ قَبْلَهُ، وَأَرَانَا مِنْ مَلَكُوتِ قُدْرَتِهِ، وَعَجَائِبِ مَا نَطَقَتْ بِهِ آثَارُ حِكْمَتِهِ، وَاعْتَرَفَ الْحَاجَّةِ مِنَ الْخَلْقِ إِلَى أَنْ يُقِيمَهَا بِمَسَاكِ قُوَّتِهِ، مَا دَلَّنَا بِاضْطِرَارٍ قِيَامِ الْحُجَّةِ لَهُ عَلَى مَعْرِفَتِهِ، وَظَهَرَتْ

الْبَدَائِعِ الَّتِي أَحَدْتَهَا آثَارُ صَنَعَتِهِ، وَأَعْلَامُ حِكْمَتِهِ، فَصَارَ كُلُّ مَا خَلَقَ حُجَّةً لَهُ وَدَلِيلًا عَلَيْهِ، وَإِنْ كَانَ خَلْقًا صَامِتًا، فَحُجَّتُهُ بِالتَّدْبِيرِ نَاطِقَةً، وَدَلَالَتُهُ عَلَى الْمُبْدِعِ قَائِمَةً.

(O Allah) I stand witness that he who likens Thee with the separateness of the limbs or with the joining of the extremities of his body did not acquaint his inner self with knowledge about Thee, and his heart did not secure conviction to the effect that there is no partner for Thee. It is as though he has not heard the (wrongful) followers disclaiming their false gods by sayings

"By Allah, we were certainly in manifest error when we equalled you with the Lord of the worlds." (Qur'an, 26:97-98).

They are wrong who liken Thee to their idols, and dress Thee with apparel of the creatures by their imagination, attribute to Thee parts of body by their own thinking and consider Thee after the creatures of various types, through the working of their intelligence. I stand witness that whoever equated Thee with anything out of Thy creation took a match for Thee, and whoever takes a match for Thee is an unbeliever, according to what is stated in Thy unambiguous verses and indicated by the evidence of Thy clear arguments. (I also stand witness that) Thou art that Allah who cannot be confined in (the fetters of) intelligence so as to admit change of condition by entering its imagination nor in the shackles of mind so as to become limited and an object of alterations.

فَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مَنْ شَبَّهَكَ بِتَبَائِنِ أَعْضَاءِ خَلْقِكَ، وَتَلَاخُمِ حِقَاقِ مَفَاصِلِهِمُ الْمُحْتَجِبَةِ لِتَدْبِيرِ حِكْمَتِكَ، لَمْ يَعْقِدْ غَيْبَ ضَمِيرِهِ عَلَى مَعْرِفَتِكَ، وَلَمْ يُبَاشِرْ قَلْبَهُ الْيَقِينُ بِأَنَّهُ لَا يَدَّ لَكَ، وَكَأَنَّهُ لَمْ يَسْمَعْ نَبْرُؤَ التَّابِعِينَ مِنَ الْمُبْعُوعِينَ إِذْ يَقُولُونَ: (تَاللَّهِ إِنْ كُنَّا لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ * إِذْ نُسَوِّيكُمْ بِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ). كَذَّبَ الْعَادِلُونَ بِكَ، إِذْ شَبَّهوكَ بِأَصْنَامِهِمْ وَنَحَلوكَ حَلِيَّةَ الْمُخْلُوقِينَ بِأَوْهَامِهِمْ، وَجَزَّأوكَ بَجَزَائِرَةِ الْمُجَسَّمَاتِ بِخَوَاطِرِهِمْ، وَقَدَّروكَ عَلَى الْخِلْقَةِ الْمُحْتَلِفَةِ الْقُوَى، بِقَرَائِحِ عُقُولِهِمْ.

فَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مَنْ سَاوَاكَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ فَقَدْ عَدَلَ بِكَ، وَالْعَادِلُ كَافِرٌ بِمَا تَنَزَّلَتْ بِهِ مُحْكَمَاتُ آيَاتِكَ، وَنَطَقَتْ عَنْهُ شَوَاهِدُ حُجَجِ بَيِّنَاتِكَ، وَإِنَّكَ أَنْتَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَمْ تَتَنَاهَ فِي الْعُقُولِ، فَتَكُونُ فِي مَهَبٍ فِكْرَهَا مُكَيِّفًا، وَلَا فِي رَوِيَّاتِ خَوَاطِرِهَا فَتَكُونُ مُخْدُودًا مُصْرَفًا.

A part of the same sermon about the greatest perfection in Allah's creation

He has fixed limits for every thing He has created and made the limits firm, and He has fixed its working and made the working delicate. He has fixed its direction and it does not transgress the limits of its position nor fall short of reaching the end of its aim. It did not disobey when it was commanded to move at His will; and how could it do so when all matters are governed by His will. He is the Producer of varieties of things without exercise of imagination, without the urge of an impulse, hidden in Him, without (the benefit of) any experiment taken from the vicissitudes of time

and without any partner who might have assisted Him in creating wonderful things.

قَدَّرَ مَا خَلَقَ فَأَحْكَمَ تَقْدِيرَهُ، وَدَبَّرَهُ فَأَلْطَفَ تَدْبِيرَهُ، وَوَجَّهَهُ لِرُجْهَتِهِ فَلَمْ يَتَعَدَّ حُدُودَ مَنزِلَتِهِ، وَلَمْ يَفْضُرْ دُونَ الْإِنْتِهَاءِ إِلَى غَايَتِهِ، وَلَمْ يَسْتَنْصِبْ إِذْ أَمَرَ بِالْمُضِيِّ عَلَى إِرَادَتِهِ، وَكَيْفَ وَإِنَّمَا صَدَرَتْ الْأُمُورُ عَنْ مَشِيئَتِهِ؟ الْمُنْشِئُ أَصْنَافَ الْأَشْيَاءِ بِإِلَهِهَا، وَلَا فَرِيحَةَ غَرِيذَةٍ ضَمَرَ عَلَيْهَا، وَلَا بَحْرِيَّةَ أَفَادَهَا مِنْ حَوَادِثِ الدُّهُورِ، وَلَا شَرِيكَ أَعَانَهُ عَلَى ابْتِدَاعِ عَجَائِبِ الْأُمُورِ،

Thus the creation was completed by His order and it bowed to His obedience and responded to His call. The laziness of any slug or the inertness of any excuse-finder did not prevent it from doing so. So He straightened the curves of the things and fixed their limits. With His power He created coherence in their contradictory parts and joined together the factors of similarity. Then He separated them in varieties which differ in limits, quantities, properties and shapes. All this is new creation. He made them firm and shaped them according as He wished and invented them.

فَتَمَّ خَلْقُهُ، وَأَدْعَنَ لِبَطَاعَتِهِ، وَأَجَابَ إِلَى دَعْوَتِهِ، لَمْ يَعْترِضْ دُونَهُ رَبُّهُ الْمُبْطِئُ، وَلَا أَنَاةُ الْمُتَلَكِّيِّ، فَأَقَامَ مِنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ أَوْدَهَا، وَنَهَجَ حُدُودَهَا، وَلَا عَمَّ بِقُدْرَتِهِ بَيْنَ مُتَضَادِّهَا، وَوَصَلَ أَسْبَابَ قَرَائِنِهَا، وَفَرَّقَهَا أَجْنَاساً مُتَّحِلِّقَاتٍ فِي الْحُدُودِ وَالْأَقْدَارِ، وَالْغَرَائِزِ وَالْهَيْئَاتِ، بِدَايَا خَلَائِقِ أَحْكَمَ صُنْعَهَا، وَفَطَرَهَا عَلَى مَا أَرَادَ وَابْتَدَعَهَا!

A part of the same sermon, containing description of the sky

منها: في صفة السماء

He has arranged the depressions and elevations of the openings of the sky. He has joined the breadths of its breaches, and has joined them with one another. He has made easy the approach to its heights for those (angels) who come down with His commands and those (angels) who go up with the deeds of the creatures. He called it when it was yet (in the form of) vapour. At once the links of its joints joined up. Then Allah opened up its closed door and put the sentinels of meteors at its holes, and held them with His hands (i.e. power) from falling into the vastness of air.

وَنَظَّمَ بِإِلَهِهَا تَعْلِيقَ رَهَوَاتِ فُرُجِهَا، وَلَا حَمَّ صُدُوعَ انْفِرَاجِهَا، وَوَشَّحَ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَ أَرْوَاجِهَا، وَذَلَّلَ لِلْمُهَابِطِينَ بِأَمْرِهِ، وَالصَّاعِدِينَ بِأَعْمَالِ خَلْقِهِ، حُزُونََةَ مِعْرَاجِهَا، وَنَادَاهَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هِيَ دُخَانٌ مُبِينٌ، فَالْتَحَمَتْ عُرَى أَشْرَاجِهَا، وَفَتَقَ بَعْدَ الْإِزْتِنَاقِ صَوَامِتَ أَبْوَابِهَا، وَأَقَامَ رَصْدًا مِنَ الشُّهُبِ النَّوَاقِبِ عَلَى نِقَائِجِهَا، وَأَمْسَكَهَا مِنْ أَنْ تُمَوَّرَ فِي خَرَقِ الْهَوَاءِ بِأَيْدِيهِ

He commanded it to remain stationary in obedience to His commands. He made its sun the bright indication for its day, and moon the gloomy indication for its night. He then put them in motion in their orbits and ordained their (pace of) movement in the stages of their paths in order to

distinguish with their help between night and day, and in order that the reckoning of years and calculations may be known by their fixed movements.

Then He hung in its vastness its sky and put therein its decoration consisting of small bright pearls and lamp-like stars. He shot at the over-hearers arrows of bright meteors. He put them in motion on their appointed routine and made them into fixed stars, moving stars, descending stars, ascending stars, ominous stars and lucky stars.

وَأَمَرَهَا أَنْ تَقِفَ مُسْتَسْلِمَةً لِأَمْرِهِ، وَجَعَلَ تَشْمُسَهَا آيَةً مُبْصِرَةً لِنَهَارِهَا، وَقَمَرَهَا آيَةً مُمَخَّوَةً مِنْ لَيْلِهَا، وَأَجْرَاهُمَا فِي مَنَاقِلِ بَجْرَاهُمَا، وَقَدَّرَ مَسِيرَهُمَا فِي مَدَارِحِ دَرَجِهِمَا، لِيُمَيِّزَ بَيْنَ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ بَيْنَهُمَا، وَيُعْلَمَ عَدَدُ السِّنِّينَ وَالْحِسَابُ بِمَقَادِيرِهِمَا، ثُمَّ عَلَّقَ فِي جَوْهَرِهَا فَلَكَّهَا، وَنَاطَ بِهَا زِينَتَهَا، مِنْ حَفِيَّاتِ دَرَارِيِّهَا، وَمَصَابِيحِ كَوَاكِبِهَا، وَرَمَى مُسْتَرْقِي السَّمْعِ بِثَوَاقِبِ شُهُبِهَا، وَأَجْرَاهَا عَلَى أَذْلَالٍ تَسْخِرُهَا مِنْ ثَبَاتِ ثَابِتِهَا، وَمَسِيرِ سَائِرِهَا، وَهَبُوطِهَا وَصُغُودِهَا، وَخُوسِهَا وَسُغُودِهَا.

A part of the same sermon, containing description of Angels

ومنها: في صفة الملائكة (عليهم السلام)

Then Allah, the Glorified, created for inhabiting of His skies and populating the higher strata of his realm new (variety of) creatures namely the angels. With them He filled the openings of its cavities and populated with them the vastness of its circumference. In between the openings of these cavities there resounds the voices of angels glorifying Him in the enclosures of sublimity, (behind) curtains of concealment and in veils of His Greatness. And behind this resounding which deafens the ears there is the effulgence of light which defies the approach of sight to it, and consequently the sight stands, disappointed at its limitation.

ثُمَّ خَلَقَ سُبْحَانَهُ لِإِسْكَانِ سَمَاوَاتِهِ، وَعِمَارَةِ الصَّفِيحِ الْأَعْلَى مِنْ مَلَكُوتِهِ، خَلْقًا بَدِيعًا مِنْ مَلَائِكَتِهِ، وَمَلَأَ بِهِمْ فُرُوجَ فِجَاجِهَا، وَحَشَا بِهِمْ فُتُوقَ أَجْوَائِهَا، وَبَيَّنَّ فِجَاجَاتِ تِلْكَ الْفُرُوجِ رَجُلُ الْمُسَبِّحِينَ مِنْهُمْ فِي حِطَائِرِ الْقُدْسِ، وَسُتْرَاتِ الْحُجُبِ، وَسُرَادِقَاتِ الْمَجْدِ، وَوَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ الرَّجِيحِ الَّذِي تَسْتَكُّ مِنْهُ الْأَسْمَاعُ سُبْحَاتُ نُورٍ تَرْدَعُ الْأَبْصَارَ عَنْ بُلُوغِهَا، فَتَقِفُ حَاسِنَةً عَلَى حُدُودِهَا.

He created them in different shapes and with diverse characteristics. They have wings. They glorify the sublimity of His Honour. They do not appropriate to themselves His skill that shows itself in creation. Nor do they claim they create anything in which He is unparalleled.

"But they are rather honoured creatures who do not take precedence over Him in uttering anything, and they act according to His command." (Qur'an, 21: 26-27).

He has made them the trustees of His revelation and sent them to Prophets as holders of His injunctions and prohibitions. He has immunised them against the waviness of doubts. Consequently no one among them goes astray from the path of His will. He has helped them with the benefits

of succour and has covered their hearts with humility and peace. He has opened for them doors of submission to His Glories. He has fixed for them bright minarets as signs of His Oneness.

The weights of sins do not burden them and the rotation of nights and days does not make them move. Doubts do not attack with arrows the firmness of their faith. Misgivings do not assault the bases of their beliefs. The spark of malice does not ignite among them. Amazement does not tarnish what knowledge of Him their hearts possess, or His greatness and awe of His glory that resides in their bosoms. Evil thoughts do not lean towards them to affect their imagination with their own rust.

نُشِأَهُمْ عَلَى صُورٍ مُخْتَلِفَاتٍ، وَأَقْدَارٍ مُتَفَاوِتَاتٍ، (أُولَى أَجْنِحَةٍ) تُسَبِّحُ جَلَالَ عِزَّتِهِ، لَا يَنْتَحِلُونَ مَا ظَهَرَ فِي الْخَلْقِ مِنْ صُنْعِهِ، وَلَا يَدْعُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئاً مَعَهُ بِمَا انْفَرَدَ بِهِ، (بَلْ عِبَادٌ مُكْرَمُونَ * لَا يَسْبِقُونَهُ بِالْقَوْلِ وَهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِ يَعْمَلُونَ). جَعَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ فِيمَا هُنَالِكَ أَهْلَ الْأَمَانَةِ عَلَى وَحْيِهِ، وَحَمَلَهُمْ إِلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ وَدَائِعِ أَمْرِهِ وَنَهْيِهِ، وَعَصَمَهُمْ مِنْ رَبِّبِ الشُّبُهَاتِ، فَمَا مِنْهُمْ زَائِعٌ عَنْ سَبِيلِ مَرْضَاتِهِ، وَأَمَدَّهُمْ بِفَوَائِدِ الْمَعُونَةِ، وَأَشْعَرَ قُلُوبَهُمْ تَوَاضِعَ إِحْبَابِ السَّكِينَةِ، وَفَتَحَ لَهُمْ أَبْوَاباً دُلَّالاً إِلَى تَمَاجِيدِهِ، وَنَصَبَ لَهُمْ مَنَاراً وَاضِحَةً عَلَى أَعْلَامِ تَوْحِيدِهِ، لَمْ تُثْقَلْهُمْ مُوصِرَاتُ الْأَنْبَاءِ، وَلَمْ تَزَلْجَلُهُمْ عُقُبُ اللَّيَالِي وَالْأَيَّامِ، وَلَمْ تَزِمِ الشُّكُوكُ بِنَوَازِعِهَا عَزِيمَةَ إِيمَانِهِمْ، وَلَمْ تَعْتَرِكِ الظُّنُونُ عَلَى مَعَاقِدِ يَقِينِهِمْ، وَلَا قَدَحَتْ قَادِحَهُ الْأَحْنِ فِيمَا بَيْنَهُمْ، وَلَا سَلَبَتْهُمْ الْحَيْرَةَ مَا لَاقَ مِنْ مَعْرِفَتِهِ بِضَمَائِرِهِمْ، وَسَكَنَ مِنْ عَظَمَتِهِ وَهَيْبَتِهِ جَلَالَتِهِ فِي أَثْنَاءِ صُدُورِهِمْ، وَلَمْ تَطْمَعْ فِيهِمُ الْوَسَاوِسُ فَتَقْتَرَعَ بِرَبِّنِهَا عَلَى فِكْرِهِمْ.

Among them are those who are in the frame of heavy clouds, or in the height of lofty mountains, or in the gloom of over-powering darkness. And there are those whose feet have pierced the lowest boundaries of the earth. These feet are like white ensigns which have gone forth into the vast expanse of wind. Under them blows the light wind which retains them upto its last end.

مِنْهُمْ مَنْ هُوَ فِي خَلْقِ الْعَمَامِ الدُّخِّ، وَفِي عِظَمِ الْجِبَالِ الشَّمَخِ، وَفِي فَتْرَةِ الظَّلَامِ الْأَيْهَمِ، وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ قَدْ حَرَقَتْ أَقْدَامُهُمْ نُحُومَ الْأَرْضِ السُّفْلَى، فَهِيَ كَرَائِيَاتٍ بِيضٍ قَدْ نَفَدَتْ فِي مَحَارِقِ الْهَوَاءِ، وَتَحْتَهَا رِيحٌ هَفَافَةٌ تَحْسِبُهَا عَلَى حَيْثُ أَنْتَهَتْ مِنَ الْحُدُودِ الْمُتَنَاهِيَةِ،

Occupation in His worship has made them carefree, and realities of Faith have served as a link between them and His knowledge. Their belief in Him has made them concentrate on Him. They long from Him not from others. They have tasted the sweetness of His knowledge and have drunk from the satiating cup of His love. The roots of His fear have been implanted in the depth of their hearts. Consequently they have bent their straight backs through His worship. The length of the humility and extreme nearness has not removed from them the rope of their fear.

قَدِ اسْتَفْرَعَتْهُمْ أَشْعَالُ عِبَادَتِهِ، وَوَسَلَتْ حَقَائِقُ الْإِيمَانِ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَعْرِفَتِهِ، وَقَطَعَهُمُ الْإِيْقَانُ بِهِ إِلَى الْوَلَهِ إِلَيْهِ، وَلَمْ يُجَاوِزْ رَغْبَاتُهُمْ مَا عِنْدَهُ إِلَى مَا عِنْدَ غَيْرِهِ. قَدْ ذَاقُوا حَالَوَةَ مَعْرِفَتِهِ، وَشَرِبُوا بِالْكَأْسِ الرَّوِيَّةِ مِنْ مَحَبَّتِهِ، وَتَمَكَّنَتْ مِنْ سُودَائِهِ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَشَبَّحَتْ حَقِيقَتَهُ، فَحَنَوْا بِطُولِ الطَّاعَةِ اعْتِدَالَ ظُهُورِهِمْ، وَلَمْ يُنْفِدْ طُولُ الرَّغْبَةِ إِلَيْهِ مَادَّةَ تَضَرُّعِهِمْ، وَلَا أَطْلَقَ عَنْهُمْ عَظِيمُ الرَّفْقَةِ رَبِّقَ حُشُوعِهِمْ،

They do not entertain pride so as to make much of their acts. Their humility before the glory of Allah does not allow them to esteem their own virtues. Languor does not affect them despite their long affliction. Their longings (for Him) do not lessen so that they might turn away from hope in (Allah) their Sustainer. The tips of their tongues do not get dry by constant prayers (to Allah). Engagements (in other matters) do not betake them so as to turn their (loud) voices for Him into faint ones. Their shoulders do not get displaced in the postures of worship. They do not move their necks (this and that way) for comfort in disobedience of His command. Follies of negligence do not act against their determination to strive, and the deceptions of desires do not overcome their courage.

لَمْ يَتَوَهَّمُوا الْأَعْجَابَ فَيَسْتَكْبِرُوا مَا سَلَفَ مِنْهُمْ، وَلَا تَرَكَتْ لَهُمْ اسْتِكَانَةُ الْأَجْلَالِ نَصِيْبًا فِي تَعْظِيمِ حَسَنَاتِهِمْ، وَلَمْ يَجْرِ الْفَتْرَاتُ فِيهِمْ عَلَى طُولِ دُؤُوبِهِمْ، وَلَمْ تَعْضُ رَغْبَاتُهُمْ فَيَحَالِفُوا عَنْ رَجَاءِ رَبِّهِمْ، وَلَمْ تَجْفَ لِطُولِ الْمُنَاجَاةِ أَسْلَاتُ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ، وَلَا مَلَكَتْهُمْ الْأَشْعَالُ فَتَنْقَطِعَ بِهَمْسِ الْخَبْرِ إِلَيْهِ أَصْوَاتُهُمْ، وَلَمْ تُخْتَلِفْ فِي مَقَاوِمِ الطَّاعَةِ مَنَاكِبُهُمْ، وَلَمْ يَبْتَنُوا إِلَى رَاحَةِ التَّقْصِيرِ فِي أَمْرِهِ رِقَابَهُمْ، وَلَا تَعْدُوا عَلَى غَزِيْمَةِ جِدِّهِمْ بِلَادَةَ الْعَفَلَاتِ، وَلَا تَنْتَضِلْ فِي هَمِيهِمْ حَدَائِقُ الشَّهَوَاتِ

They regard the Master of the Throne (Allah) as the store for the day of their need. Because of their love (for Him) they turn to Him even when others turn to the creatures. They do not reach the ending limit of His worship. Their passionate fondness for His worship does not turn them except to the springs of their own hearts, springs which are never devoid of His hope and His fear. Fear (of Allah) never leaves them so that they might slacken in their efforts, nor have temptations entrapped them so that they might prefer this light search over their (serious) effort.

قَدْ اتَّخَذُوا ذَا الْعَرْشِ ذَخِيْرَةً لِيَوْمِ فَاقَتِهِمْ، وَيَمَّمُوهُ عِنْدَ انْقِطَاعِ الْخَلْقِ إِلَى الْمَخْلُوقِيْنَ بِرَغْبَتِهِمْ، لَا يَقْطَعُونَ أَمَدَ غَايَةِ عِبَادَتِهِ، وَلَا يَرْجِعُ بِهِمُ الْإِسْتِهْتَارُ بِلُزُومِ طَاعَتِهِ، إِلَّا إِلَى مَوَادِّ مِنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ غَيْرِ مُنْقَطِعَةٍ مِنْ رَجَائِهِ وَمَحَافَتِهِ، لَمْ تَنْقَطِعْ أَسْبَابُ الشَّقَقَةِ مِنْهُمْ، فَيَبْتَنُوا فِي جِدِّهِمْ، وَلَمْ تَأْسِرْهُمْ الْأَطْمَاعُ فَيُؤْتِرُوا وَشِيكَ السَّعْيِ عَلَى اجْتِهَادِهِمْ.

They do not consider their past (virtuous) deeds to be great, for if they had considered them great then (excessive) hope would have wiped away fearfulness from their hearts. They did not differ (among themselves) about their Sustainer as a result of Satan's control over them. The vice of separation from one another did not disperse them. Rancour and mutual

malice did not overpower them. Ways of wavering did not divide them. Differences of degree of courage did not render them into divisions.

Thus they are captives of faith; neither crookedness (of mind), nor excess, nor lethargy nor languor loosens them from its bond. There is not the thinnest point in the skies but there is an angel over it in prostration (before Allah) or (busy) in quick performance (of His commands). By long worship of their Sustainer they increase their knowledge, and the honour of their Sustainer increases in their hearts.

وَلَمْ يَسْتَعْظِمُوا مَا مَضَىٰ مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمْ، وَلَوْ اسْتَعْظَمُوا ذَلِكَ لَنَسَخَ الرَّجَاءُ مِنْهُمْ شَفَقَاتِ
وَجَلِيلِهِمْ، وَلَمْ يَحْتَلِفُوا فِي رَيْبِهِمْ بِاسْتِحْوَاذِ الشَّيْطَانِ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَلَمْ يُفَرِّقْهُمْ سُوءُ التَّقَاتِ، وَلَا تَوَلَّاهُمْ
غِلُّ التَّحَاسُدِ، وَلَا تَشَعَّبَتْهُمْ مَصَارِفُ الرَّيْبِ، وَلَا اقْتَسَمَتْهُمْ أَحْيَافُ الْهِمَمِ، فَهُمْ أُسْرَاءُ إِيْمَانٍ لَمْ
يُفُكْهُمْ مِنْ رَيْبَتِهِ زَيْغٌ وَلَا عُذُولٌ وَلَا وَنَىٰ وَلَا فُتُورٌ، وَكَيْسَ فِي أَطْبَاقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ مَوْضِعٌ إِهَابِ
إِلَّا وَعَلَيْهِ مَلَكٌ سَاجِدٌ، أَوْ سَاعٌ حَافِدٌ، يَزْدَادُونَ عَلَىٰ طُولِ الطَّاعَةِ بِرَيْبِهِمْ عِلْمًا، وَتَزْدَادُ عِزَّةُ
رَيْبِهِمْ فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ عِظْمًا.

A part of the same sermon, in description of earth and its spreading on water

ومنها: في صفة الارض ودحوها على الماء

Allah spread the earth on stormy and tumultuous waves and the depths of swollen seas, where waves clashed with each other and high surges leapt over one another. They emitted foam like the he-camel at the time of sexual excitement. So the tumult of the stormy water was subdued by the weight of the earth, when the earth pressed it with its chest its shooting agitation eased, and when the earth rolled on it with its shoulder bones the water meekly submitted.

Thus after the tumult of its surges it became tame and overpowered, and an obedient prisoner of the shackles of disgrace, while the earth spread itself and became solid in the stormy depth of this water. (In this way) the earth put an end to the pride, self conceit, high position and superiority of the water, and muzzled the intrepidity of its flow. Consequently it stopped after its stormy flow and settled down after its tumult.

كَبَسَ الْأَرْضَ عَلَىٰ مَوْرٍ أَمْوَاجٍ مُسْتَفْجِلَةٍ، وَلَجَّ بِحَارِ زَاخِرَةٍ، تَلْتَطِمُ أَوَاذِي أَمْوَاجِهَا،
وَتَصْطَفِقُ مُتَقَادِفَاتٍ أَنْبَاجِهَا، وَتَرْغُو زَيْدًا كَالْفُحُولِ عِنْدَ هِيَاجِهَا، فَخَضَعَ جَمَاحُ الْمَاءِ
الْمُنَالِطِمْ لِثِقَلِ حَمْلِهَا، وَسَكَنَ هَيْجُ اِزْتِمَائِهِ إِذْ وَطِئَتْهُ بِكُلِّكَلِهَا، وَذَلَّ مُسْتَحْدِيًا إِذْ تَمَعَّكَتْ
عَلَيْهِ بِكَوَاهِلِهَا، فَأَصْبَحَ بَعْدَ اصْطِحَابِ أَمْوَاجِهِ، سَاجِيًا مُفْهُورًا، وَفِي حَكْمَةِ الدَّلِّ مُنْقَادًا
أَسِيرًا، وَسَكَنَتِ الْأَرْضُ مَدْحُوَّةً فِي لُجَّةِ تَيَّارِهِ، وَرَدَّتْ مِنْ نَحْوَةِ بَأْوِهِ وَاعْتِلَائِهِ، وَشُمُوخَ أَنْفِهِ وَسُمُومِ
غُلُوبَائِهِ، وَكَعَمَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كِطَّةِ جَرِيَّتِهِ، فَهَمَدَ بَعْدَ نَزَقَاتِهِ، وَبَعَدَ زَيْفَانِ وَثَبَاتِهِ .

When the excitement of water subsided under the earth's sides and under the weight of the high and lofty mountains placed on its shoulders, Allah

flowed springs of water from its high tops and distributed them through plains and low places and moderated their movement by fixed rocks and high mountain tops. Then its trembling came to a standstill because of the penetration of mountains in (various) parts of its surface and their being fixed in its deep areas, and their standing on its plains.

Then Allah created vastness between the earth and firmament, and provided blowing wind for its inhabitants. Then He directed its inhabitants to spread all over its convenient places. Thereafter He did not leave alone the barren tracts of the earth where high portions lacked in water-springs and where rivers could not find their way, but created floating clouds which enliven the unproductive areas and grow vegetation.

فَلَمَّا سَكَنَ حَيْجُ الْمَاءِ مِنْ تَحْتِ أَكْنَافِهَا، وَحَمَلِ شَوَاهِقِ الْجِبَالِ الْبُدْخِ عَلَى أَكْنَافِهَا، فَجَرَّ
يَنَابِيعَ الْعُيُونِ مِنْ عَرَائِنِ أَنْوُفِهَا، وَفَرَّقَهَا فِي سُهُوبِ بَيْدِهَا وَأَخَادِيدِهَا، وَعَدَلَ حَرَكَاتَهَا
بِالرَّاسِيَّاتِ مِنْ جَلَامِيدِهَا، وَدَوَاتِ الشَّنَاخِيْبِ الشَّمِّ مِنْ صَيَّاخِيدِهَا، فَسَكَنْتَ مِنَ الْمَيَدَانِ
بُرُسُوبِ الْجِبَالِ فِي قِطْعِ أَدِيمِهَا، وَتَعَلُّعُهَا مُتَسَرِّبَةً فِي جَوَابَاتِ حَيَاشِيمِهَا، وَرُكُوبِهَا أَعْنَاقِ سُهُولِ
الْأَرْضِيْنَ وَجَرَائِمِهَا، وَفَسَحَ بَيْنَ الْجَوِّ وَبَيْنِهَا، وَأَعَدَّ الْهَوَاءَ مُتَنَسِّمًا لِسَاكِنِهَا، وَأَخْرَجَ إِلَيْهَا
أَهْلَهَا عَلَى تَمَامِ مَرَافِقِهَا. ثُمَّ لَمْ يَدَعْ جُرُزَ الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي تَقْصُرُ مِيَاهُ الْعُيُونِ عَنْ رَوَابِئِهَا، وَلَا يَجِدُ
جَدَاوِلَ الْأَنْهَارِ ذَرِيعَةً إِلَى بُلُوعِهَا، حَتَّى أَنْشَأَ لَهَا نَاشِئَةً سَحَابَ نُحْيِي مَوَاتِهَا، وَتَسْتَخْرِجُ
نَبَاتِهَا،

He made a big cloud by collecting together small clouds and when water collected in it and lightning began to flash on its sides and the flash continued under the white clouds as well as the heavy ones. He sent it raining heavily. The cloud was hanging towards the earth and southerly winds were squeezing it into shedding its water like a she-camel bending down for milking.

When the cloud prostrated itself on the ground and delivered all the water it carried on itself Allah grew vegetation on the plain earth and herbage on dry mountains. As a result, the earth felt pleased at being decorated with its gardens and wondered at her dress of soft vegetation and the ornaments of its blossoms. Allah made all this the means of sustenance for the people and feed for the beasts. He has opened up highways in its expanse and has established minarets (of guidance) for those who tread on its highways.

أَلْفَ عَمَامَهَا بَعْدَ افْتِرَاقِ لَمْعِهِ، وَتَبَائِنِ قَرَعِهِ. حَتَّى إِذَا تَمَحَّضَتْ جُئُهُ الْمُرْنِ فِيهِ، وَالتَّمَعِ
بَرْقُهُ فِي كُفْفِهِ، وَلَمْ يَنْمِ وَمِيضُهُ فِي كَنْهَوْرِ رَبَائِهِ، وَتُمْتَرَاكِمِ سَحَابِهِ، أَرْسَلَهُ سَحَابًا مُتَدَارِكًا، قَدْ
أَسْفَتْ هَيْدَبُهُ، تَمْرِيهِ الْجُنُوبِ دَرَزَ أَهَاضِيْبِهِ، وَدَفَعَ شَأْبِيْبِهِ.

فَلَمَّا أَلْفَتِ السَّحَابُ بَرَكَ بَوَاتِيْهَا، وَبَعَاغَ مَا اسْتَقَلَّتْ بِهِ مِنَ الْعِبَاءِ الْمَحْمُولِ عَلَيْهَا،
أَخْرَجَ بِهٍ مِنْ هَوَامِدِ الْأَرْضِ النَّبَاتِ، وَمِنْ رُغْرِ الْجِبَالِ الْأَعْشَابِ، فَهِيَ تَبْهَجُ بِزِينَةِ
رِيَاضِهَا، وَتَزْدَهِي بِمَا أَلْبَسَتْهُ مِنْ رَيْطِ، أَزَاهِيْرِهَا، وَحَلِيْبَةِ مَا سُمِطَتْ بِهِ مِنْ نَاضِرِ أَنْوَارِهَا، وَجَعَلَ

ذَلِكَ بَلَاغًا لِلْأَنَامِ، وَرِزْقًا لِّلْأَنْعَامِ، وَحَرْقَ الْفَجَاجِ فِي آفَاقِهَا، وَأَقَامَ الْمَنَارَ لِّلسَّالِكِينَ عَلَى جَوَادِّ طُرُقِهَا.

On the Creation of Man and the sending of the Prophet

When He spread out the earth and enforced His commands He chose Adam (peace be upon him) as the best in His creation and made him the first of all creation. He made him to reside in Paradise and gave him ample sustenance in it, and also instructed him regarding what He had prohibited him. He told him that proceeding towards it meant His disobedience and endangering his own position. But Adam did what he had been refrained from, just as Allah already knew beforehand. Consequently, Allah sent him down after (accepting) his repentance, to populate His earth with his progeny and to serve as a proof and plea for Him among his creatures.

فَلَمَّا مَهَدَ أَرْضَهُ، وَأَنْفَذَ أَمْرَهُ، اخْتَارَ آدَمَ (عليه السلام)، خَيْرَةً مِنْ خَلْقِهِ، وَجَعَلَهُ أَوَّلَ جِبَلْتِهِ، وَأَسْكَنَهُ جَنَّتهُ، وَأَرْعَدَ فِيهَا أَكْلَهُ، وَأَوْعَزَ إِلَيْهِ فِيمَا نَهَاهُ عَنْهُ، وَأَعْلَمَهُ أَنَّ فِي الْأَقْدَامِ عَلَيْهِ التَّعَرُّضَ لِمَعْصِيَتِهِ، وَالْمُخَاطَرَةَ بِمَنْزِلَتِهِ؛ فَأَقْدَمَ عَلَى مَا نَهَاهُ عَنْهُ . مُوَافَاةً لِسَابِقِ عِلْمِهِ . فَأَهْبَطَهُ بَعْدَ التَّوْبَةِ لِيُعْمَرَ أَرْضَهُ بِنَسْلِهِ، وَلِيُقِيمَ الْحُجَّةَ بِهِ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ،

Even when He made Adam die, He did not leave them without one who would serve among them as proof and plea for His Godhead, and serve as the link between them and His knowledge, but He provided to them the proofs through His chosen Messengers and bearers of the trust of His Message, age after age till the process came to end with our Prophet Muhammad - Allah may bless him and his descendants - and His pleas and warnings reached finality.

وَلَمْ يُخْلِهِمْ بَعْدَ أَنْ قَبَضَهُ، مِمَّا يُؤَكِّدُ عَلَيْهِمْ حُجَّةَ رَبُّوبِيَّتِهِ، وَيَصِلُ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَعْرِفَتِهِ، بَلْ تَعَاهَدَهُمْ بِالْحُجَجِ عَلَى أَلْسِنِ الْخَيْرَةِ مِنْ أَنْبِيَائِهِ، وَمُتَحَمِّلِي وَدَائِعِ رِسَالَاتِهِ، فَرْنَا فَقْرَانًا؛ حَتَّى تَمَّتْ بِنَبِيِّنَا مُحَمَّدٍ (صلى الله عليه وآله) حُجَّتُهُ، وَبَلَغَ الْمَقْطَعُ عُذْرَهُ وَنُذْرَهُ،

He ordained livelihoods³ with plenty and with paucity. He distributed them narrowly as well as profusely. He did it with justice to test whomever He desired, with prosperity or with destitution, and to test through it the gratefulness or endurance of the rich and the poor. Then He coupled plenty with misfortunes of destitution, safety with the distresses of calamities and pleasures of enjoyment with pangs of grief. He created fixed ages and made them long or short and earlier or later, and ended them up with death. He had made death capable of pulling up the ropes of ages and cutting them asunder.

وَقَدَّرَ الْأَرْزَاقَ فَكَثَّرَهَا وَقَلَّلَهَا، وَقَسَّمَهَا عَلَى الصَّبِيقِ وَالسَّعَةِ فَعَدَلَ فِيهَا لِيَبْتَلِيَ مَنْ أَرَادَ بِمَسُورِهَا وَمَعْسُورِهَا، وَلِيَحْتَبِرَ بِذَلِكَ الشُّكْرَ وَالصَّبْرَ مِنْ غَنِيِّهَا وَفَقِيرِهَا، ثُمَّ قَرَنَ بِسَعَتِهَا عَقَابِيلَ فَاقْتَبَلَهَا، وَبِسَلَامَتِهَا طَوَارِقَ آفَاتِهَا، وَبِفَرْجِ أَفْرَاجِهَا غُصَصَ أَتْرَاجِهَا . وَخَلَقَ الْأَجَالَ

فَأَطْلَمَهَا وَقَصَّرَهَا، وَقَدَّمَهَا وَأَخَّرَهَا، وَوَصَلَ بِالْمَوْتِ أَسْبَابَهَا، وَجَعَلَهُ حَاجِلاً لِشَطَائِهَا، وَقَاطِعاً لِمُرَائِرِ أَقْرَانِهَا.

He⁴ knows the secrets of those who conceal them, the secret conversation of those who engage in it, the inner feelings of those who indulge in guesses, the established certainties, the furtive glances of the eyes, the inner contents of hearts and depths of the unknown. He also knows what can be heard only by bending the holes of the ears, the summer resorts of ants and winter abodes of the insects, resounding of the cries of wailing women and the sound of steps.

He also knows the spots in the inner sheaths of leaves where fruits grow, the hiding places of beasts namely caves in mountains and valleys, the hiding holes of mosquitoes on the trunks of trees and their herbage, the sprouting points of leaves in the branches, the dripping points of semen passing through passages of loins, small rising clouds and the big giant ones, the drops of rain in the thick clouds, the particles of dust scattered by whirlwinds through their skirts, the lines erased by rain floods, the movements of insects on sand-dunes, the nests of winged creatures on the cliffs of mountains and the singing of chattering birds in the gloom of their brooding places.

عَالِمٌ السِّرِّ مِنْ ضَمَائِرِ الْمُضْمِرِينَ، وَنَجْوَى الْمُتَخَفِّينَ، وَخَوَاطِرِ رَجِمِ الظُّنُونِ، وَعَقْدِ عَرِيَمَاتِ اليَقِينِ، وَمَسَارِقِ إِيمَاضِ الجُفُونِ، وَمَا ضَمِنَتْهُ أَكْنَافُ القُلُوبِ، وَعَيَابَاتُ العُيُوبِ، وَمَا أَصَعَّتْ لِاسْتِرَاقِهِ مَصَائِحُ الأَسْمَاعِ، وَمَصَائِفُ الدَّرِّ، وَمَشَاقِي الهَوَامِّ، وَرَجْعَ الحَيْنِ مِنَ المُوَهَّلَاتِ، وَهَمْسِ الأَقْدَامِ، وَمُنْفَسِحِ التَّمَرَةِ مِنْ وَلايِحِ غُلْفِ الأَكْمَامِ، وَمُنْقَمَعِ الوُحُوشِ مِنَ غَيْرَانِ الجِبَالِ وَأَوْدِيَّتِهَا، وَمُخْتَبَأِ البُعُوضِ بَيْنَ سُوقِ الأشْجَارِ وَالْحَيِّتِهَا، وَمَعْرِزِ الأَوْزَاقِ مِنَ الأَفْقَانِ، وَمَحْطِّ الأَمْشَاجِ مِنْ مَسَارِبِ الأَصْلَابِ، وَنَاشِئَةِ العُيُومِ وَمُتَلَاحِمِهَا، وَدُرُورِ قَطْرِ السَّحَابِ فِي مُتَرَاقِمِهَا، وَمَا تَسْقِي الأَعَاصِيرُ بِدُبُوهَا، وَتَعْمُو الأَمْطَارُ بِسُيُوهَا، وَعَوْمِ بَنَاتِ الأَرْضِ فِي كُتُبَانِ الرِّمَالِ، وَمُسْتَقَرِّ دَوَاتِ الأَجْنِحَةِ بِدُرَا سَنَاحِيِبِ الجِبَالِ، وَتَعْرِيدِ دَوَاتِ المَنْطِقِ فِي دَيَاجِيرِ الأَوْكَارِ،

And)He knows(whatever has been treasured by mother-of-pearls, and covered under the waves of oceans, all that which is concealed under the darkness of night and all that on which the light of day is shining, as well as all that on which sometimes darkness prevails and sometimes light shines, the trace of every footstep, the feel of every movement, the echo of every sound, the motion of every lip, the abode of every living being, the weight of every particle, the sobs of every sobbing heart, and whatever is there on the earth like fruits of trees or falling leaf, or the settling place of semen, or the congealing of blood or clot and the developing of life and embryo.

وَمَا أَوْعَتَهُ الأَصْدَافُ، وَحَصَّنَتْ عَلَيْهِ أَمْوَاجِ البِحَارِ، وَمَا عَشِيَّتُهُ سُدْفَةٌ لَيْلِ، أَوْ دَرَّ عَلَيْهِ شَارِقُ نَهَارِ، وَمَا اعْتَقَبَتْ عَلَيْهِ أَطْبَاقُ الدِّيَاجِيرِ، وَسُبُحَاتِ النُّورِ، وَأَثَرِ كُلِّ خَطْوَةٍ، وَحِسِّ كُلِّ

حَرَكَه، وَرَجَعَ كُلِّ كَلِمَةٍ، وَتَحْرِيكَ كُلِّ شَفَةِ، وَمُسْتَقَرِّ كُلِّ نَسَمَةٍ، وَمُنْقَالِ كُلِّ ذَرَّةٍ، وَهَمَاهِمِ كُلِّ نَفْسٍ هَامَّةٍ، وَمَا عَلَيْهَا مِنْ ثَمَرِ شَجَرَةٍ، أَوْ سَاقِطِ وَرْقَةٍ، أَوْ قَرَارَةِ نُطْفَةٍ، أَوْ نُقَاعَةِ دَمٍ وَمُضْعَةٍ، أَوْ نَاشِئَةِ خَلْقٍ وَسَالَاةٍ.

On all this He suffers no trouble, and no impediment hampers Him in the preservation of what he created nor any languor or grief hinders Him from the enforcement of commands and management of the creatures. His knowledge penetrates through them and they are within His counting. His justice extends to all of them and His bounty encompasses them despite their falling short of what is due to Him.

لَمْ تَلْحَقْهُ فِي ذَلِكَ كُفْلَةٌ، وَلَا اعْتَرَضَتْهُ فِي حِفْظِ مَا ابْتَدَعَ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ عَارِضَةٌ، وَلَا اعْتَوَرَتْهُ فِي تَنْفِيذِ الْأُمُورِ وَتَدَابِيرِ الْمَخْلُوقِينَ مَلَائِكَةٌ وَلَا فَتْرَةٌ، بَلْ نَفَذَهُمْ عِلْمُهُ، وَأَحْصَاهُمْ عَدْدُهُ، وَوَسِعَهُمْ عَدْلُهُ، وَعَمَّرَهُمْ فَضْلُهُ، مَعَ تَقْصِيرِهِمْ عَنْ كُنْهِ مَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ.

O My God! Thou deservest handsome description and the highest esteem. If wish is directed towards Thee, Thou art the best to be wished for. If hope is reposed in Thee, Thou art the Most Honoured to be hoped from. O My God! Thou hast bestowed on me such power that I do not praise any one other than Thee, and I do not eulogise any one save Thee. I do not direct my praise towards others who are sources of disappointment and centres of misgivings. Thou hast kept away my tongue from the praises of human beings and eulogies of the created and the sustained. O My God! Every praiser has on whom he praises the right of reward and recompense. Certainly, I have turned to Thee with my eye at the treasures of Thy Mercy and stores of forgiveness.

اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ أَهْلُ الْوَصْفِ الْجَمِيلِ، وَالتَّعْدَادِ الْكَثِيرِ، إِنْ تُؤَمِّلُ فَخَيْرٌ مَأْمُولٍ، وَإِنْ تُرْجِ فَأَكْرَمُ مَرْجُوءٍ.

اللَّهُمَّ وَقَدْ بَسَطْتُ لِي فِيمَا لَا أَمْدَحُ بِهِ غَيْرَكَ، وَلَا أَتُنِي بِهِ عَلَى أَحَدٍ سِوَاكَ، وَلَا أُوَجِّهُهُ إِلَى مَعَادِنِ الْحَيَاةِ وَمَوَاضِعِ الرِّيْبَةِ، وَعَدَلْتُ بِلِسَانِي عَنْ مَدَائِحِ الْأَدْمِيَّةِ، وَالتَّنَائِ عَلَى الْمَرْئِيَّةِ الْمَخْلُوقِينَ.

اللَّهُمَّ وَلِكُلِّ مَثْنٍ عَلَى مَنْ أَنْتَى عَلَيْهِ مَثُوبَةٌ (1) مِنْ جَزَاءٍ، أَوْ عَارِفَةٌ مِنْ عَطَاءٍ; وَقَدْ رَجَوْتُكَ دَلِيلًا عَلَى دَخَائِرِ الرَّحْمَةِ وَكُنُوزِ الْمَعْفَرَةِ.

O My God! Here stands one who has singled Thee with Oneness that is Thy due and has not regarded any one deserving of these praises and eulogies except Thee. My want towards Thee is such that nothing except Thy generosity can cure its destitution, nor provide for its need except Thy obligation and Thy generosity. So do grant us in this place Thy will and make us free from stretching hands to anyone other than Thee.

"Certainly, Thou art powerful over every thing. " (Qur'an, 66:8).

اللَّهُمَّ وَهَذَا مَقَامٌ مَنْ أْفَرَدَكَ بِالتَّوْحِيدِ الَّذِي هُوَ لَكَ، وَمَنْ يَرِ مُسْتَحِقًّا لِهَذِهِ الْمَحَامِدِ
وَالْمَمَادِحِ غَيْرِكَ، وَبِي فَاقَةٌ إِلَيْكَ لَا يَجْبُرُ مَسْكَنَتَهَا إِلَّا فَضْلُكَ، وَلَا يَنْعَشُ مِنْ خَلَّتْهَا إِلَّا
مُنُّكَ وَجُودُكَ، فَهَبْ لَنَا فِي هَذَا الْمَقَامِ رِضَاكَ، وَأَغْنِنَا عَنْ مَدِّ الْأَيْدِي إِلَى مَنْ سِوَاكَ، (إِنَّكَ
عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ!)

Alternative Sources for Sermon 91

- (1) *Mas`adah ibn Sadaqah, author of Khutab Amir al-Mu'minin;*
- (2) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, II, 406;*
- (3) *al-Saduq, al-Tawhid, 34;*
- (4) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, bab al-mala'ikah;*
- (5) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, discusses its unusual (gharib) phrases in several places;*
- (6) *Ibn Tawus, Faraj al-mahmum, 56.*

Notes

1. The name of this sermon is the Sermon of "al-Ashbah". "ashbah" is the plural of shabah which means skeleton, since it contains description of angels and other kinds of beings it has been named by this name.

The reason for being angry at the questioner was that his request was unconnected with the obligations of shari`ah and beyond limits of human capacity.

2. Allah is the Guarantor of sustenance and Provider of livelihood as He says:

No creature is there crawling on the earth, but its provision rests on Allah...(Qur'an, 11:6)

But His being guarantor means that He has provided ways for everyone to live and earn livelihood, and has allowed every one equal shares in forests, mountains, rivers, mines and in the vast earth, and has given everyone the right to make use of them. His bounties are not confined to any single person, nor is the door of His sustenance closed to any one. Thus, Allah says:

All We do aid, these and (also) those out of the bounty of thy Lord; and the bounty of thy Lord is not confined. (Qur'an, 17:20)

If some one does not secure these things through languor or ease and sits effortless it is not possible that livelihood would reach his door. Allah has laid the table with multifarious feeds but to get them it is necessary to extend the hand. He has deposited pearls in the bottom of the sea but it requires diving to get them out. He has filled the mountains with rubies and precious stones but they cannot be had without digging the stones. The earth contains treasures of growth but benefit cannot be drawn from them without sowing of seed. Heaps of edibles lie scattered on all four sides of the earth but they cannot be collected without the trouble of travelling. Thus, Allah says:

... Traverse ye then its broad sides, and eat ye of His provision . . . (Qur'an, 67:15)

Allah's providing livelihood does not mean that no effort is needed in searching livelihood or no going out of the house is required for it, and that livelihood should itself finds its way to the seeker. The meaning of His being the provider of livelihood is that He has given earth the property of growing, He has sent rain from clouds for germination, created fruits, vegetables and grains. All this is from Allah but securing them is connected with human effort. Whoever will strive will reap the benefits of his efforts, and whoever abstains from strife would face the consequences of his idleness and laziness. Accordingly Allah says: And that man shall have nothing but what he striveth for. (Qur'an, 53:39)

The order of universe hinges on the maxim "Sow and reap." It is wrong to expect germination without sowing, to hope for results without effort. Limbs and faculties have been given solely to be kept active. Thus, Allah addresses Mary and says: And shake towards thee the trunk of the palm-tree, it will drop on thee dates fresh (and) ripe. Then eat and drink and refresh the eye... (Qur'an, 19:25-26) Allah provided the means for Mary's livelihood. He did not however pluck the dates from the tree and put them in her lap. This

was because so far as production of food goes it is His concern. So he made the tree green, put fruits on it and ripened the fruits. But when the stage arrived for plucking them He did not intervene. He just recalled to Mary her job namely that she should now move her hand and get her food.

Again, if His providing the livelihood means that whatever is given is given by Him and whatever is received from Him, then whatever a man would earn and eat, and in whatever manner he would obtain it would be permissible for him, whether he obtains it by theft, bribery, oppression or violence, because it would mean Allah's act and the food would be that given by Him, wherein he would have no free will, and where anything is out of the limits of free action there is no question of permissible or forbidden for it, nor is there any liability to account for it. But when it is not actually so and there is the question of permissible and forbidden then it should have bearing on human actions, so that it could be questioned whether it was secured in lawful or unlawful manner. Of course, where He has not bestowed the power of seeking the livelihood, there He has taken upon Himself the responsibility to provide the livelihood. Consequently, He has managed for the feeding of the embryo in the mother's womb, and it reaches him there according to its needs and requirements. But when this very young life enters the wide world and picks up energy to move its limbs, then it can't get its food from the source without moving his lips (for sucking).

3. In the management of the affairs of this world Allah has connected the sequence with the cause of human acts as a result of which the power of action in man does not remain idle, in the same way He had made these actions dependent on His own will, so man should not rely on his own power of action and forget the Creator. This is the issue of the will between two wills in the controversy of "free will or compulsion". Just as in the entire Universe nature's universal and sovereign law is in force, in the same way the production and distribution of food also is provided in a set manner under the dual force of Divine ordainment and human effort. And this is somewhere less and somewhere more depending on the proportion of human effort and the aim of Divine ordainment. Since He is the Creator of the means of livelihood, and the powers of seeking food have also been bestowed by Him, the paucity or plenty of livelihood has been attributed to Him because He has fixed different and separate measures for livelihood keeping in view the difference in efforts and actions and the good of the creatures. Somewhere there is poverty and somewhere affluence, somewhere distress and somewhere comfort, and some one is enjoying pleasure while some one else is suffering the hardships of want.

Qur'an says: ...amplifieth He their sustenance unto whomsoever He willeth and straiteneth; Verily He knoweth all things. (Qur'an, 42:12)

In sermon 23, Amir al-mu'minin has referred to this matter and said: The Divine command descends from the sky towards the earth with whatever is ordained for every one, whether less or more, just like rain drops.

So just as there is a fixed process and manner for the benevolence of rain namely that vapours rise from the sea with the store of water, spread over in the sky in the shape of dark clouds and then ooze the water by drops till they form themselves in regular lines. They irrigate plains as well as high lands thoroughly and proceed onwards to collect in the low areas, so that the thirsty may drink it, animals may use it and dry lands may be watered from it. In the same way Allah has provided all the means of livelihood but His bounty follows a particular mode in which there is never a jot of deviation. Thus Allah says: And there is not a thing but with Us are its treasures, and We do not send it down but in a known measure. (Qur'an, 15:21)

If man's greed and avarice exceeds its bounds, then just as excess of rain ruins crops instead of growing and bringing them up, so the abundance of the article of livelihood and necessities of life would make man oblivious of Allah and rouse him to revolt and unruliness. Consequently, Allah says: And should Allah amplify the sustenance unto his servants, they would certainly rebel in the earth, but He sendeth it down by measure as he willeth; Verily of His servants, He is All-aware, All-seeing. (Qur'an, 42:27)

If He lessens the food then just as stoppage of rain makes the land arid and kills the animals, in the same way, by closure of the means of livelihood, human society would be destroyed and so there would remain no means of living and livelihood. Allah accordingly

says: Or who is that who can provide you with sustenance should He withhold His sustenance?... (Qur'an, 67:21)

Consequently, Allah, the Wise, the Omniscient, has put the organisation for livelihood on moderate and proportionate lines, and in order to emphasise the importance of livelihood and sustenance and to keep them correlated with each other has introduced differences in the distribution of livelihood. Sometimes, this difference and unequal distribution owes itself to the difference of human effort and sometimes it is the consequence of overall arrangement of the affairs of the Universe and Divine acts of wisdom and objectives. This is because, if by poverty and want He has tested the poor in endurance and patience, in affluence and wealth there is severe test of the rich by way of thanks-giving and gratifying the rights of others, namely whether the rich person gratifies the claims of the poor and the distressed, and whether he takes care of the destitute or not. Again, where there is wealth there would also be dangers of all sorts. Sometimes there would be danger to the wealth and property and sometimes fear of poverty and want.

Consequently, there would be many persons who would be more satisfied and happy for lack of wealth. For them this destitution and want would be far better than the wealth which might snatch away their comfort and peace. Moreover sometimes this very wealth which one holds dearer than life becomes the cause of loss of one's life. Further, it has also been seen that so long as wealth was lacking character was above reproach, life was unblemished, but the moment property and wealth changed into plenty the conduct worsened, character became faulty and there appeared the vice of drink, crowd of beauties and gathering of singing and music. In such a case the absence of wealth was a blessing. However, being ignorant of Allah's objectives, man cries out and being affected by transitory distress begins complaining but does not realise from how many vices which could have accrued owing to wealth he has remained aloof. Therefore, if wealth produces conveniences, poverty serves as a guard for the character.

4. The eloquence with which Amir al-mu'minin has thrown light on Allah's attributes of knowledge and the sublime words in which he has pictured the all-engrossing quality of His knowledge cannot but impress the mind of the most die-hard opponent. Thus, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written:

If Aristotle, who believed that Allah is only aware of the universe and not of its particulars, had heard this speech, his heart too would have inclined, his hair would have stood on end and his thinking would have undergone a dramatic change. Do you not see the brightness, force, vehemence, sublimity, glory, seriousness and ripeness of this speech? Besides these qualities, there is sweetness, colourfulness, delicacy and smoothness in it. I have not found any utterance similar to it. Of course, if there is any utterance matching it, that can be the word of Allah only. And there is no wonder in it, because he is an off-shoot of the same tree (of the Prophet Ibrahim, who set up the Unity of Allah), a distributory of the same river and a reflection of the same light. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol.7, pp. 23-24)

Those who regard Allah to possess only over-all knowledge argue that since details undergo changes, to believe Him to have knowledge of the changing details would necessitate changes in His knowledge but since knowledge is the same as His Being, His Being would have to be regarded as the object of change the result of which would be that He would have to be taken as having come into existence. In this way He would lose the attribute of being from ever. This is a very deceptive fallacy because changes in the object of knowledge can lead to changes in the knower only when it is assumed that the knower does not already possess knowledge of these changes. But since all the forms of change and alteration are crystal clear before Him there is no reason that with the changes in the objects of knowledge He too should be regarded changeable, although really this change is confined to the object of knowledge and does not affect knowledge in itself.

Sermon 92: Leave me and find someone else ...

When people decided to swear allegiance¹ at Amir al-mu'minin's hand after the murder of `Uthman, he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لما أَرَادَهُ النَّاسُ عَلَى الْبَيْعَةِ بَعْدَ قَتْلِ عَثْمَانَ

Leave me and seek some one else. We are facing a matter which has (several) faces and colours, which neither hearts can stand nor intelligence can accept. Clouds are hovering over the sky, and faces are not discernible. You should know that if I respond to you I would lead you as I know and would not listen to the utterance of any speaker or the reproof of any reprover. If you leave me then I am the same as you are. It is possible I would listen to and obey whomever you make in charge of your affairs. I am better for you as a counsellor than as chief.

دَعَوْنِي وَالتَّمِسُوا عَيْرِي؛ فَإِنَّا مُسْتَقْبِلُونَ أَمْرًا لَهُ وَجُوهٌ وَأَلْوَانٌ؛ لَا تَقُومُ لَهُ الْقُلُوبُ، وَلَا تَثْبُتُ عَلَيْهِ الْعُقُولُ، وَإِنَّ الْأَفَاقَ قَدْ أَعَامَتْ، وَالْمَحَجَّةَ قَدْ تَنَكَّرَتْ. وَاعْلَمُوا أَيُّيَ إِنِّ أَجْبَنْتُكُمْ رَكِبْتُ بِكُمْ مَا أَعْلَمُ، وَمَنْ أَضْغَ إِلَى قَوْلِ الْقَائِلِ وَعَتَبِ الْعَاتِبِ، وَإِنِّ تَرَكْتُمُونِي فَأَنَا كَأَحَدِكُمْ؛ وَلَعَلِّي أَسْمَعُكُمْ وَأَطُوعُكُمْ لِمَنْ وَلَّيْتُمُوهُ أَمْرُكُمْ، وَأَنَا لَكُمْ وَزِيرًا، خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ مِنِّي أَمِيرًا!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 92

- (1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, * VI, 3066 (events of the year 35);*
- (2) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah (events of the year 35);*
- (3) *Ibn Miskawayh, Tajarib al-'umam, I, 508.*

Notes

1. When with the murder of `Uthman the seat of Caliphate became vacant, Muslims began to look at `Ali (p.b.u.h.) whose peaceful conduct, adherence to principles, and politia lacumen had been witnessed by them to a great extent during this long period. Consequently, they rushed for swearing allegiance in the same way as a traveller who had lost his way and catches sight of the objective would have rushed towards it, as the historian at-Tabari (in at-Tarikh, vol .I, pp. 3066, 3067, 3076) records:

People thronged on Amir al-mu'minin and said, "We want to swear allegiance to you and you see what troubles are befalling Islam and how we are being tried about the near ones of the Prophet."

But Amir al-mu'minin declined to accede to their request whereupon these people raised a hue and cry and began to shout loudly, "O' Abu'l-Hasan, do you not witness the ruination of Islam or see the advancing flood of unruliness and mischief? Do you have no fear of Allah?" Even then Amir al-mu'minin showed no readiness to consent because he was noticing that the effects of the atmosphere that had come into being after the Prophet had overcome hearts and minds of the people, selfishness and lust for power had become rooted in them, their thinking affected by materialism and they had become habituated to treating government as the means for securing their ends. Now they would like to materialise the Divine Caliphate too and play with it. In these circumstances it would be impossible to change the mentalities or turn the direction of temperaments. In addition to these ideas he had also seen the end in view that these people should get further time to think over so that on frustration of their material ends hereafter they should not say that the allegiance had

been sworn by them under a temporary expediency and that thought had not been given to it, just as `Umar's idea was about the first Caliphate, which appears from his statement that:

Abu Bakr's Caliphate came into being without thought but Allah saved us from its mischief. If anyone repeats such an affair you should kill him. (as-Sahih, al-Bukhari, vol 8, pp.210, 211; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.1, p.55; at-Tabari, vol.1, p.1822; Ibn al-Athir, vol.2, p.327; Ibn Hisham, vol.4, pp.308-309; Ibn Kathir, vol.5, p.246)

In short, when their insistence increased beyond limits, Amir al-mu'minin delivered this sermon wherein he clarified that "If you want me for your worldly ends, then I am not ready to serve as your instrument. Leave me and select someone else who may fulfil your ends. You have seen my past life that I am not prepared to follow anything except the Qur'an and sunnah and would not give up this principle for securing power. If you select someone else I would pay regard to the laws of the state and the constitution as a peaceful citizen should do. I have not at any stage tried to disrupt the collective existence of the Muslims by inciting revolt. The same will happen now. Rather, just as keeping the common good in view I have hitherto been giving correct advice, I would not grudge doing the same. If you let me in the same position it would be better for your worldly ends, because in that case I won't have power in my hands so that I could stand in the way of your worldly affairs, and create an impediment against your hearts' wishes. However, if you are determined on swearing allegiance on my hand, bear in mind that if you frown or speak against me I would force you to tread on the path of right, and in the matter of the right I would not care for anyone. If you want to swear allegiance even at this, you can satisfy your wish." The impression Amir al-mu'minin had formed about these people is fully corroborated by later events. Consequently, when those who had sworn allegiance with worldly motives did not succeed in their objectives they broke away and rose against his government with baseless allegations.

Sermon 93: I have pulled out the eye of revolt ...

About the annihilation of the Kharijites, the mischief mongering of Umayyads and the vastness of his own knowledge¹

ومن خطبة له عليه السلام

وفيهما يَنْبَهُ أمير المؤمنين على فضله وعلمه ويبيِّن فتنة بني أُمِّيَّة

Praise and eulogy be to Allah, O people, I have put out the eye of revolt. No one except me advanced towards it when its gloom was swelling and its madness was intense. Ask me before you miss me,² because, by Allah, who has my life in His hands, if you ask me anything between now and the Day of Judgement or about the group who would guide a hundred people and also misguide a hundred people I would tell you who is announcing its march, who is driving it in the front and who is driving it at the rear, the stages where its riding animals would stop for rest and the final place of stay, and who among them would be killed and who would die a natural death.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ فَإِنِّي فَقَّأْتُ عَيْنَ الْفِتْنَةِ، وَمَنْ يَكُنْ لِيَجْتَرِيءَ عَلَيْهَا أَحَدٌ غَيْرِي بَعْدَ أَنْ مَاجَ غَيْبُهَا، وَاسْتَدَّ كَلْبُهَا فَاسْأَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي، فَوَ الَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ لَا تَسْأَلُونِي عَنْ شَيْءٍ فِيمَا بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ السَّاعَةِ، وَلَا عَنْ فِئَةٍ تَهْدِي مَائَةً وَتُضِلُّ مَائَةً إِلَّا نَبَأْتُكُمْ بِنَاقِحِهَا وَفَائِدِهَا وَسَائِقِهَا، وَمَنَاخِ رِكَابِهَا، وَمَحَطِّ رِحَالِهَا، وَمَنْ يُقْتَلُ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا قَتْلًا، وَمَنْ يَمُوتُ مِنْهُمْ مَوْتًا.

When I am dead, hard circumstances and distressing events will befall you, many persons in the position of asking questions will remain silent with cast down eye, while those in the position of replying will lose courage. This would be at a time when wars will descend upon you with all hardship and days will be so hard on you that you would feel them prolonged because of hardship till Allah will give victory to those remaining virtuous among you.

وَلَوْ قَدْ فَقدْتُمُونِي وَنَزَلَتْ كَرَائِهِ الْأُمُورُ، وَخَوَّزِبُ الْحُطُوبِ، لَا طَرَقَ كَثِيرٌ مِنَ السَّائِلِينَ، وَفُشِلَ كَثِيرٌ مِنَ الْمَسْئُولِينَ، وَذَلِكَ إِذَا فَلَّصَتْ حَزْبُكُمْ، وَشَمَّرَتْ عَنْ سَاقٍ، وَضَاقَتِ الدُّنْيَا عَلَيْكُمْ ضَيْقًا، تَسْتَطِيلُونَ أَيَّامَ الْبَلَاءِ عَلَيْكُمْ، حَتَّى يَفْتَحَ اللَّهُ لِبَقِيَّةِ الْأَبْرَارِ مِنْكُمْ.

When mischiefs come they confuse (right with wrong) and when they clear away they leave a warning. They cannot be known at the time of approach but are recognised at the time of return. They blow like the blowing of winds, striking some cities and missing others.

Beware that the worst mischief for you in my view is the mischief of Banu Umayyah, because it is blind and also creates darkness. Its sway is general but its ill effects are for particular people. He who remains clear-

sighted in it would be affected by distress, and he who remains blind in it would avoid the distress.

By Allah, you will find Banu Umayyah after me worst people for yourselves, like the old unruly she-camel who bites with its mouth, beats with its fore-legs, kicks with its hind legs and refuses to be milked. They would remain over you till they would leave among you only those who benefit them or those who do not harm them.

Their calamity would continue till your seeking help from them would become like the seeking of help by the slave from his master or of the follower from the leader. Their mischief would come to you like evil eyed fear and pre-Islamic fragments, wherein there would be neither minaret of guidance nor any sign (of salvation) to be seen.

إِنَّ الْفِتْنَ إِذَا أَقْبَلَتْ شَبَّهَتْ، وَإِذَا أَدْبَرَتْ نَبَّهَتْ، يُنْكَرَنَّ مُقْبَلَاتٍ، وَيُعْرَفَنَّ مُدْبِرَاتٍ،
يُخْمَنَ حَوَمَ الرِّيَّاحِ، يُصِيبَنَّ بَلْدًا وَيُخْطِئَنَّ بَلْدًا .

أَلَا وَإِنَّ أَخْوَفَ الْفِتَنِ عِنْدِي عَلَيْكُمْ فِتْنَةُ بَنِي أُمَيَّةَ، فَإِنَّهَا فِتْنَةٌ عَمِيَاءُ مُظْلِمَةٌ: عَمَّتْ
حُطَّتْهَا، وَخَصَّتْ بَلِيَّتْهَا، وَأَصَابَ الْبَلَاءُ مَنْ أَبْصَرَ فِيهَا، وَأَخْطَأَ الْبَلَاءُ مَنْ عَمِيَ عَنْهَا. وَإِمْ
اللَّهِ لَتَجِدَنَّ بَنِي أُمَيَّةَ لَكُمْ أَرْبَابَ سُوءِ بَعْدِي، كَالنَّابِ الضَّرُوسِ: تَعْدِمُ فِيهَا، وَتَخْطِئُ بِيَدِهَا،
وَتَزِينُ بِرِجْلِهَا، وَتَمْنَعُ دَرَّهَا، لَا يَزَالُونَ بِكُمْ حَتَّى لَا يَتْرُكُوا مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا نَافِعًا لَهُمْ، أَوْ غَيْرَ ضَائِرٍ
بِهِمْ، وَلَا يَزَالُ بِلَاؤُهُمْ حَتَّى لَا يَكُونَ انْتِصَارُ أَحَدِكُمْ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا مِثْلَ انْتِصَارِ الْعَبْدِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ،
وَالصَّاحِبِ مِنْ مُسْتَصْحَبِهِ، تَرُدُّ عَلَيْكُمْ فِتْنَتَهُمْ شَوْهَاءَ مُحْشِيَّةً، وَقِطْعًا جَاهِلِيَّةً، لَيْسَ فِيهَا مَنَارٌ
هُدًى، وَلَا عِلْمٌ يُرَى.

We Ahlul Bayt (the Household of the Prophet) are free from this mischief and we are not among those who would engender it. Thereafter, Allah would dispel it from you like the removal of the skin (from flesh) through him who would humble them, drag them by necks, make them drink full cups (of hardships), not extend them anything but sword and not clothe them save with fear. At that time Quraysh would wish at the cost of the world and all its contents to find me even only once and just for the duration of the slaughter of a camel in order that I may accept from them (the whole of) that of which at present I am asking them only a part but they are not giving me.

خُذْ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ مِنْهَا بِنَجَاةٍ، وَلَسْنَا فِيهَا بِدُعَاةٍ، ثُمَّ يُفَرِّجْهَا اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ كَتَفْرِيجِ الْأَدِيمِ: بِمَنْ
يَسُومُهُمْ حَسَنًا، وَيَسُوفُهُمْ عُنْفًا، وَيَسْقِيهِمْ بِكَأْسِ مُصَبَّرَةٍ، لَا يُعْطِيهِمْ إِلَّا السَّيْفَ، وَلَا
يُجْلِسُهُمْ إِلَّا الْخَوْفَ، فَعِنْدَ ذَلِكَ تَوَدُّ قُرَيْشٌ . بِالذُّنْيَا وَمَا فِيهَا . لَوْ يَرَوْنِي مَقَامًا وَاحِدًا، وَلَوْ
قَدَّرَ جَزْرَ جَزُورٍ، لِاقْبَلَ مِنْهُمْ مَا أَطْلُبُ الْيَوْمَ بَعْضَهُ فَلَا يُعْطُونِيهِ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 93

(1) *Al-Ya`qubi, Tar'ikh, II, 182;*

(2) *Abu Nu`aym, Hilyah, I, 68;*

- (3) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, I, 6, 7, 16;*
- (4) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 377 (h.z.b), III, 200 ('a.dh.m);*
- (5) *al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak, II, 466;*
- (6) *Ibn 'Abd al-Birr, Jami', I, 114;*
- (7) *Ibn Hajar, al-'Isabah, II, 509;*
- (8) *al-Tabari, al-Riyad, 198;*
- (9) *al-Suyuti, Ta'rikh al-khulafa', 124;*
- (10) *Dahlan, al-Futuhah, II, 337;*
- (11) *al-Qunduzi, Yanabi', 224.*

Notes

1. Amir al-mu'minin delivered this sermon after the battle of Nahrawan. In it, mischiefs imply the battles fought in Basrah, Siffin and Nahrawan because their nature was different from the battles of the Prophet. There the opposite party was the unbelievers while here the confrontation was with those who had veils of Islam on their faces. So people were hesitant to fight against Muslims, and asked why they should fight with those who recited the call to the prayers and offered the prayers. Thus, Khuzaymah ibn Thabit al-Ansari did not take part in the Battle of Siffin till the falling of 'Ammar ibn Yasir as martyr did not prove that the opposite party was rebellious. Similarly the presence of companions like Talhah and az-Zubayr who were included in the "Foretold Ten" on the side of 'A'ishah in Basrah, and the prayer signs on foreheads of the Kharijites in Nahrawan and their prayers and worship were creating confusion in the minds. In these circumstances only those could have the courage to rise against them were aware of the secrets of their hearts and the reality of their faith. It was the peculiar perception of Amir al-mu'minin and his spiritual courage that he rose to oppose them, and testified the saying of the Holy Prophet:

You will fight after me with the breakers of allegiance (people of Jamal), oppressors (people of Syria) and deviators (the Kharijites). (al-Mustadrak 'ala as-Sahihayn, al-Hakim, vol.3, p.139,140; ad-Durr al-manthur, vol.6, p.18; al-Ist'ab, vol.3, p.1117; Usd al-ghabah, vol.4 pp.32,33; Tarikh Baghdad, vol.8, p.340; vol.13, pp.186,187; at-Tarikh, Ibn 'Asakir, vol. 5, p. 41; at-Tarikh, Ibn Kathir, vol.7, pp.304,305,306; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.7, p.238; vol.9, p.235; Sharh al-mawahib, vol.3, pp.316-317; Kanz al-'ummal, vol. 6, pp.72,82,88,155,319,391,392; vol. 8, p.215)

2. After the Holy Prophet no one save Amir al-mu'minin could utter the challenge "Ask whatever you want to." Ibn 'Abd al-Barr in Jami' bayan al-'ilm wa fadlihi, vol.1 p.58 and in al-Ist'ab, vol.3, p.1103; Ibn al-Athir in Usd al-ghabah, vol.4, p.22; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol.7, p.46; as-Suyuti in Tarikh al-Khulafa', p.171 and Ibn Hajar al-Haytami in as-Sawa'iq al-muhriqah, p.76 have written that "None among the companions of the Holy Prophet ever said 'Ask me whatever you want to' except 'Ali ibn Abi Talib." However, among other than the companions a few names do appear in history who did utter such a challenge, such as Ibrahim ibn Hisham al-Makhzumi, Muqatil ibn Sulayman, Qatadah ibn Di'amah, 'Abd ar-Rahman (Ibn al-Jawzi) and Muhammad ibn Idris ash-Shafi'i etc. but everyone of them had to face disgrace and was forced to take back his challenge. This challenge can be urged only by him who knows the realities of the Universe and is aware of the happenings of the future. Amir al-mu'minin, the opener of the door of the Prophet's knowledge, as he was, was the only person who was never seen being unable to answer any question on any occasion, so much so that even Caliph 'Umar had to say that "I seek Allah's protection from the difficulty for the solution of which 'Ali would not be available." Similarly, the prophecies of Amir al-mu'minin made about the future proved true word by word and served as an index to his vast knowledge, whether they be about the devastation of Banu Umayyah or the rising of the Kharijites, the wars and destruction by the Tartars or the attacks of the English, the floods of Basrah or the ruination of Kufah. In short, when these events are historical realities there is no reason why this challenge of Amir al-mu'minin should be wondered at.

Sermon 94: Exalted is Allah Whom heights of daring cannot approach...

Allah's praise and eulogy of the prophets

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام

وفيهما يصف الله تعالى ثم يبين فضل الرسول الكريم وأهل بيته ثم يعظ الناس

Exalted is Allah Whom heights of daring cannot approach and fineness of intelligence cannot find. He is such First that there is no extremity for Him so that He be contained within it, nor is there an end for Him where would cease.

فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا تَبْلُغُهُ بُعْدُ الْهَيْمَمِ، وَلَا يَنَالُهُ حَدْسُ الْفِطَنِ، الْأَوَّلُ الَّذِي لَا عَايَةَ لَهُ فَيَنْتَهِي، وَلَا آخِرَ لَهُ فَيَنْقُضِي.

A part of the same sermon about the Prophet

منها: [في وصف الانبياء]

Allah kept the Prophets in deposit in the best place of deposit and made them stay in the best place of stay. He moved them in succession from distinguished fore-fathers to chaste wombs. Whenever a predecessor from among them died the follower stood up for the cause of the religion of Allah.

فَاسْتَوْدَعَهُمْ فِي أَفْضَلِ مُسْتَوْدَعٍ، وَأَقَرَّهُمْ فِي خَيْرِ مُسْتَقَرٍّ، تَنَاسَخَتْهُمْ كَرَائِمُ الْأَصْلَابِ إِلَى مُطَهَّرَاتِ الْأَرْحَامِ؛ كُلَّمَا مَضَى سَلْفٌ، قَامَ مِنْهُمْ بِدِينِ اللَّهِ خَلْفٌ.

About the Holy Prophet and his Descendants (Itrah)

رسول الله وأهل بيته

Until this distinction of Allah, the Glorified, reached Muhammad - peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants. Allah brought him out from the most distinguished sources of origin and the most honourable places of planting, namely from the same (lineal) tree from which He brought forth other Prophets and from which He selected His trustees. Muhammad's descendants are the best descendants, his kinsmen the best of kin and his lineal tree the best of trees. It grew in esteem and rose in distinction. It has tall branches and unapproachable fruits.

حَتَّى أَفْضَتْ كَرَامَةُ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ إِلَى مُحَمَّدٍ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، فَأَخْرَجَهُ مِنْ أَفْضَلِ الْمَعَادِنِ مَنِيَّتًا، وَأَعَزَّ الْأُرُومَاتِ مَعْرِسًا، مِنَ الشَّجَرَةِ الَّتِي صَدَعَ مِنْهَا أَنْبِيَاءُهُ، وَانْتَجَبَ مِنْهَا أُمَّنَاءُهُ.

عِزَّتُهُ خَيْرُ الْعِزِّ، وَأَسْرَتُهُ خَيْرُ الْأَسْرِ، وَشَجَرَتُهُ خَيْرُ الشَّجَرِ؛ نَبَتْ فِي حَرَمٍ، وَبَسَقَتْ فِي حَرَمٍ، لَهَا فُرُوعٌ طَوَالٌ، وَثَمَرٌ لَا يُنَالُ.

He is the leader (Imam) of all who exercise fear (of Allah) and a light for those who seek guidance. He is a lamp whose flame is burning, a meteor whose light is shining and a flint whose spark is bright. His conduct is upright, his behaviour is guiding, his speech is decisive and his decision is just. Allah sent him after an interval from the previous Prophets when people had fallen into errors of action and ignorance. Allah may have mercy on you.

فَهُوَ إِمَامٌ مِّنَ اتَّقَى، وَبَصِيرَةٌ مِّنَ اهْتَدَى، وَسِرَاجٌ لَمَعَ ضَوْؤُهُ، وَشِهَابٌ سَطَعَ نُورُهُ وَزَنْدٌ
بَرَقَ لَمَعُهُ؛ سِيرَتُهُ الْقَصْدُ، وَسُنَّتُهُ الرُّشْدُ، وَكَلَامُهُ الْفَصْلُ، وَحُكْمُهُ الْعَدْلُ؛ أَرْسَلَهُ عَلَيَّ حِينَ
فَتْرَةٍ مِّنَ الرُّسُلِ، وَهَفْوَةٍ عَنِ الْعَمَلِ، وَغَبَاوَةٍ مِّنَ الْأَمَمِ.

Exhortation

عظة الناس

May Allah shower His mercy on you! Do act according to the clear signs, because the way is straight and leads to the house of safety while you are in the place of seeking Allah's favour, and have time and opportunity. The books (of your doings) are open and pens (of angels) are busy (to record your actions) while your bodies are healthy, tongues are free, repentance is accepted and deeds are accorded recognition.

اعْمَلُوا، رَحِمَكُمُ اللَّهُ، عَلَى أَعْلَامٍ بَيِّنَةٍ، فَالطَّرِيقُ نَهْجٌ يَدْعُو إِلَى دَارِ السَّلَامِ، وَأَنْتُمْ فِي دَارِ
مُسْتَعْتَبٍ عَلَى مَهَلٍ وَقَرَاغٍ، وَالصُّحُفُ مَنْشُورَةٌ، وَالْأَقْلَامُ جَارِيَةٌ، وَالْأَبْدَانُ صَحِيحَةٌ، وَالْأَلْسُنُ
مُطْلَقَةٌ، وَالتَّوْبَةُ مَسْمُوعَةٌ، وَالْأَعْمَالُ مَقْبُولَةٌ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 94

- (1) *Al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, I, 134;*
- (2) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, IV, 74.*

Sermon 95: Allah sent the Prophet at a time when the people...

About the condition of the people at the time of the Prophet's proclamation and his actions to do with the dissemination of his message

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يقرر فضيلة الرسول الكريم

Allah sent the Prophet at a time when the people were going astray in perplexity and were moving here and there in mischief. Desires had deflected them and self-conceit had swerved them. Extreme ignorance had made them foolish. They were confounded by the unsteadiness of matters and the evils of ignorance. Then the Prophet - blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants - did his best in giving them sincere advice, himself trod on the right path and called (them) towards wisdom and good counsel.

بَعَثَهُ وَالنَّاسُ ضَلَّالٌ فِي حَيْرَةٍ، وَحَاطِبُونَ فِي فِتْنَةٍ، قَدْ اسْتَهْوَتْهُمْ الْأَهْوَاءُ، وَاسْتَزَلَّتْهُمْ الْكِبْرِيَاءُ، وَاسْتَحَفَّتْهُمْ الْجَاهِلِيَّةُ الْجُهْلَاءُ: حَيَارَى فِي زَلْزَالٍ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ، وَبَلَاءٍ مِنَ الْجُهْلِ، فَبَالَغَ (صلى الله عليه وآله) فِي النَّصِيحَةِ، وَمَضَى عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ، وَدَعَا إِلَى الْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 95

(1) *Al-Majlisi, Bihar, XVIII, 219.c*

Sermon 96: Praise belongs to God, Who is the First ...

In eulogy of the Holy Prophet

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في الله وفي الرسول الاكرم

Praise be to Allah who is such First that nothing is before Him and such Last that there is nothing after Him. He is such Manifest that there is nothing above Him and such Hidden that there is nothing nearer than He.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْأَوَّلِ فَلَا شَيْءَ قَبْلَهُ، وَالْآخِرِ فَلَا شَيْءَ بَعْدَهُ، وَالظَّاهِرِ فَلَا شَيْءَ فَوْقَهُ،
وَالْبَاطِنِ فَلَا شَيْءَ دُونَهُ.

A part of the same sermon about the Holy Prophet

منها: في ذكر الرسول (صلى الله عليه وآله)

His place of stay is the best of all places and his origin the noblest of all origins in the mines of honour and the cradles of safety. Hearts of virtuous persons have been inclined towards him and the reins of eyes have been turned towards him. Through him Allah buried mutual rancour and put off the flames of revolt. Through him He gave them affection like brothers and separated those who were together (through unbelief). Through him He gave honour to the low and degraded honour (of unbelief). His speaking is clear and his silence is (indicative) like tongue.

مُسْتَقَرُّهُ خَيْرٌ مُسْتَقَرٍّ، وَمَنْبِتُهُ أَشْرَفُ مَنْبِتٍ، فِي مَعَادِنِ الْكِرَامَةِ، وَمَاهِدِ السَّلَامَةِ. قَدْ
صُرِفَتْ نَحْوُهُ أَفْعَدَةُ الْأَبْرَارِ، وَتُنْبِتُ إِلَيْهِ أَرْزَمَةُ الْأَبْصَارِ، دَفَنَ [اللَّهُ] بِهِ الصَّغَائِرَ، وَأَطْفَأَ بِهِ
النَّوَائِرَ، وَأَلْفَ بِهِ إِخْوَانًا، وَفَرَّقَ بِهِ أَقْرَانًا، أَعَزَّ بِهِ الدِّلَّةَ، وَأَدَلَّ بِهِ الْعِزَّةَ، كَلَامُهُ بَيَانٌ، وَصَمْتُهُ
لِسَانٌ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 96

(1) *Al-Majlisi, Bihar, XVI, 380.*

Sermon 97: Although Allah gives time to the oppressor...

Admonishing his own companions [about his companions and the companions of the Prophet]

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في أصحابه وأصحاب رسول الله (ﷺ)

Although Allah gives time to the oppressor, His catch would not spare him. Allah watches him on the passage of his way and the position of that which suffocates the throats.

By Allah in Whose power my life lies, these people (Mu`awiyah and his men) will overcome you not because they have a better right than you but because of their hastening towards the wrong with their leader and your slowness about my right (to be followed).

وَلَيْنَ أَمَهَلَ اللَّهُ الظَّالِمَ فَلَنْ يَفُوتَ أَخْذَهُ، وَهُوَ لَهُ بِالْمُرْصَادِ عَلَى تَحَازِرِ طَرِيقِهِ، وَمَوْضِعِ الشَّجَا مِنْ مَسَاغِ رِيقِهِ. أَمَا وَالَّذِي نَفْسِي بِيَدِهِ، لَيُظْهِرَنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمَ عَلَيْكُمْ، لَيْسَ لَاتَهُمْ أَوْلَى بِالْحَقِّ مِنْكُمْ، وَلَكِنْ لِاسْرَاعِهِمْ إِلَى بَاطِلٍ صَاحِبِهِمْ، وَإِبْطَائِكُمْ عَنْ حَقِّي.

People are afraid of the oppression of their rulers while I fear the oppression of my subjects. I called you for war but you did not come. I warned you but you did not listen. I called you secretly as well as openly, but you did not respond. I gave you sincere counsel, but you did not accept it. Are you present like the absent, and slaves like masters?

I recite before you points of wisdom but you turn away from them, and I advise you with far reaching advice but you disperse away from it. I rouse you for jihad against the people of revolt but before I come to the end of my speech, I see you disperse like the sons of Saba.² You return to your places and deceive one another by your counsel. I straighten you in the morning but you are back to me in the evening as curved as the back of a bow. The sraightener has become weary while those to be straightened have become incorrigible.

وَلَقَدْ أَصْبَحَتِ الْأُمَّةُ تَخَافُ ظُلْمَ رُعَايَتِهَا، وَأَصْبَحْتُ أَخَافُ ظُلْمَ رِعْيَتِي. اسْتَنْفَرْتُكُمْ لِلْجِهَادِ فَلَمْ تَنْفَرُوا، وَأَسْمَعْتُكُمْ فَلَمْ تَسْمَعُوا، وَدَعَوْتُكُمْ سِرًّا وَجَهْرًا فَلَمْ تَسْتَجِيبُوا، وَنَصَحْتُ لَكُمْ فَلَمْ تَقْبَلُوا. شُهُودٌ كَعُيَّابٍ، وَعَبِيدٌ كَأَرْبَابٍ! أَتَلُوا عَلَيْكُمْ الْحِكْمَ فَتَنْفَرُونَ مِنْهَا، وَأَعْظَمْتُكُمْ بِالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْبَالِغَةِ فَتَتَفَرَّقُونَ عَنْهَا، وَأَحْنُتُكُمْ عَلَى جِهَادِ أَهْلِ الْبُعْيِ فَمَا آتَى عَلَى آخِرِ قَوْلِي حَتَّى أَرَائِكُمْ مُتَفَرِّقِينَ أَيَادِي سَبَا، تَرْجِعُونَ إِلَى مَجَالِسِكُمْ، وَتَتَحَادَعُونَ عَنْ مَوَاعِظِكُمْ، أَقْوَمُكُمْ عُذْوَةً، وَتَرْجِعُونَ إِلَيَّ عَشِيَّةً، كَظَهْرِ الْحَيَّةِ، عَجَزَ الْمُقْوَمُ، وَأَعْضَلَ الْمُقْوَمُ.

O those whose bodies are present but whose wits are absent, whose wishes are scattered, and whose rulers are afflicted by them. Your leader

obeys Allah but you disobey him while the leader of the people of Syria (ash-Sham) disobeys Allah but they obey him. By Allah, I wish Mu'awiyah exchanges with me like Dinars with Dirhams, so that he takes from me ten of you and gives me one from them.

أَيُّهَا الشَّاهِدَةُ أَبَدَانُهُمْ، الْعَائِيَةُ عَنْهُمْ عُقُوبُهُمْ، الْمُحْتَلِفَةُ أَهْوَاؤُهُمْ، الْمَيْتَلِي بِهَمِّ أَمْرَاؤُهُمْ، صَاحِبِكُمْ يُطِيعُ اللَّهَ وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْصُونَ، وَصَاحِبُ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ يَعْصِي اللَّهَ وَهُمْ يُطِيعُونَهُ، لَوَدِدْتُ وَاللَّهِ أَنَّ مُعَاوِيَةَ صَارَفَنِي بِكُمْ صَرَفَ الدِّينَارِ بِالدِّرْهِمِ، فَأَخَذَ مِنِّي عَشْرَةَ مِنْكُمْ وَأَعْطَانِي رَجُلًا مِنْهُمْ!

O people of Kufah, I have experienced in you three things and two others: you are deaf in spite of having ears, dumb in spite of speaking, and blind in spite of having eyes. You are neither true supporters in combat nor dependable brothers in distress. Your hands may be soiled with earth. O examples of those camels whose herdsman has disappeared, if they are collected together from one side they disperse from the other. By Allah, I see you in my imagination that if war becomes intense and action is in full swing you would run away from the son of Abi Talib like the woman who becomes naked in the front. I am certainly on clear guidance from my Lord (Allah) and on the path of my Prophet and I am on the right path which I adhere to regularly.

يَا أَهْلَ الْكُوفَةِ، مُنِيثٌ مِنْكُمْ بِثَلَاثٍ وَائْتِنَيْنِ: صُمٌّ ذُؤُوسَمَاعٍ، وَبُكْمٌ ذُؤُوكَلَامٍ، وَعُغْمِي ذُؤُوَابْصَارٍ، لَا أَحْرَاؤُ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ اللَّقَاءِ، وَلَا إِخْوَانُ ثِقَةٍ عِنْدَ الْبَلَاءِ! تَرَبَّتْ أَيْدِيكُمْ! يَا أَشْبَاهَ الْأَيْلِ غَابَ عَنْهَا رِعَايَتُهَا! كُلَّمَا جُمِعَتْ مِنْ جَانِبٍ تَفَرَّقَتْ مِنْ آخَرَ، وَاللَّهِ لَكَأَنَّيَ بِكُمْ فِيمَا إِخَالُ: لَوْ حَمَسَ الْوَعْيَى، وَحَمِيَ الضَّرَابُ، قَدِ انْفَرَجْتُمْ عَنِ ابْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ انْفِرَاجَ الْمَرْأَةِ عَنِ قُبْلَتِهَا، وَإِنِّي لَعَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّي، وَمِنْهَاجٍ مِنْ نَبِيِّي، وَإِنِّي لَعَلَى الطَّرِيقِ الْوَاضِحِ الْفَطْهُ لَفَطًا.

About the Household of the Holy Prophet

أهل البيت وأصحاب رسول الله

Look at the people of the Prophet's family. Adhere to their direction. Follow their footsteps because they would never let you out of guidance, and never throw you into destruction. If they sit down, you sit down, and if they rise up you rise up. Do not go ahead of them, as you would thereby go astray and go not lag behind of them as you would thereby be ruined.

انظُرُوا أَهْلَ بَيْتِ نَبِيِّكُمْ فَالزَّمُوا سَمْتَهُمْ، وَاتَّبِعُوا أَثَرَهُمْ فَلَنْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ هُدًى، وَلَنْ يُعِيدُوكُمْ فِي رَدًى، فَإِنْ لَبَدُوا فَالْبُدُوا، وَإِنْ نَهَضُوا فَانْهَضُوا، وَلَا تَسْبِقُوهُمْ فَتَضِلُّوا، وَلَا تَتَأَخَّرُوا عَنْهُمْ فَتَهْلِكُوا.

I have seen the companions of the Prophet but I do not find anyone resembling them. They began the day with dust on the hair and face (in hardship of life) and passed the night in prostration and standing in prayers. Sometimes they put down their foreheads and sometimes their cheeks. With

the recollection of their resurrection it seemed as though they stood on live coal. It seemed that in between their eyes there were signs like knees of goats, resulting from long prostrations. When Allah was mentioned their eyes flowed freely till their shirt collars were drenched. They trembled for fear of punishment and hope of reward as the tree trembles on the day of stormy wind.

لَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمْ أَصْحَابَ مُحَمَّدٍ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، فَمَا أَرَى أَحَدًا يُشَبِّهُهُمْ مِنْكُمْ! لَقَدْ كَانُوا يُضْبِحُونَ شِعْنًا غَيْرًا، قَدْ بَاثُوا سُجْدًا وَقِيَامًا، يُرَاوِحُونَ بَيْنَ جِبَاهِهِمْ وَخُدُودِهِمْ، وَيَقِفُونَ عَلَى مِثْلِ الْجُمُرِ مِنْ ذِكْرِ مَعَادِهِمْ! كَأَنَّ بَيْنَ أَعْيُنِهِمْ رَكَبَ الْمِعْزَى مِنْ طُولِ سُجُودِهِمْ! إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ هَمَلَتْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ حَتَّى تَبْلَّ جُيُوبَهُمْ، وَمَادُوا كَمَا يَمِيدُ الشَّجَرُ يَوْمَ الرِّيحِ الْعَاصِفِ، خَوْفًا مِنَ الْعِقَابِ، وَرَجَاءٍ لِلثَّوَابِ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 97

- (1) *Kitab Sulaym ibn Qays*, 110;
- (2) *al-Kulayni, al-Kafi*, II, 236;
- (3) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun*, II, 301;
- (4) *Abu Nu`aym, Hilyah*, I, 76;
- (5) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad*, 161;
- (6) *al-Mufid, al-Majalis*, 105;
- (7) *Sibt, Tadhkirah*, 137;
- (8) *Ibn `Asakir, Ta'rikh, biographical account of `Ali (A)*;
- (9) *al-Jahiz, al-Bayan*, II, 68;
- (10) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab*, II, 142;
- (11) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali*, * 62.

Notes

1. In the atmosphere that had been created soon after the Prophet the Ahlul Bayt (members of his family) had no course except to remain secluded as a result of which world has remained ignorant of their real qualities and unacquainted with their teachings and attainments, and to belittle them and keeping them away from authority has been considered as the greatest service to Islam. If `Uthman's open misdeeds had not given a chance to the Muslims to wake up and open their eyes there would have been no question of allegiance to Amir al-mu'minin and temporal authority would have retained the same course as it had so far followed. But all those who could be named for the purpose had no courage to come forward because of their own shortcomings while Mu`awiyah was sitting in his capital away from the centre. In these circumstances there was none except Amir al-mu'minin who could be looked at. Consequently people's eyes hovered around him and the same common people who, following the direction of the wind, had been swearing allegiance to others jumped at him for swearing allegiance. Nevertheless, this allegiance was not on the count that they regarded his Caliphate as from Allah and him as an Imam (Divine Leader) to obey whom was obligatory. It was rather under their own principles which were known as democratic or consultative. However, there was one group who was swearing allegiance to him as a religious obligation regarding his Caliphate as determined by Allah. Otherwise, the majority regarded him a ruler like the other Caliphs, and as regards precedence, on the fourth position, or at the level of the common men after the three caliphs. Since the people, the army, and the civil servants had been impressed by the beliefs and actions of the previous rulers and immersed in their ways whenever they found anything against their liking they fretted and frowned, evaded war and were ready to rise in disobedience and revolt. Further, just as among those who fought in jihad with the Prophet there were some seekers of this world and others of the next world, in the same way here

too there was no dearth of worldly men who were, in appearance, with Amir al-mu'minin but actually they had connections with Mu`awiyah who has promised some of them positions and had extended to others temptation of wealth. To hold them as Shi`ahs of Amir al-mu'minin and to blame Shi`ism for this reason is closing the eyes to facts, because the beliefs of these people would be the same as of those who regarded Amir al-mu'minin fourth in the series. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid throws light on the beliefs of these persons in clear words:

Whoever observes minutely the events during the period of Caliphate of Amir al-mu'minin would know that Amir al-mu'minin had been brought to bay because those who knew his real position were very few, and the swarming majority did not bear that belief about him which was obligatory to have. They gave precedence to the previous Caliphs over him and held that the criterion of precedence was Caliphate, and in this matter those coming later followed the predecessors, and argued that if the predecessors had not the knowledge that the previous Caliphs had precedence over Amir al-mu'minin they would not have preferred them to him. Rather, these people knew and took Amir al-mu'minin as a citizen and subject. Most of those who fought in his company did so on grounds of prestige or Arab partisanship, not on the ground of religion or belief. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol.7, p.72)

2. The progeny of Saba' ibn Yashjub ibn Ya`rub ibn Qahtan is known as the tribe of Saba'. When these people began to falsify prophets then to shake them Allah sent to them a flood of water by which their gardens were submerged and they left their houses and property to settle down in different cities. This proverb arose out of this event and it is now applied wherever people so disperse that there can be no hope of their joining together again.

Sermon 98: By Allah, they would continue like this...

A out the oppression of the Umayyads

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

يشير فيه إلى ظلم بني أمية

By Allah, they would continue like this till there would be left no unlawful act before Allah but they would make it lawful and no pledge but they would break it, and till there would remain no house of bricks or of woollen tents but their oppression would enter it. Their bad dealings would make them wretched, till two groups of crying complainants would rise, one would cry for his religion and the other for this world and the help of one of you to one of them would be like the help of a slave to his master, namely when he is present he obeys him, but when the master is away he backbites him. The highest among you in distress would be he who bear best belief about Allah. If Allah grants you safety accept it, and if you are put in trouble endure it, because surely

“(good) result is for the God-fearing” (7:128).

وَاللّٰهُ لَا يَزَالُونَ حَتّٰى لَا يَدْعُوا لِلّٰهِ مُحَرَّمًا اِلَّا اسْتَحْلُوْهُ، وَلَا عَقْدًا اِلَّا حَلُّوْهُ، حَتّٰى لَا يَبْقَىٰ
بَيْتٌ مَدْرٍ وَلَا وَبَرٍ اِلَّا دَخَلَهُ ظُلْمُهُمْ وَنَبَا بِهِ سُوْءُ رَعِيَّتِهِمْ، وَحَتّٰى يَفْقَمَ الْبَاكِيَانِ الْبَاكِيَانِ: بَاكٍ
يَبْكِي لِذِيْنِهِ، وَبَاكٍ يَبْكِي لِذُنُوبِهِ، وَحَتّٰى تَكُوْنَ نُصْرَةُ اَحَدِكُمْ مِنْ اَحَدِهِمْ كَنُصْرَةِ الْعَبْدِ مِنْ
سَيِّدِهِ، اِذَا شَهِدَ اطَاعَهُ، وَاِذَا غَابِ اعْتَابَهُ، وَحَتّٰى يَكُوْنَ اَعْظَمُكُمْ فِيْهَا عَنَاءً اَحْسَنُكُمْ بِاللّٰهِ
ظَنًّا، فَاِنْ اَتَاكُمْ اللّٰهُ بِعَافِيَةٍ فَاَقْبَلُوْا، وَاِنْ اِبْتَلَيْتُمْ فَاَصْبِرُوْا، فَاِنَّ الْعَاقِبَةَ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ).

Alternative Sources for Sermon 98

- (1) Ibn Qutaybah, al-Imamah, I, 151;
- (2) Sibt, Tadhkirah, 100;
- (3) al-Mufid, al-Irshad, 157.

Sermon 99: We praise Allah for what has happened...

About abstinence of the world and vicissitudes of time

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في التزهيد من الدنيا

We praise Allah for what has happened and seek His succour in our affairs for what is yet to happen, and we beg Him for safety in the faith just as we beg Him for safety in our bodies.

نَحْمَدُهُ عَلَى مَا كَانَ، وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ مِنْ أَمْرِنَا عَلَى مَا يَكُونُ، وَنَسْأَلُهُ الْمُعَافَاةَ فِي الْأَدْيَانِ، كَمَا نَسْأَلُهُ الْمُعَافَاةَ فِي الْأَبْدَانِ.

O creatures of Allah! I advise you to keep away from this world which is (shortly) to leave you even though you do not like its departure, and which would make your bodies old even though you would like to keep them fresh. Your example and its example is like the travellers who travel some distance and then as though they traverse it quickly or they aimed at a sign and reached it at once. How short is the distance to the aim if one heads towards it and reaches it. And how short is the stage of one who has only a day which he cannot exceed while a swift driver is driving him in this world till he departs from it.

أَوْصِيَكُمْ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ بِالرَّفْضِ لِهَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا التَّارِكَةِ لَكُمْ وَإِنْ لَمْ تُحِبُّوا تَرْكَهَا، وَالْمُبْلِيَةِ لِاجْسَامِكُمْ وَإِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ تَجْدِيدَهَا، فَإِنَّمَا مَثَلُكُمْ وَمَثَلُهَا كَسَفَرِ (1) سَلَكَوا سَبِيلًا فَكَأَنَّهُمْ قَدْ قَطَعُوهُ، وَأُمُومًا (2) عَلِمًا فَكَأَنَّهُمْ قَدْ بَلَغُوهُ، وَكَمْ عَسَى الْمُنْجِرِي إِلَى الْعَايَةِ (3) أَنْ يَجْرِيَ إِلَيْهَا حَتَّى يَبْلُغَهَا! وَمَا عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونَ بَقَاءُ مَنْ لَهُ يَوْمٌ لَا يَعُدُّهُ، وَطَالِبٌ حَثِيثٌ يَحْدُوهُ (1) فِي الدُّنْيَا حَتَّى يُفَارِقَهَا!

So do not hanker after worldly honour and its pride, and do not feel happy over its beauties and bounties nor wail over its damages and misfortunes because its honour and pride will end while its beauty and bounty will perish, and its damages and misfortunes will pass away. Every period in it has an end and every living being in it is to die. Is not there for you a warning in the relics of the predecessors and an eye opener and lesson in your fore-fathers, provided you understand?

فَلَا تَنَافَسُوا فِي عِزِّ الدُّنْيَا وَفَخْرِهَا، وَلَا تَعْجَبُوا بِزَيْنَتِهَا وَنَعِيمِهَا، وَلَا تَجْرَعُوا مِنْ ضَرَائِهَا وَبُؤْسِهَا، فَإِنَّ عِزَّهَا وَفَخْرَهَا إِلَى انْقِطَاعٍ، وَزَيْنَتُهَا وَنَعِيمُهَا إِلَى زَوَالٍ، وَضَرَائِهَا وَبُؤْسِهَا إِلَى نَفَادٍ، وَكُلُّ مُدَّةٍ فِيهَا إِلَى انْتِهَاءٍ، وَكُلُّ حَيٍّ فِيهَا إِلَى فَنَاءٍ. أَوَلَيْسَ لَكُمْ فِي آثَارِ الْأَوَّلِينَ مُرَدَجْرٌ، وَفِي آبَائِكُمُ الْمَاضِينَ تَبَصِيرَةٌ وَمُعْتَبَرٌ، إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ!

Do you not see that your predecessors do not come back and the surviving followers do not remain? Do you not observe that the people of

the world pass mornings and evenings in different conditions? Thus, (somewhere) the dead is wept for, someone is being condoled, someone is prostrate in distress, someone is enquiring about the sick, someone is passing his last breath, someone is hankering after the world while death is looking for him, someone is forgetful but he is not forgotten (by death), and on the footsteps of the predecessors walk the survivors.

أَوَّم تَرَوْا إِلَى الْمَاضِيْنَ مِنْكُمْ لَا يَرْجِعُونَ، وَإِلَى الْخُلْفِ الْبَاقِي لَا يَنْقُذُونَ! أَوْلَسْتُمْ تَرَوْنَ أَهْلَ الدُّنْيَا يُمْسُونَ وَيُضْبِحُونَ عَلَى أَحْوَالِ شَيْءٍ: فَمَيِّتٌ يُنْكِي، وَآخِرٌ يُعْزِي، وَصَرِيْعٌ مُبْتَلِيٌّ، وَعَائِدٌ يَعُودُ، وَآخِرٌ بِنَفْسِهِ يَجُودُ، وَطَالِبٌ لِّلدُّنْيَا وَالْمَوْتُ يَطْلُبُهُ، وَعَافٍ لَّيْسَ بِمَغْفُولٍ عَنْهُ; وَعَلَى أَثَرِ الْمَاضِي مَا يَمْضِي الْبَاقِي!

Beware! At the time of committing evil deeds remember the destroyer of joys, the spoiler of pleasures, and the killer of desires (namely death). Seek assistance of Allah for fulfilment of His obligatory rights, and for (thanking Him) for His countless bounties and obligations.

أَلَا فَادْكُرُوا هَادِمَ اللَّذَاتِ، وَمُنْعَصَ الشَّهَوَاتِ، وَقَاطِعَ الْأُمْنِيَّاتِ، عِنْدَ الْمَسَاوِرَةِ لِلْأَعْمَالِ الْقَبِيْحَةِ، وَاسْتَعِينُوا اللَّهَ عَلَى آدَاءِ وَاجِبِ حَقِّهِ، وَمَا لَا يُخْصَى مِنْ أَعْدَادِ نِعْمِهِ وَإِحْسَانِهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 99

- (1) *Al-Saduq, Ma`ani, 184;*
- (2) *al-Saduq, Man la yahduruh, I, 270;*
- (3) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, II, 50;*
- (4) *al-Tabarsi, Mishkat, 107.*

Sermon 100: Praise be to Allah Who spreads His bounty...

About the Holy Prophet and his Descendants

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في رسول الله وأهل بيته

Praise be to Allah Who spreads His bounty throughout the creation, and extends His hand of generosity among them. We praise Him in all His affairs and seek His assistance for fulfilment of His rights. We stand witness that there is no god except He and that Muhammad (p.b.u.h.a.h.p.) is His slave and Prophet. He sent him to manifest His commands and speak about His remembrance. Consequently, he fulfilled it with trustworthiness, and he passed away while on the right path.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ النَّاشِرِ فِي الْخَلْقِ فَضْلَهُ، وَالْبَاسِطِ فِيهِمْ بِالْجُودِ يَدَهُ، نَحْمَدُهُ فِي جَمِيعِ أُمُورِهِ، وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ عَلَى رِعَايَةِ حُقُوقِهِ، وَنَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، أَرْسَلَهُ بِأَمْرِهِ صَادِعًا، وَبِذِكْرِهِ نَاطِقًا، فَأَدَّى أَمِينًا، وَمَضَى رَشِيدًا،

He left among us the standard of right. Whoever goes further from it goes out of Faith, whoever lags behind it is ruined. Whoever sticks to it would join (the right). Its guide is short of speech, slow of steps, and quick when he rises. When you have bent your necks before him and pointed towards him with your fingers his death would occur and would take him away.

They would live after him as long as Allah wills, till Allah brings out for you one who would collect you together and fuse you after diffusion. Do not place expectations in one who does not¹ come forward and do not lose hope in one who is veiled, because it is possible that one of the two feet of the veiled one may slip while the other may remain sticking, till both return to position and stick.

وَحَلَفَ فِينَا رَايَةَ الْحَقِّ، مَنْ تَقَدَّمَهَا مَرَقَ، وَمَنْ تَخَلَّفَ عَنْهَا زَهَقَ، وَمَنْ لَزِمَهَا لَحِقَ، دَلِيلُهَا مَكِيثُ الْكَلَامِ، بَطِيءُ الْقِيَامِ سَرِيعُ إِذَا قَامَ، فَإِذَا أَنْتُمْ أَنْتُمْ لَهُ رِقَابِكُمْ، وَأَشْرْتُمْ إِلَيْهِ بِأَصَابِعِكُمْ، جَاءَهُ الْمَوْتُ فَذَهَبَ بِهِ، فَلَبِثْتُمْ بَعْدَهُ مَا سَاءَ اللَّهُ حَتَّى يُطْلِعَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ مَنْ يَجْمَعُكُمْ وَيَضُمُّ نَشْرُكُمْ، فَلَا تَطْمَعُوا فِي غَيْرِ مُقْبِلٍ، وَلَا تَيَاسُوا مِنْ مُدْبِرٍ، فَإِنَّ الْمُدْبِرَ عَسَى أَنْ تَزُلَّ بِهِ إِحْدَى قَائِمَتِيهِ، وَتَثْبُتَ الْأُخْرَى، فَتَرْجِعَا حَتَّى تَثْبُتَا جَمِيعًا.

Beware! The example of the descendants (Ali) of Muhammad - peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants - is like that of stars in the sky. When one star sets another one rises. So you are in a position that Allah's blessings on you have been perfected and He has shown you what you used to wish for.

أَلَا إِنَّ مَثَلَ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ (ﷺ)، كَمَثَلِ نُجُومِ السَّمَاءِ: إِذَا حَوَى نَجْمٌ طَلَعَ نَجْمٌ، فَكَأَنَّكُمْ قَدْ
تَكَامَلْتُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِيكُمْ الصَّنَائِعُ، وَأَتَاكُمْ مَا كُنْتُمْ تَأْمَلُونَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 100

See `Abd al-Zahra', II, 198-199.

Notes

1. The implication is that if for the time being your expectations are not being fulfilled, you should not be disappointed. It is possible matters may improve, the impediments in the way of improvement may be removed and matters may be settled as you wish.

Sermon 101: Praise be to God, the First ...

About the vicissitudes of time

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وهي من خطبته التي تشتمل على ذكر الملاحم

Praise to Allah, Who is the First before every first and the Last after every last. His Firstness necessitates that there is no (other) first before Him and His Lastness necessitates that there is no other last after Him. I do stand witness that there is no god but Allah both openly as well as secretly, with heart as well as with tongue.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْأَوَّلِ قَبْلَ كُلِّ أَوَّلٍ، وَالْآخِرِ بَعْدَ كُلِّ آخِرٍ، بِأَوْلَيْتِهِ وَجَبَ أَنْ لَا أَوَّلَ لَهُ، وَبِآخِرِيَّتِهِ وَجَبَ أَنْ لَا آخِرَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ شَهَادَةً يُؤَافِقُ فِيهَا السِّرُّ الْأَعْلَانُ، وَالْقَلْبُ اللَّسَانُ.

O people, do not commit the crime of opposing me, do not be seduced into disobeying me and do not wink at each other with eyes when you hear me. By Allah, Who germinates the seed and blows the wind, whatever I convey to you is from the Prophet. Neither the conveyor (of Allah's message, i.e. the Prophet) lied nor the hearer misunderstood.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، لَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شِقَاقِي، وَلَا يَسْتَهْوِينَكُمْ عَصِيَانِي، وَلَا تَتَرَامَوْا بِالْأَبْصَارِ عِنْدَ مَا تَسْمَعُونَهُ مِنِّي.

فَوَالَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ، وَبَرَأَ النَّسَمَةَ، إِنَّ الَّذِي أَنْبَأَكُمْ بِهِ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، مَا كَذَبَ الْمُبَلِّغُ، وَلَا جَهَلَ السَّامِعُ،

Well, it is as though I see a misguided man¹ who is shouting in Syria (ash-Sham) and has put his banners in the outskirts of Kufah. When his mouth would be fully opened, his recalcitrance would become intense and his steps on earth would become heavy (and tyrannical) then the disorder (so created) would cut the people with its teeth and war would rage with (all) its waves, days would become severe and night full of toil.

So when the crops grows and stands on stalks, its foam shoots forth and its lightning shines, the banners of misguiding rebellion would fire up and shoot forth like darkening night and surging sea. This and how many other storms would rend Kufah and gales would sweep over it, and shortly heads would clash with heads, the standing crop would be harvested and the harvest would be smashed.

لَكَأَنِّي أَنْظُرُ إِلَى ضَلِيلٍ قَدْ نَعَقَ بِالشَّامِ، وَفَحَصَ بِرَايَاتِهِ فِي ضَوَاحِي كُوفَانَ. فَإِذَا فَعَرَتْ فَاعْرَتْهُ، وَاشْتَدَّتْ شَكِيمَتُهُ، وَتَقَلَّتْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَطَأْتُهُ، عَصَّتِ الْفِتْنَةُ أَبْنَاءَهَا بِأَنْبِيَائِهَا، وَمَاجَتِ الْحَرْبُ بِأَمْوَاجِهَا، وَبَدَأَ مِنَ الْأَيَّامِ كُلوْحُهَا، وَمِنَ اللَّيَالِي كُدُوْحُهَا. فَإِذَا بَنَعَ زَرْعُهُ، وَقَامَ عَلَى

يَنْعِيهِ، وَهَدَّرَتْ شَفَاثِفُهُ، وَبَرَقَتْ بَوَارِقُهُ، عُقِدَتْ رَايَاتُ الْفِتَنِ الْمُعْضِلَةِ، وَأَقْبَلْنَ اللَّيْلَ الْمُظْلِمَ،
وَالْبَحْرَ الْمُلتَطِّمَ. هَذَا، وَكَمْ يَحْرِقُ الْكُوفَةَ مِنْ قَاصِفٍ، وَيَمُرُّ عَلَيْهَا مِنْ عَاصِفٍ! وَعَنْ قَلِيلٍ
تَلْتَفُ الْقُرُونُ بِالْقُرُونِ، وَيُخْصَدُ الْقَائِمُ، وَيُحْطَمُ الْمَحْصُودُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 101

- (1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 48;*
- (2) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, (b.j.r);*
- (3) *al-Saduq, al-'Amali;*
- (4) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 329;*
- (5) *al-Karajiki, Ma`dan, 226;*
- (6) *al-Bayhaqi, al-Mahasin, 41;*
- (7) *al-Jahiz, al-Hayawan, II, 90.*

Notes

1. Some people have taken this to refer to Mu`awiyah and others to `Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan.

Sermon 102: On that day Allah will collect...

On the Day of Judgement

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

تجري هذا المجرى

وفيها ذكر يوم القيامة وأحوال الناس المقبلة

On that day Allah will collect on it the anteriors and the posteriors, to stand in obedience for exaction of accounts and for award of recompense for deeds. Sweat would flow upto their mouths like reins while the earth would be trembling under them. In the best condition among them would be he who has found a resting place for both his feet and an open place for his breath.

وَذَلِكَ يَوْمٌ يَجْمَعُ اللَّهُ فِيهِ الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ لِنَقَاشِ الْحِسَابِ وَجَزَاءِ الْأَعْمَالِ، حُضُوعاً، قِيَاماً، قَدْ أَجْمَعُهُمُ الْعَرْقُ وَرَجَعَتْ بِهِمُ الْأَرْضُ فَأَحْسَنُهُمْ حَالاً مَنْ وَجَدَ لِقَدَمَيْهِ مَوْضِعاً، وَلِنَفْسِهِ مَتَسَعاً.

A part of the same sermon about future troubles (fitan)

منها: في حال مقبلة على الناس

The troubles are like a dark night. Horses would not stand for (facing) them nor would their banners turn back. They would approach in full reins and ready with saddles. Their leader would be driving them and the rider would be exerting (them). The trouble-mongers are a people whose attacks are severe. Those who would fight them for the sake of Allah would be a people who are low in the estimation of the proud, unknown in the earth but well known on the sky. Woe to you O Basrah, when an army of Allah's infliction would face upon you without (raising) dust of cries. Your inhabitants would then face bloody death and dire hunger.

فَتَرْتُ كَقَطْعِ اللَّيْلِ الْمُظْلِمِ لَا تَقُومُ لَهَا قَائِمَةٌ، وَلَا تُرَدُّ لَهَا رَايَةٌ، تَأْتِيكُمْ مَرْمُومَةٌ مَرْحُولَةٌ يَخْفِزُهَا قَائِدُهَا وَيَجْهَدُهَا رَاكِبُهَا، أَهْلُهَا قَوْمٌ شَدِيدٌ كَلْبُهُمْ، قَلِيلٌ سَلْبُهُمْ يُجَاهِدُهُمْ فِي اللَّهِ قَوْمٌ أَدْلَةٌ عِنْدَ الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ، فِي الْأَرْضِ مَجْهُولُونَ، وَفِي السَّمَاءِ مَعْرُوفُونَ. فَوَيْلٌ لَكَ يَا بَصْرَةَ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ، مِنْ جَيْشٍ مِنْ نَفَمِ اللَّهِ! لَا رَهَجَ لَهُ، وَلَا حَسَّ، وَسَيَبْتَلِي أَهْلَكَ بِالْمَوْتِ الْأَحْمَرِ، وَالْجُوعِ الْأَعْبَرِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 102

- (1) Ibn Qutaybah, *al-'Imamah*, I, 153;
- (2) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf*, 131;
- (3) *al-Kulayni, Furu` al-Kafi*, IV, 31;
- (4) *al-Mufid, al-Majalis*, 95;
- (5) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali*, I, 197.

Sermon 103: O people, look at the world ...

About abstemiousness and fear of Allah

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في التزهيد في الدنيا

O people! Look at the world like those who abstain from it, and turn away from it. By Allah, it would shortly turn out its inhabitants and cause grief to the happy and the safe. That which turns and goes away from it never returns and that which is likely to come about is not known or anticipated. Its joy is mingled with grief. Herein men's firmness inclines towards weakness and languidness. The majority of what pleases you here should not mislead you because that which would help you would be little.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، انظُرُوا إِلَى الدُّنْيَا نَظَرَ الرَّاهِدِينَ فِيهَا، الصَّادِقِينَ عَنْهَا؛ فَإِنَّهَا وَاللَّهِ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ تُزِيلُ النَّاسِيَةَ السَّاكِنِينَ، وَتَفْجَعُ الْمُتَشَرِّفَ الْأَمِنَ، لَا يَرْجِعُ مَا تَوَلَّى مِنْهَا فَأَذْبَرَ، وَلَا يُدْرَى مَا هُوَ آتٍ مِنْهَا فَيَنْتَظِرُ. سُورُهَا مَشُوبٌ بِالْحُزْنِ، وَجِلْدُ الرَّجَالِ فِيهَا إِلَى الضَّعْفِ وَالْوَهْنِ فَلَا يُعْرَتُكُمْ كَثْرَةُ مَا يُعْجِبُكُمْ فِيهَا لِقَلَّةِ مَا يَصْحَبُكُمْ مِنْهَا

Allah may shower His mercy on him who ponders and takes lesson thereby, and when he takes lesson he achieves enlightenment. Whatever is present in this world would shortly not exist, while whatever is to exist in the next world is already in existence. Every countable thing would pass away. Every anticipation should be taken to be coming up and every thing that is to come up should be taken as just near.

رَحِمَ اللَّهُ امْرَأً تَفَكَّرَ فَأَعْتَبَرَ، وَاعْتَبَرَ فَأَبْصَرَ، فَكَانَ مَا هُوَ كَائِنٌ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا عَنْ قَلِيلٍ لَمْ يَكُنْ، وَكَانَ مَا هُوَ كَائِنٌ مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ لَمْ يَزَلْ، وَكُلُّ مَعْدُودٍ مُنْقَضٍ، وَكُلُّ مُتَوَقَّعٍ آتٍ، وَكُلُّ آتٍ قَرِيبٌ دَانَ.

A part of the same sermon on the attributes of a learned person

منها: في صفة العالم

Learned is he who knows his worth. It is enough for a man to remain ignorant if he knows not his worth. Certainly, the most hated man with Allah is he whom Allah has left for his own self. He goes astray from the right path, and moves without a guide. If he is called to the plantation of this world he is active, but if he is called to the plantation of the next world he is slow. As though what he is active for is obligatory upon him whereas in whatever he is slow was not required of him.

العالمُ مَنْ عَرَفَ قَدْرَهُ، وَكَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ جَهْلًا أَلَّا يَعْرِفَ قَدْرَهُ؛ وَإِنَّ مِنْ أْبْعَصَ الرَّجَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ لَعَبْدٌ وَكَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَى نَفْسِهِ، جَائِزٌ عَنْ قَصْدِ السَّبِيلِ، سَائِرٌ بَعِيرٌ دَلِيلٌ، إِنْ دُعِيَ إِلَى حَرْثِ الدُّنْيَا

عَمَلٍ، أَوْ إِلَى حَرْثِ الْأَخِرَةِ كَسِيلٍ! كَأَنَّ مَا عَمِلَ لَهُ وَاجِبٌ عَلَيْهِ، وَكَأَنَّ مَا وَنَى فِيهِ سَاقِطٌ عَنْهُ!

A part of the same sermon concerning future times

منها: في آخر الزمان

There would be a time wherein only a sleeping (inactive) believer would be safe (such that) if he is present he is not recognised but if he is absent he is not sought after. These are the lamps of guidance and banners of night journeys. They do not spread calumnies nor divulge secrets, nor slander. They are those for whom Allah opens the doors of His mercy and keeps off from them the hardships of His chastisement.

وَذَلِكَ زَمَانٌ لَا يَنْجُو فِيهِ إِلَّا كُلُّ مُؤْمِنٍ نُؤْمَةٍ إِنْ شَهِدَ لَمْ يُعْرَفْ، وَإِنْ غَابَ لَمْ يُفْتَقَدْ،
أَوْلَيْكَ مَصَابِيحُ الْهُدَى، وَأَعْلَامُ السُّرَى لَيْسُوا بِالْمَسَايِحِ وَلَا الْمَذَايِعِ الْبُدْرُ أَوْلَيْكَ يَفْتَحُ اللَّهُ
لَهُمْ أَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِهِ، وَيَكْشِفُ عَنْهُمْ ضُرَاءَ نِقْمَتِهِ

O people! A time will come to you when Islam would be capsized as a pot is capsized with all its contents. O people, Allah has protected you from that He might be hard on you but He has not spared you from being put on trial. Allah the Sublimest of all speakers has said:

Verily in this are signs and We do only try (the people). (Qur'an, 23:30)
أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، سَيَأْتِي عَلَيْكُمْ زَمَانٌ يُكْفَأُ فِيهِ الْأَسْلَامُ، كَمَا يُكْفَأُ الْأَنْاءُ بِمَا فِيهِ. أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ،
إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَعَادَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْ يَجُورَ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَلَمْ يُعِدْكُمْ مِنْ أَنْ يَبْتَلِيَكُمْ، وَقَدْ قَالَ جَلَّ مِنْ قَائِلٍ:
(إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لآيَاتٍ وَإِنْ كُنَّا لَمُبْتَلِينَ).

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: As regards Amir al-mu'minin's words "kullu mu'minin nuwamah" (every sleeping believer), he implies thereby one who is talked of little and causes no evil. And the word "al-masayih" is the plural of "misyah". He is one who spreads trouble among people through evils and calumnies. And the word "al-madhay" is the plural of "midhya". He is one who on hearing of an evil about some one spreads it and shouts about it. And "al-budhur" is the plural of "badhur". He is one who excels in foolishness and speaks rubbish.

قال السيد الشريف: أما قوله (عليه السلام): «كُلُّ مُؤْمِنٍ نُؤْمَةٍ» فإنما أراد به: الخامل الذكر القليل الشر. والمساييح: جمع مسياح، وهو: الذي يسيح بين الناس بالفساد والنمائم. والمذاييع: جمع مذايع، وهو: الذي إذا سمع لغيره بفاحشة أذاعها، ونوّه بها. والبُدْرُ: جمع بُدْرٍ وهو: الذي يكثر سفهه ويلغو منطقته.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 103

- (1) *Al-Kulayni, Rawdah, 139;*
- (2) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 143;*
- (3) *al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, II, 225;*
- (4) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, II, 352;*

- (5) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi` , I, 219;*
- (6) *Ibn Talhah, Matalib, I, 202;*
- (7) *al-Qadi al-Quda`i, Dustur, 48;*
- (8) *al-Khuza`i, al-Fitan, see (9)*
- (9) *Ibn Tawus, al-Malahim, 27;*
- (10) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, V, 131.*

Sermon 104: God Almighty sent Muhammad ...

About the condition of the people before the proclamation of prophethood and the Prophet's performance in spreading his message

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

Certainly Allah Almighty sent Muhammad (S) as Prophet while no one among the Arabs read the Book nor claimed prophethood or revelation. He had to fight those who disobeyed him in company with those who followed him, leading them towards their salvation and hastening with them lest death overtook them. When any weary person sighed or a distressed one stopped he stood at him till he got him his aim, except the worst in whom there was not virtue at all. Eventually he showed them their goal and carried them to their places (of deliverance). Consequently, their affairs moved on and their hand-mill began to rotate (i.e. position gained strength), their spears got straightened.

أَمَا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ بَعَثَ مُحَمَّدًا (صلى الله عليه وآله)، وَلَيْسَ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْعَرَبِ يَقْرَأُ كِتَابًا، وَلَا يَدْعِي نُبُوَّةً وَلَا وَحْيًا، فَفَاتَلَ بِمَنْ أَطَاعَهُ مِنْ عَصَاهُ، يَسُوقُهُمْ إِلَى مَنَاجِيهِمْ، وَيُبَادِرُ بِهِمُ السَّاعَةَ أَنْ تَنْزِلَ بِهِمْ، يَحْسِرُ الْحَسِيرُ، وَيَقِفُ الْكَسِيرُ فَيَقِيمُ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّى يُلْحِقَهُ غَايَتُهُ، إِلَّا هَالِكًا لَا خَيْرَ فِيهِ، حَتَّى أَرَاهُمْ مَنَاجِيهِمْ وَبَوَائِهِمْ مَحَلَّتُهُمْ، فَاسْتَدَارَتْ رِحَاهُمْ، وَاسْتَقَامَتْ قَنَاثُهُمْ .

By Allah, I was among their rear-guard till they turned back on their sides and were flocked in their rope. I never showed weakness or lack of courage, nor did I betray or become languid. By Allah, I shall split the wrong till I extract right from its flanks.

وَإِيْمُ اللَّهِ، لَقَدْ كُنْتُ مِنْ سَاقَتِهَا حَتَّى تَوَلَّتْ بِحَدَائِيرِهَا، وَاسْتَوَسَّتْ فِي قِيَادِهَا، مَا ضَعُفْتُ، وَلَا جُبْنْتُ، وَلَا خُنْتُ، وَلَا وَهَنْتُ، وَإِيْمُ اللَّهِ، لَا بُرْهَانَ الْبَاطِلِ حَتَّى أُخْرِجَ الْحَقَّ مِنْ خَاصِرَتِهِ!

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: I have quoted a selected part of this sermon before, but since I have found in the narration that this part differs from the previous one, more or less, I deemed it necessary to quote it again here.

قال السيد الشريف الرضي: وقد تقدم مختار هذه الخطبة، إلا أنني وجدتها في هذه الرواية على خلاف ما سبق من زيادة ونقصان، فأوجبت الحال إثباتها ثانية.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 104

(1) *Al-Mufid, al-'Irshad*, 154;

(2) *al-Nasa'i, al-Khasa'is*, 70.

Sermon 105: Then Allah sent Muhammad ...

In eulogy of the Holy Prophet

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في بعض صفات الرسول الكريم وتهديد بني أمية وعظة الناس

Then Allah sent Muhammad (S) as a witness, giver of good tidings and warner, the best in the universe as a child and the most chaste as a grown up man, the purest of the purified in conduct, the most generous of those who are approached for generosity.

حَتَّى بَعَثَ اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدًا (ﷺ)، شَهِيدًا، وَبَشِيرًا، وَنَذِيرًا، حَيْرَ الْبَرِيَّةِ طِفْلًا، وَأَنْجَبَهَا كَهْلًا،
أَطْهَرَ الْمُطَهَّرِينَ شَيْمَةً، وَأَجْوَدَ الْمُسْتَمْطَرِينَ دِيمَةً

About the Umayyads

بنو أمية

This world did not appear sweet to you in its pleasures and you did not secure milk from its udders except after having met it when its nose-rein was trailing and its leather girth was loose. For certain people its unlawful items were like bent branches (laden with fruit) while its lawful items were far away, not available.

By Allah, you would find it like a long shade upto a fixed time. So the earth is with you without let or hindrance and your hands in it are extended while the hands of the leaders are held away from you. Your swords are hanging over them while their swords are held away from you.

فَمَا اخْلَوْلَتْ الدُّنْيَا لَكُمْ فِي لَذَّتْهَا، وَلَا تَمَكَّنْتُمْ مِنْ رِضَاعِ اخْلَافِهَا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا
صَادَفْتُمُوهَا جَائِلًا خِطَامُهَا قَلِقًا وَضِيئُهَا، قَدْ صَارَ حَرَامُهَا عِنْدَ أَقْوَامٍ بِمَنْزِلَةِ السِّدْرِ الْمَحْضُودِ
وَخَالَهَا بَعِيدًا غَيْرَ مَوْجُودٍ، وَصَادَفْتُمُوهَا، وَاللَّهِ، ظِلًّا مَمْدُودًا إِلَى أَجْلِ مَعْدُودٍ، فَالْأَرْضُ لَكُمْ
شَاغِرَةٌ وَأَيْدِيكُمْ فِيهَا مَبْسُوطَةٌ، وَأَيْدِي الْفَادَةِ عَنْكُمْ مَكْفُوفَةٌ، وَسُيُوفُكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ مَسْلُطَةٌ،
وَسُيُوفُهُمْ عَنْكُمْ مَقْبُوضَةٌ .

Beware that for every blood (that is shed) there is an avenger and for every right there is a claimant. The avenger for our blood is like the judge for his own claim, and it is Allah who is such that if one seeks Him, then He does not disappoint him, and one who runs away from Him cannot escape Him. I swear by Allah, O Banu Umayyah, shortly you will see it (i.e. your possession) in the hands of others and in the house of your enemy. Know that the best looking eye is that whose sight catches virtue and know that the best hearing ear is that which hears good advice and accepts it.

أَلَا إِنَّ لِكُلِّ دَمٍ نَائِرًا، وَلِكُلِّ حَقٍّ طَالِبًا، وَإِنَّ النَّائِرَ فِي دِمَائِنَا كَالْحَاكِمِ فِي حَقِّ نَفْسِهِ، وَهُوَ
اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا يُعْجِزُهُ مَنْ طَلَبَ، وَلَا يَفُوتُهُ مَنْ هَرَبَ. فَأُقْسِمُ بِاللَّهِ، يَا بَنِي أُمَيَّةَ، عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ

لَتَعْرِفَنَّهَا فِي أَيِّدِي غَيْرِكُمْ وَفِي دَارِ عَدُوِّكُمْ! أَلَا إِنَّ أَبْصَرَ الْأَبْصَارِ مَا نَعَدَ فِي الْخَيْرِ طَرَفُهُ! أَلَا إِنَّ
أَسْمَعَ الْأَسْمَاعِ مَا وَعَى التَّنْذِيرَ وَقَبِيلَهُ!

Exhortation (About the functions of the Imams)

وعظ الناس

O people! Secure light from the flame of lamps of the preacher who follows what he preaches and draw water from the spring which has been cleaned of dirt.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، اسْتَصْبِحُوا مِنْ شُعْلَةِ مَصْبَاحٍ وَعِظْ مُتَعِظٌ، وَامْتَاخُوا مِنْ صَفْوِ عَيْنٍ قَدْ رُوِّقَتْ
مِنَ الْكَدْرِ.

O creatures of Allah, do not rely on your ignorance, do not be obedient to your desires, because he who stays at this place is like one who stays on the brink of a bank undermined by water carrying ruin on his back from one portion to the other following his opinion which he changes (one after the other). He wants to make adhere what cannot adhere and to bring together what cannot keep together. So fear Allah and do not place your complaints before him who cannot redress your grievance, nor undo with his opinion what has been made obligatory for you.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، لَا تَرْكَبُوا إِلَى جَهَالَتِكُمْ، وَلَا تَتَّقَادُوا لِأَهْوَائِكُمْ، فَإِنَّ النَّازِلَ بِهَذَا الْمَنْزِلِ نَازِلٌ
بِشَقٍّ جُرْفٍ هَارٍ، يَنْقُلُ الرَّدَى عَلَى ظَهْرِهِ مِنْ مَوْضِعٍ إِلَى مَوْضِعٍ، لِرَأْيٍ يُجَدِّدُهُ بَعْدَ رَأْيٍ، يُرِيدُ
أَنْ يُلْصِقَ مَا لَا يَلْتَصِقُ، وَيُقَرِّبَ مَا لَا يَتَقَارَبُ! فَاللَّهُ اللَّهُ أَنْ تَشْكُوا إِلَيَّ مَنْ لَا يُشْكِي
شَجْوَكُمْ، وَلَا يَنْفُضُ بِرَأْيِهِ مَا قَدْ أَبْرَمَ لَكُمْ.

Certainly, there is no obligation on the Imam except what has been devolved on him from Allah, namely to convey warnings, to exert in good advice, to revive the sunnah, to enforce penalties on those liable to them and to issue shares to the deserving. So hasten towards knowledge before its vegetation dries up and before you turn yourselves away from seeking knowledge from those who have it. Desist others from the unlawful and abstain from it yourself, because you have been commanded to abstain (yourself) before abstaining (others).

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ عَلَى الْأَمَامِ إِلَّا مَا حَمَلَ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّهِ: الْأَبْلَغُ فِي الْمَوْعِظَةِ، وَالْاجْتِهَادُ فِي
التَّصْبِيحِ، وَالْأَخْيَاءُ لِلسُّنَّةِ، وَإِقَامَةُ الْحُدُودِ عَلَى مُسْتَحَقِّيهَا، وَإِصْدَارُ السُّهُمَانِ عَلَى أَهْلِهَا.
فَبَادِرُوا الْعِلْمَ مِنْ قَبْلِ تَصْوِيحِ نَبِيِّهِ، وَمَنْ قَبِلَ أَنْ تُشْعَلُوا بِأَنْفُسِكُمْ عَنْ مُسْتَتَارِ الْعِلْمِ مِنْ عِنْدِ
أَهْلِهِ، وَأَنْهَوْا عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَتَنَاهَوْا عَنْهُ، فَإِنَّمَا أُمِرْتُمْ بِالنَّهْيِ بَعْدَ التَّنَاهِي!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 105

(1) *Al-Mufid, al-Irshad, 160;*

(2) *Ali ibn Ibrahim al-Qummi, Tafsir, I, 384.*

Sermon 106: Praise belong to Allah, who established Islam...

About Islam

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها بيّن فضل الاسلام ويذكر الرسول الكريم ثم يلوم أصحابه

Praise belong to Allah, who established Islam and made it easy for those who approach it and gave strength to its columns against any one who tries to overpower it. So Allah made it (a source of) peace for him who clings to it, safety for him who enters it, argument for him who speaks about it, witness for him who fights with its help, light for him who seeks light from it, understanding for him who provides it, sagacity for him who exerts, a sign (of guidance) for him who perceives, sight for him who resolves, lesson for him who seeks advice, salvation for him who testifies, confidence for him who trusts, pleasure for him who entrusts, and shield for him who endures.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي شَرَعَ الْأِسْلَامَ فَسَهَّلَ شَرَائِعَهُ لِمَنْ وَرَدَهُ، وَأَعَزَّ أَرْكَانَهُ عَلَى مَنْ غَالَبَهُ، فَجَعَلَهُ أَمْنًا لِمَنْ عَلِقَهُ، وَسَلْمًا لِمَنْ دَخَلَهُ، وَبُرْهَانًا لِمَنْ تَكَلَّمَ بِهِ، وَشَاهِدًا لِمَنْ خَاصَمَ بِهِ، وَنُورًا لِمَنْ اسْتَصْنَاءَ بِهِ، وَفَهْمًا لِمَنْ عَقَلَ، وَلُبًّا لِمَنْ تَدَبَّرَ، وَآيَةً لِمَنْ تَوَسَّسَ، وَتَبْصِيرَةً لِمَنْ عَزَمَ، وَعِبْرَةً لِمَنْ اتَّعَطَّ، وَنَجَاةً لِمَنْ صَدَّقَ، وَثِقَةً لِمَنْ تَوَكَّلَ، وَرَاحَةً لِمَنْ فَوَّضَ، وَجَنَّةً لِمَنْ صَبَرَ.

It is the brightest of all paths, the clearest of all passages. It has dignified minarets, bright highways, burning laps, prestigious field of activity, and high objective. It has a collection of race horses. It is approached eagerly. Its riders are honourable. Testimony (of Allah, Prophet etc.) is its way, good deeds are its minarets, death is its extremity, this world is its race-course, the Day of Judgement is its horses and Paradise is its point of approach.

فَهُوَ أَبْلَجُ الْمَنَاهِجِ وَ أَوْضَحُ الْوَلَائِحِ مُشْرِفُ الْمَنَارِ مُشْرِقُ الْجَوَادِ مُضِيءُ الْمَصَابِيحِ، كَرِيمُ الْمِضْمَارِ رَفِيعُ الْعَايَةِ، جَامِعُ الْحَلْبَةِ مُتَنَافِسُ السُّبْقَةِ، شَرِيفُ الْفُرْسَانِ. التَّصَدِيقُ مِنْهَاجُهُ، وَالصَّلَاحَاتُ مَنَارُهُ، وَالْمَوْتُ غَايَتُهُ، وَالدُّنْيَا مِضْمَارُهُ، وَالْقِيَامَةُ حَلْبَتُهُ، وَالْجَنَّةُ سُبْقَتُهُ

A part of the same sermon about the Holy Prophet

منها: في ذكر النبي (صلى الله عليه وآله)

The Prophet lighted flames for the seeker and put bright signs for the impeded. So he is Thy trustworthy trustee, Thy witness on the Day of Judgement, Thy deputy as a blessing and Thy messenger of truth as mercy. My God, distribute to him a share from Thy Justice and award him multiples of good by Thy bounty. My God, heighten his construction over the constructions of others, honour him when he comes to Thee, dignify his position before Thee, give him honourable position, and award him glory and distinction, and bring us out (on the Day of Judgement) among his

party, neither ashamed, nor repentant, nor deviators, nor pledge-breakers, nor strayers, nor misleaders nor seduced.

حَتَّى أَوْرى قَبْساً لِقَابِيسٍ، وَأَنَارَ عِلْماً لِحَابِيسٍ، فَهُوَ أَمِينُكَ الْمَأْمُونُ، وَشَهِيدُكَ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ، وَبِعَيْتِكَ نِعْمَةً، وَرَسُولُكَ بِالْحَقِّ رَحْمَةً.

اللَّهُمَّ اقسِمْ لَهُ مَقْسَمًا مِنْ عَدْلِكَ، وَاجزِهِ مُضَعَفَاتِ الْخَيْرِ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ. اللَّهُمَّ أَعْلِ عَلِيَّ بِنَاءِ الْبَانِينَ بِنَاءَهُ، وَأَكْرِمِ لَدَيْكَ نُزُلَهُ، وَشَرِّفْ عِنْدَكَ مَنَزِلَهُ، وَآتِهِ الْوَسِيلَةَ، وَأَعْطِهِ السَّنَاءَ وَالْفَضِيلَةَ، وَاحشُرْنَا فِي زُمْرَتِهِ غَيْرِ حَزَائِيَا، وَلَا نَادِمِينَ، وَلَا نَاكِبِينَ، وَلَا نَاكِبِينَ، وَلَا ضَالِّينَ، وَلَا مُفْتُونِينَ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This sermon had already appeared earlier but we have repeated it here because of the difference between the two versions.

قال الشريف: وقد مضى هذا الكلام فيما تقدم، إلا أننا كررناه هاهنا لما في الروایتين من الاختلاف.

A part of the same sermon addressed to his followers

منها: في خطاب أصحابه

By bounty of Allah over you, you have acquired a position where even your slave maids are honoured, your neighbours are treated well. Even he over whom you enjoy no distinction or obligation honours you. Even those people fear you who had no apprehension of attack from you or any authority over you. You now see pledges to Allah being broken but do not feel enraged although you fret and frown on the breaking of the traditions of your forefathers. Allah's matters have been coming to you, and going from and again coming back to you; but you have made over your place to wrong-doers and thrown towards them your responsibilities, and have placed Allah's affairs in their hands. They act in doubts and tread in (fulfilment of) desires. By Allah, even if they disperse you under every star Allah would surely collect you on the day that would be worst for them.

وَقَدْ بَلَّغْتُمْ مِنْ كَرَامَةِ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ مَنَزِلَةً تُكْرَمُ بِهَا إِمَائُكُمْ، وَتُوصَلُ بِهَا حَبِيرَانُكُمْ، وَبِعِظْمَتِكُمْ مِنْ لَا فَضْلَ لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِ، وَلَا يَدْلُكُمْ عِنْدَهُ، وَيَهَابُكُمْ مَنْ لَا يَخَافُ لَكُمْ سَطْوَةً، وَلَا لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِ إِمْرَةً، وَقَدْ تَرَوْنَ عُهُودَ اللَّهِ مَنْقُوضَةً فَلَا تَعْضَبُونَ! وَأَنْتُمْ لِنَقْضِ ذِمِّ آبَائِكُمْ تَأْنِفُونَ! وَكَانَتْ أُمُورُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ تَرْدٌ، وَعَنْكُمْ تَصُدُّرٌ، وَإِلَيْكُمْ تَرْجِعُ، فَمَكَّنْتُمُ الظَّلْمَةَ مِنْ مَنَزَلَتِكُمْ، وَالْقَبِيْثَةَ إِلَيْهِمْ أَرْمَيْتُمْ، وَأَسَلَّمْتُمْ أُمُورَ اللَّهِ فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ، يَعْمَلُونَ بِالشُّبُهَاتِ، وَيَسِيرُونَ فِي الشَّهَوَاتِ، وَإِنَّمَا اللَّهُ، لَوْ فَرَّقُوْكُمْ تَحْتَ كُلِّ كَوْكَبٍ، لَجَمَعَكُمْ اللَّهُ لِشَرِّ يَوْمٍ هُمْ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 106

- (1) Al-Ghazali, *Ihya'*;
- (2) al-Harrani, *Tuhaf*, 126;
- (3) al-Kulayni, *Usul al-Kafi*, II, 49;

- (4) *al-Qali, al-'Amali, 171;*
- (5) *Abu Talib al-Makki, Qut, I, 382, 407;*
- (6) *Abu Nu`aym, Hilyah, I, 74, 75;*
- (7) *al-Saduq, al-Khisal, I, 108;*
- (8) *al-Qadi al-Quda`i, Dustur, 121;*
- (9) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, * 23.*

Sermon 107: I have seen...

Delivered During One Of The Days Of Siffin

ومن حُطْبَةٍ لَهُ (عليه السلام)

فِي بَعْضِ أَيَّامِ صِفِّينَ

I have seen your flight and your dispersal from the lines. You were surrounded by rude and low people and Bedouins of Syria (ash-Sham), although you are the chiefs of Arabs and summit of distinction, and possess dignity as that of the high nose and big hump of the camel. The sigh of my bosom can subside only when I eventually see you surrounding them as they surrounded you, and see you dislodging them from their position as they dislodged you, killing them with arrows and striking them with spears so that their forward rows might fall on the rear ones just like the thirsty camels who have been turned away from their place of drink and removed from their water-points.

وَقَدْ رَأَيْتُ جَوَلْتَكُمْ، وَأَنْحِيَاكُمْ عَنْ صُفُوفِكُمْ، تَحُورُكُمْ الْجَفَاءُ الطَّعَامُ، وَأَعْرَابُ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ، وَأَنْتُمْ هَامِيمُ الْعَرَبِ، وَيَأْفِيحُ الشَّرَفِ، وَالْأَنْفُ الْمُقَدَّمِ، وَالسِّنَّامُ الْأَعْظَمُ، وَلَقَدْ شَفَى وَحَاوَحَ صَدْرِي أَنْ رَأَيْتُكُمْ بِأَخْرَةٍ، تَحُورُونَهُمْ كَمَا حَاوَرُوكُمْ، وَتُرِيْلُونَهُمْ عَنْ مَوَاقِفِهِمْ كَمَا أَرَاوَكُمْ; حَسَاءً بِاللِّصَالِ، وَشَجْرًا بِالرِّمَاحِ، تَرْكَبُ أَوْلَاهُمْ أَحْرَاهُمْ كَالْأَبْلِ الْهَيْمِ الْمَطْرُودَةِ، تُرْمَى عَنْ حِيَاضِهَا، وَتُدَادُ عَنْ مَوَارِدِهَا!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 107

- (1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 14, events of 37 H.;*
- (2) *al-Kulayni, Furu` al-Kafi, V, 40;*
- (3) *Nasr ibn Muzahim, Siffin, 256.*

Sermon 108: Praise belongs to Allah, Who is Manifest ...

It Is One Of The Sermons About The Vicissitudes Of Time

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وهي من خطب الملاحم

Praise belongs to Allah, Who is Manifest before His creation through His creation, Who is apparent to their hearts through His clear proof; Who created without meditating, since meditating does not befit except one who has thinking organs while He has no thinking organ in Himself. His knowledge has split forth the inside of unknown secrets and encompassed abstruse and hidden beliefs.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْمُتَجَلِّي لِخَلْقِهِ بِخَلْقِهِ، وَالظَّاهِرِ لِقُلُوبِهِمْ بِحُجَّتِهِ، خَلَقَ الْخَلْقَ مِنْ غَيْرِ رَوِيَّةٍ، إِذْ كَانَتِ الرَّوِيَّاتُ لَا تَلِيْقُ إِلَّا بِدَوِيِّ الضَّمَائِرِ وَلَيْسَ بِذِي ضَمِيرٍ فِي نَفْسِهِ، حَرَقَ عِلْمُهُ بَاطِنَ غَيْبِ السُّتْرَاتِ، وَأَحَاطَ بِعُمُوضِ عَقَائِدِ السَّرِيرَاتِ.

A part of the same sermon about the Holy Prophet

منها: في ذكر النبي (صلى الله عليه وآله)

Allah chose him from the lineal tree of prophets, from the flame of light, from the forehead of greatness, from the best part of the valley of al-Bat'ha', from the lamps for darkness, and from the sources of wisdom.

اخْتَارَهُ مِنْ شَجَرَةِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ، وَمَشْكَاةِ الصِّبْيَاءِ، وَذَوَابَةِ الْعُلْيَاءِ، وَسُرَّةِ الْبَطْحَاءِ، وَمَصَابِيحِ الظُّلْمَةِ، وَيَنَابِيْعِ الْحِكْمَةِ.

A part of the same sermon

منها:

The Prophet was like a roaming physician who has set ready his ointments and heated his instruments. He uses them wherever the need arises for curing blind hearts, deaf ears, and dumb tongues. He followed with his medicines the spots of negligence and places of perplexity.

طَبِيبٌ دَوَّارٌ بِطَبِّهِ، قَدْ أَحْكَمَ مَرَاهِمَهُ، وَأَمْضَى مَوَاسِمَهُ، يَضَعُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ حَيْثُ الْحَاجَةُ إِلَيْهِ، مِنْ قُلُوبِ عُمِّي، وَأَذَانِ صِمِّ، وَاللِّسَنَةِ بُكْمٍ؛ مُتَتَّبِعٌ بِدَوَائِهِ مَوَاضِعَ الْعُقْلَةِ، وَمَوَاطِنَ الْحَيْرَةِ؛

Blaming Muslims

فتنة بني أمية

They (people) did not take light from the lights of his wisdom nor did they produce flame from the flint of sparkling knowledge. So in this matter they are like grazing cattle and hard stones. Nevertheless, hidden things have appeared for those who perceive, the face of right has become clear for

the wanderer, the approaching moment has raised the veil from its face and signs have appeared for those who search for them.

لَمْ يَسْتَضِيئُوا بِأَضْوَاءِ الْحِكْمَةِ، وَلَمْ يَفِدَحُوا بِزِنَادِ الْعُلُومِ النَّاقِبَةِ؛ فَهُمْ فِي ذَلِكَ كَالْأَنْعَامِ
السَّائِمَةِ، وَالصُّحُورِ الْقَاسِيَةِ.

قَدْ انْجَابَتِ السَّرَائِرُ لِأَهْلِ الْبَصَائِرِ، وَوَضَحَتْ مَحَجَّةُ الْحَقِّ لِخَاطِبِهَا، وَأَسْفَرَتِ السَّاعَةُ عَنْ
وَجْهِهَا، وَظَهَرَتِ الْعَلَامَةُ لِمَتَوَسِّمِهَا.

What is the matter with me! I see you just bodies without spirits and spirits without bodies, devotees without good, traders without profits, wakeful but sleeping, present but unseen, seeing but blind, hearing but deaf and speaking but dumb.

مَا لِي أَرَأَيْتُمْ أَشْبَاحاً بِلَا أَرْوَاحَ، وَأَرْوَاحاً بِلَا أَشْبَاحَ، وَنُسَاكاً بِلَا صَلَاحَ، وَتُجَّاراً بِلَا أَرْبَاحَ،
وَأَيْقَاطاً نُومًا، وَشُهُوداً غُيْبًا، وَنَاطِرَةً عُيْمًا، وَسَامِعَةً صُمًّا، وَنَاطِقَةً بُكْمًا!

I notice that misguidance has stood on its centre and spread (all round) through its off-shoots. It weighs you with its weights and confuses you with its measures. Its leader is an out-cast from the community. He persists on misguidance. So on that day none from among you would remain except as the sediment in a cooking pot or the dust left after dusting a bundle. It would scrape you as leather is scraped, and trample you as harvest is trampled, and pick out the believer as a bird picks out a big grain from the thin grain.

رَأَيْتُمْ ضَلَالَةً قَدْ قَامَتْ عَلَى قُطْبِهَا، وَتَفَرَّقَتْ بِشُعَبِهَا، تَكِيلُكُمْ بِصَاعِهَا، وَتَحْبِطُكُمْ بِبَاعِهَا .
فَأَيْدِهَا حَارِجٌ مِنَ الْمِلَّةِ، قَائِمٌ عَلَى الصِّلَةِ؛ فَلَا يَبْقَى يَوْمَئِذٍ مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا نُفَالَةٌ كَثْفَالَةَ الْقِدْرِ، أَوْ
نُفَاضَةٌ كُنْفَاضَةَ الْعِجْمِ، تَعْرُكُكُمْ عَزَّكَ الْأَدِي، وَتُدُوسُكُمْ دَوْسَ الْحَصِيدِ، وَتَسْتَخْلِصُ الْمُؤْمِنَ
مِنْ بَيْنِكُمْ اسْتِخْلَاصَ الطَّيْرِ الْحَبَّةَ الْبَطِينَةَ مِنْ بَيْنِ هَزِيلِ الْحَبِّ.

Where are these ways taking you, gloom misleading you, and falsehoods deceiving you? Whence are you brought and where are you driven? For every period there is a written document and everyone who is absent has to return. So listen to your godly leader and keep your hearts present. If he speaks to you be wakeful. The forerunner must speak truth to his people, should keep his wits together and maintain presence of mind. He has clarified to you the matter as the stitch-hole is cleared, and scraped it as the gum is scraped (from the twigs).

أَيْنَ تَذْهَبُ بِكُمْ الْمَدَاهِبُ، وَتَبِيهُ بِكُمْ الْعِيَاهِبُ، وَتَحْدَعُكُمْ الْكَوَادِبُ؟ وَمِنْ أَيْنَ تُؤْتُونَ،
وَأَيَّ تُوَفِّقُونَ؟ فَلَئِنْ أَجَلَ كِتَابٌ، وَلِكُلِّ غَيْبَةٍ إِيَابٌ، فَاسْتَمِعُوا مِنْ رَبَّانِيِّكُمْ، وَأَخْضَرُوا
قُلُوبَكُمْ، وَاسْتَيْقِظُوا إِنْ هَتَفَ بِكُمْ، وَلْيَصُدِّقْ رَائِدُ أَهْلِهِ، وَلْيَجْمَعْ سَمَلُهُ، وَلْيُخْضِرْ ذَهْنَهُ، فَلَقَدْ
فَلَقَ لَكُمْ الْأَمْرَ فَلَقَ الْحَرَرَةَ، وَقَرَفَهُ قَرَفَ الصَّمْعَةِ.

Nevertheless, now the wrong has set itself on its places and ignorance has ridden on its riding beasts. Unruliness has increased while the call for virtue is suppressed. Time has pounced upon like a devouring carnivore, and

wrong is shouting like a camel after remaining silent. People have become brothers over ill-doings, have forsaken religion, are united in speaking lie but bear mutual hatred in the matter of truth.

فَعِنْدَ ذَلِكَ أَخَذَ الْبَاطِلُ مَا أَخَذَهُ، وَرَكِبَ الْجَهْلُ مَرَاقِبَهُ، وَعَظُمَتِ الطَّاعِنِيَّةُ، وَقَلَّتِ الدَّاعِيَّةُ،
وَصَالَ الدَّهْرُ صِيَالِ السَّبْعِ الْعُثُورِ، وَهَدَرَ فَنِيْقُ الْبَاطِلِ بَعْدَ كُطُومِ، وَتَوَاحَى النَّاسُ عَلَى
الْفُجُورِ، وَتَهَاجَرُوا عَلَى الدِّينِ، وَتَحَابُّوا عَلَى الْكُذِبِ، وَتَبَاغَضُوا عَلَى الصِّدْقِ.

When such is the case, the son would be a source of anger (instead of coolness of the eye to parents) and rain the cause of heat, the wicked would abound and the virtuous would diminish. The people of this time would be wolves, its rulers beasts, the middle class men gluttons and the poor (almost) dead. Truth would go down, falsehood would overflow, affection would be claimed with tongues but people would be quarrelsome at heart. Adultery would be the key to lineage while chastity would be rare and Islam would be worn overturned like the skin.

فَإِذَا كَانَ ذَلِكَ كَانَ الْوَلَدُ غَيْظًا، وَالْمَطَرُ قَيْظًا، وَتَفِيضُ اللَّقَامِ فَيْضًا، وَتَغِيضُ الْكِرَامِ
غَيْضًا، وَكَانَ أَهْلُ ذَلِكَ الرِّمَانِ ذِنَابًا، وَسَلَاطِينُهُ سِبَاعًا، وَأَوْسَاطُهُ أُكَّالًا، وَفُقَرَاؤُهُ أَمْوَاتًا، وَغَارَ
الصِّدْقُ، وَفَاضَ الْكُذِبُ، وَاسْتَعْمَلَتِ الْمَوَدَّةُ بِاللِّسَانِ، وَتَشَاجَرَ النَّاسُ بِالْقُلُوبِ، وَصَارَ
الْمُسْتَوْقُ نَسْبًا، وَالْعَقَافُ عَجَبًا، وَلَبَسَ الْأَسْلَامُ لُبْسَ الْفُرِّ مَقْلُوبًا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 108

(1) Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 85, 209;

(2) al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, bab tabaddul al-'ahwal.

Sermon 109: Everything submits to Him ...

About the Might of Allah

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في بيان قدرة الله وانفراده بالعظمة وأمر البعث

Everything submits to Him and everything exists by Him. He is the satisfaction of every poor, dignity of the low, energy for the weak and shelter for the oppressed. Whoever speaks, He hears his speaking, and whoever keeps quiet, He knows his secret. On Him is the livelihood of everyone who lives, and to Him returns whoever dies.

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ خَاشِعٌ لَهُ، وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ قَائِمٌ بِهِ: غِنَى كُلِّ فَقِيرٍ، وَعِزُّ كُلِّ ذَلِيلٍ، وَقُوَّةُ كُلِّ ضَعِيفٍ، وَمَفْرَعُ كُلِّ مَلْهُوفٍ، مَنْ تَكَلَّمَ سَمِعَ نُطْقَهُ، وَمَنْ سَكَتَ عَلِمَ سِرَّهُ، وَمَنْ عَاشَرَ فَعَلَيْهِ رِزْقُهُ، وَمَنْ مَاتَ فَإِلَيْهِ مُنْقَلَبُهُ.

(O Allah!) The eyes have not seen Thee so as to be aware of Thee, but Thou wert before the describers of Thy creation. Thou didst not create the creation on account of loneliness, nor didst make them work for gain. He whom Thou catchest cannot go farther than Thee, and he whom Thou holdest cannot escape Thee. He who disobeys Thee does not decrease Thy authority, and he who obeys Thee does not add to Thy Might. He who disagrees with Thy judgement cannot turn it, and he who turns away from Thy command cannot do without Thee. Every secret before Thee is open and for Thee every absent is present.

لَمْ تَرَكَ الْعَيُونَ فَتُحْبِرَ عَنْكَ، بَلْ كُنْتَ قَبْلَ الْوَاصِفِينَ مِنْ خَلْقِكَ، لَمْ تَخْلُقِ الْخَلْقَ لِرُوحَشَةٍ، وَلَا اسْتَعْمَلْتَهُمْ لِمَنْفَعَةٍ، وَلَا يَسْبِقُكَ مَنْ طَلَبْتَ، وَلَا يُفْلِتُكَ مَنْ أَحَدْتَ، وَلَا يَنْقُصُ سُلْطَانَكَ مَنْ عَصَاكَ، وَلَا يَزِيدُ فِي مُلْكِكَ مَنْ أَطَاعَكَ، وَلَا يَزِيدُ أَمْرَكَ مَنْ سَخَطَ قَضَاءَكَ، وَلَا يَسْتَعْنِي عَنْكَ مَنْ تَوَلَّى عَنْ أَمْرِكَ. كُلُّ سِرِّ عِنْدَكَ عَلَانِيَةٌ، وَكُلُّ غَيْبٍ عِنْدَكَ شَهَادَةٌ.

Thou art everlasting; there is no end to Thee. Thou art the highest aim, there is no escape from Thee, and Thou art the promised (point of return) from which there is no deliverance except towards Thee. In Thy hand is the forelock of every creature and to Thee is the return of every living being. Glory be to Thee! How great is Thy affair! Glory to Thee! How great is Thy creation that we see, but how small is this greatness by the side of Thy Might! How awe-striking is Thy realm that we notice, but how humble is this against what is hidden from us out of Thy authority! How extensive are Thy bounties in this world, but how small are they against the bounties of the next world!

أَنْتَ الْأَبَدُ فَلَا أَمَدَ لَكَ، وَأَنْتَ الْمُنتَهَى فَلَا مَحِيصَ عَنْكَ، وَأَنْتَ الْمَوْعِدُ فَلَا مَنْجَى مِنْكَ إِلَّا إِلَيْكَ، يَبْدِكَ نَاصِيَةُ كُلِّ ذَابَّةٍ، وَإِلَيْكَ مَصِيرُ كُلِّ نَسَمَةٍ. سُبْحَانَكَ مَا أَعْظَمَ شَأْنُكَ!

سُبْحَانَكَ مَا أَعْظَمَ مَا نَرَى مِنْ خَلْقِكَ! وَمَا أَصْعَرَ كُلَّ عَظِيمَةٍ فِي جَنْبِ قُدْرَتِكَ! وَمَا أَهْوَلَ
مَا نَرَى مِنْ مَلَكُوتِكَ! وَمَا أَحْقَرَ ذَلِكَ فِيمَا غَابَ عَنَّا مِنْ سُلْطَانِكَ! وَمَا أَسْبَغَ نِعْمَكَ فِي
الدُّنْيَا، وَمَا أَصْعَرَهَا فِي نِعَمِ الْآخِرَةِ!

A part of the same sermon about the Angels

منها: في الملائكة الكرام

Thou (O Allah) made angels reside in Thy skies and place them high above from Thy earth. They have the most knowledge about Thee and Thy whole creation, the most fearing from Thee, and the nearest to Thee. They never stayed in loins nor were retained in wombs. They were not created "from mean water (semen)" (Qur'an 32:8; 77:20). They were not dispersed by "vicissitudes of time" (52:30).

They are on their places (distinct) from Thee and in their positions near Thee. Their desires are concentrated in Thee. Their worship for Thee is much. Their neglect from Thy command is little. If they witness what remains hidden about Thee they would regard their deeds as very little, they would criticise themselves and would realise that they did not worship Thee according to Thy right for being worshipped and did not obey Thee as Thou hast the right of being obeyed.

مِنْ مَلَائِكَةٍ أَسْكَنْتَهُمْ سَمَاوَاتِكَ، وَرَفَعْتَهُمْ عَنْ أَرْضِكَ؛ هُمْ أَعْلَمُ خَلْقِكَ بِكَ، وَأَخْوَفُهُمْ
لَكَ، وَأَفْرَبُهُمْ مِنْكَ؛ لَمْ يَسْكُنُوا الْأَصْلَابَ، وَلَمْ يُضْمَنُوا الْأَرْحَامَ، وَلَمْ يُخْلَقُوا (مِنْ مَاءٍ مَهِينٍ)،
وَلَمْ يَتَشَعَّبْهُمْ (رَيْبَ الْمُنُونِ)؛ وَإِنَّهُمْ عَلَى مَكَانِهِمْ مِنْكَ، وَمَنْزِلَتِهِمْ عِنْدَكَ، وَاسْتَجْمَاعَ أَهْوَائِهِمْ
فِيكَ، وَكَثْرَةَ طَاعَتِهِمْ لَكَ، وَقِلَّةَ غَفْلَتِهِمْ عَنْ أَمْرِكَ، لَوْ عَايَنُوا كُنْهَ مَا خَفِيَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْكَ لَحَقُّوا
أَعْمَالَهُمْ، وَلَزَرُوا عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ، وَلَعَرَفُوا أَنَّهُمْ لَمْ يَعْبُدُوكَ حَقَّ عِبَادَتِكَ، وَلَمْ يُطِيعُوكَ حَقَّ
طَاعَتِكَ.

About the bounties and guidance of Allah, and those who are ungrateful

عصيان الخلق

Glorified art Thou, the Creator, the Worshipped, on account of Thy good trials of Thy creatures. Thou created a house (the Paradise) and provided in it for feasting, drinks, foods, spouses, servants, places, streams, plantations and fruits. Then Thou sent a messenger to invite towards it, but the people did not respond to the caller, and did not feel persuaded to what Thou persuaded them nor showed eagerness towards what Thou desired them to feel eager. They jumped on the carcass (of this world), earned shame by eating it and became united on loving it.

سُبْحَانَكَ خَالِقاً وَمَعْبُوداً! بِحُسْنِ بِلَاتِكَ عِنْدَ خَلْقِكَ، خَلَقْتَ دَاراً، وَجَعَلْتَ فِيهَا مَأْدُبَةً،
مَشْرَباً وَمَطْعَمًا، وَأَزْوَاجاً وَخُدَمًا، وَفُصُورًا، وَأَنْهَارًا، وَزُرُوعًا، وَثَمَارًا. ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْتَ دَاعِيًا يَدْعُو

إِلَيْهَا، فَلَا الدَّاعِيَ أَجَابُوا، وَلَا فِيمَا رَغَبْتَ رَغَبُوا، وَلَا إِلَىٰ مَا سَوَّغْتَ إِلَيْهِ اسْتَأْفُوا. أَفَبُلُوا عَلَىٰ حِيْفَةٍ قَدْ افْتَضَحُوا بِأَكْلِهَا، وَاصْطَلَحُوا عَلَىٰ حِيْفِهَا،

When one loves a thing it blinds him and sickens his heart. Then he sees but with a diseased eye, hears but with unhearing ears. Desires have cut asunder his wit, and the world has made his heart dead, while his mind is all longing for it. Consequently, he is a slave of it and of everyone who has any share in it. Wherever it turns, he turns towards it and wherever it proceeds, he proceeds towards it. He is not desisted by any desister from Allah, nor takes admonition from any preacher. He sees those who have been caught in neglect whence there is neither rescission nor reversion.

وَمَنْ عَشِقَ شَيْئًا أَعَشَىٰ بَصْرَهُ، وَأَمْرَضَ قَلْبَهُ، فَهُوَ يَنْظُرُ بِعَيْنٍ غَيْرِ صَحِيحَةٍ، وَيَسْمَعُ بِأُذُنٍ غَيْرِ سَمِيْعَةٍ، قَدْ حَرَقَتِ الشَّهَوَاتُ عَقْلَهُ، وَأَمَاتَتِ الدُّنْيَا قَلْبَهُ، وَوَلِهَتْ عَلَيْهَا نَفْسَهُ، فَهُوَ عَبْدٌ لَهَا، وَلَمْ يَنْ فِي يَدَيْهِ شَيْءٌ مِنْهَا، حَيْثُ مَا زَالَتْ زَالَ إِلَيْهَا، وَحَيْثُ مَا أَقْبَلَتْ أَقْبَلَ عَلَيْهَا؛ لَا يَنْزَجِرُ مِنَ اللَّهِ بِزَاجِرٍ، وَلَا يَنْتَعِظُ مِنْهُ بِوَاعِظٍ، وَهُوَ يَرَى الْمَأْخُودِينَ عَلَى الْعِرَّةِ، حَيْثُ لَا إِقَالَءَ وَلَا رَجْعَةً،

About Death

Whatever they were ignoring has befallen them, separation from this world, from which they took themselves safe, has come to them and they have reached that in the next world which they had been promised. Whatever has befallen them cannot be described. Pangs of death and grief for losing (this world) have surrounded them. Consequently, their limbs become languid and their complexion changes.

كَيْفَ نَزَلَ بِهِمْ مَا كَانُوا يَجْهَلُونَ، وَجَاءَهُمْ مِنْ فِرَاقِ الدُّنْيَا مَا كَانُوا يَأْمُنُونَ، وَقَدِمُوا مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ عَلَىٰ مَا كَانُوا يُوعَدُونَ. فَغَيْرُ مَوْصُوفٍ مَا نَزَلَ بِهِمْ: اجْتَمَعَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ سَكْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ وَحَسْرَةُ الْمَوْتِ، فَفَتَّرَتْ لَهَا أَطْرَافُهُمْ، وَتَغَيَّرَتْ لَهَا أَلْوَانُهُمْ.

Then death increases its struggle over them. In some one it stands in between him and his power of speaking although he lies among his people, looking with eyes, hearing with his ears, with full wits and intelligence. He then thinks over how he wasted his life and in what (activities) he passed his time. He recalls the wealth he collected when he had blinded himself in seeking it, and acquired it from fair and foul sources. Now the consequences of collecting it have overtaken him. He gets ready to leave it. It would remain for those who are behind him.

They would enjoy it and benefit by it. It would be an easy acquisition for others but a burden on his back, and the man cannot get rid of it. He would thereupon bite his hands with teeth out of shame for what was disclosed to him about his affairs at the time of his death. He would dislike what he coveted during the days of his life and would wish that the one who envied him on account of it and felt jealous over him for it should have amassed it instead of himself.

ثُمَّ اَزْدَادَ الْمَوْتُ فِيهِمْ وُلُوجًا، فَحِيلَ بَيْنَ أَحَدِهِمْ وَبَيْنَ مَنْطِقِهِ، وَإِنَّهُ لَبَيْنَ أَهْلِهِ يَنْظُرُ بِبَصَرِهِ، وَيَسْمَعُ بِأُذُنِهِ، عَلَى صِحَّةٍ مِنْ عَقْلِهِ، وَبَقَاءٍ مِنْ لَبِّهِ، يُفَكِّرُ فِيهِمْ أَفْقَى عُمْرُهُ، وَفِيمَ أَذْهَبَ دَهْرُهُ! وَيَتَذَكَّرُ أَمْوَالًا جَمَعَهَا، أَعْمَصَ فِي مَطَالِبِهَا، وَأَخَذَهَا مِنْ مُصْرَحَاتِهَا وَمُشْتَبِهَاتِهَا، قَدْ لَزِمَتْهُ تَبِعَاتُ جَمْعِهَا، وَأَشْرَفَ عَلَى فِرَاقِهَا، تَبَقَى لِمَنْ وَرَاءَهُ يَنْعَمُونَ فِيهَا، وَيَتَمَتَّعُونَ بِهَا، فَيَكُونُ الْمَهْنَأُ لِعَيْرِهِ، وَالْعَبَاءُ عَلَى ظَهْرِهِ. وَالْمَرْءُ قَدْ غَلَقَتْ رُهُونُهُ بِهَا، فَهُوَ يَعْضُ يَدَهُ نَدَامَةً عَلَى مَا أَصْحَرَ لَهُ عِنْدَ الْمَوْتِ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ، وَيَزْهَدُ فِيمَا كَانَ يِرْعَبُ فِيهِ أَيَّامَ عُمْرِهِ، وَيَتَمَتَّى أَنَّ الَّذِي كَانَ يَغْبِطُهُ بِهَا وَيَحْسُدُهُ عَلَيْهَا قَدْ حَازَهَا دُونَهُ!

Death would continue affecting his body till his ears too would behave like his tongue (and lose functioning). So he would lie among his people, neither speaking with his tongue or hearing with his ears. He would be rotating his glance over their faces, watching the movements of their tongues, but not hearing their speaking.

Then death would increase its sway over him, and his sight would be taken by death as the ears had been taken and the spirit would depart from his body. He would then become a carcass among his own people. They would feel loneliness from him and get away from near him. He would not join a mourner or respond to a caller. Then they would carry him to a small place in the ground and deliver him in it to (face) his deeds. They abandoned visiting him.

فَلَمَّ يَزَلِ الْمَوْتُ يُبَالِغُ فِي جَسَدِهِ حَتَّى خَالَطَ لِسَانَهُ سَمْعُهُ، فَصَارَ بَيْنَ أَهْلِهِ لَا يَنْطِقُ بِلِسَانِهِ، وَلَا يَسْمَعُ بِسَمْعِهِ: يُرَدِّدُ طَرْفَهُ بِالنَّظْرِ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ، يَرَى حَرَكَاتِ أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ، وَلَا يَسْمَعُ رَجْعَ كَلَامِهِمْ. ثُمَّ اَزْدَادَ الْمَوْتُ التَّبَاتُاطًا بِهِ، فَفِيضَ بَصَرُهُ كَمَا فِيضَ سَمْعُهُ، وَخَرَجَتِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ جَسَدِهِ، فَصَارَ حَيْفَةً بَيْنَ أَهْلِهِ، قَدْ أَوْ حَشُوا مِنْ جَانِبِهِ، وَتَبَاعَدُوا مِنْ قُرْبِهِ. لَا يُسْعِدُ بَاكِيًا، وَلَا يُجِيبُ دَاعِيًا. ثُمَّ حَمَلُوهُ إِلَى مَحَطِّ فِي الْأَرْضِ، فَأَسْلَمُوهُ فِيهِ إِلَى عَمَلِهِ، وَانْقَطَعُوا عَنْ زُورَتِهِ.

About the Day of Judgement

القيامة

Till whatever is written as ordained approaches its end, the affairs complete their destined limits, the posteriors join the anteriors and whatever Allah wills takes place in the shape of resurrection of His creation. Then He would convulse the sky and split it. He would quake the earth and shake it. He would root out the mountains and scatter them. They would crush each other out of awe of His Glory and fear of His Dignity.

حَتَّى إِذَا بَلَغَ الْكِتَابُ أَجَلَهُ، وَالْأَمْرُ مَقَادِيرَهُ، وَالْحَقُّ آخِرَ الْخَلْقِ بِأَوَّلِهِ، وَجَاءَ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ مَا يُرِيدُهُ مِنْ تَجْدِيدِ خَلْقِهِ، أَمَادَ السَّمَاءِ وَفَطَّرَهَا، وَأَرْجَّ الْأَرْضَ وَأَرْجَفَهَا، وَقَلَعَ جِبَالَهَا وَنَسَفَهَا، وَذَكَ بَعْضُهَا بَعْضًا مِنْ هَيْبَةِ جَلَالَتِهِ وَمُخُوفِ سَطْوَتِهِ،

He would take out everyone who is in it. He would refresh them after they had been worn out and collect them after they had been separated. Then He would set them apart for questioning about the hidden deeds and secret acts. He would then divide them into two groups, rewarding one and punishing the other. As regards the obedient people He would reward them with His nearness and would keep them for ever in His house from where those who settle therein do not move out. Their position would not undergo change, fear would not overtake them, ailments would not befall them, dangers would not affect them and journey would not force them (from place to place).

وَأَخْرَجَ مَنْ فِيهَا، فَجَدَّدَهُمْ بَعْدَ إِخْلَاقِهِمْ، وَجَمَعَهُمْ بَعْدَ تَفْرِيقِهِمْ، ثُمَّ مَيَّرَهُمْ لِمَا يُرِيدُهُ مَنْ مَسْأَلَتِهِمْ عَنْ خَفَايَا الْأَعْمَالِ وَخَبَايَا الْأَفْعَالِ، وَجَعَلَهُمْ فَرِيقَيْنِ: أَنْعَمَ عَلَى هَؤُلَاءِ وَأَنْتَقَمَ مِنْ هَؤُلَاءِ. فَأَمَّا أَهْلُ الطَّاعَةِ فَأَتَانَهُمْ بِجِوَارِهِ، وَخَلَدَهُمْ فِي دَارِهِ، حَيْثُ لَا يَطْعَنُ النُّزْلُ، وَلَا تَتَغَيَّرُ بِهِمُ الْحَالُ، وَلَا تَتَوَبُّهُمْ الْأَفْرَاقُ، وَلَا تَنَاهَهُمُ الْأَسْقَامُ، وَلَا تَعْرِضُ لَهُمُ الْأُحْطَارُ، وَلَا تُشْخِصُهُمُ الْأَسْفَارُ.

As for people of sins, He would settle them in the worst place, would bind their hands with the necks, bind the forelocks with feet and would clothe them in shirts of tar and dresses cut out of flames. They would be in punishment whose heat would be severe, door would be closed on the inmates - in fire which is full of shouts and cries and rising flames and fearful voices. Its inmate does not move out of it, its prisoner cannot be released by ransom and its shackles cannot be cut. There is no fixed age for this house so that it might perish, or period for its life that might pass away.

وَأَمَّا أَهْلُ الْمَعْصِيَةِ فَأَنْزَلَهُمْ شَرَّ دَارٍ، وَعَلَّ الْأَيْدِي إِلَى الْأَعْنَاقِ، وَقَرَنَ التَّوَاصِي بِالْأَقْدَامِ، وَالْبَسَهُمْ سَرَائِلَ الْقَطِرَانِ، وَمَقْطَعَاتِ النَّيِّرَانِ، فِي عَدَابٍ قَدِ اشْتَدَّ حَرُّهُ، وَتَابَ قَدْ أُطِيقَ عَلَى أَهْلِهِ، فِي نَارٍ لَهَا كَلْبٌ وَجَبُّ، وَهَبُّ سَاطِعٌ، وَقَصِيفٌ هَائِلٌ، لَا يَطْعَنُ مُقِيمُهَا، وَلَا يُفَادَى أَسِيرُهَا، وَلَا تُفْصَمُ كُبُوتُهَا. لَا مُدَّةَ لِلدَّارِ فَتَفْتَنِي، وَلَا أَجَلَ لِلْقَوْمِ فَيُفْضَى.

A part of the same sermon about the Holy Prophet

منها: في ذكر النبي (صلى الله عليه وآله)

He treated this world disdainfully and regarded it low. He held it contemptible and hated it. He realised that Allah kept it away from him with intention and spread it out for others by way of contempt. Therefore, he remained away from it by his heart, banished its recollection from his mind and wished that its attraction should remain hidden from his eye so that he should not acquire any clothing from it, or hope for staying in it. He conveyed from Allah the pleas (against committing sins), counselled his people as a warner (against Divine chastisement) and called (people) towards Paradise as a conveyor of good tidings and made them fear the Fire cautioning against it.

قَدْ حَقَّرَ الدُّنْيَا وَصَغَّرَهَا، وَأَهْوَنَ بِهَا وَهَوَّنَهَا، وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى زَوَّاهَا عَنْهُ اخْتِيَارًا،
وَبَسَطَهَا لِغَيْرِهِ اخْتِفَارًا، فَأَعْرَضَ عَنِ الدُّنْيَا بِقَلْبِهِ، وَأَمَاتَ ذِكْرَهَا عَنِ نَفْسِهِ، وَأَحَبَّ أَنْ تَغِيبَ
زِينَتُهَا عَنْ عَيْنِهِ، لِكَيْلَا يَتَّخِذَ مِنْهَا رِيَاشًا، أَوْ يَرْجُو فِيهَا مَقَامًا. بَلَغَ عَنِ رَبِّهِ مُعْذِرًا، وَنَصَحَ
لِإِمَّتِهِ مُنذِرًا، وَدَعَا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ مُبَشِّرًا، وَخَوَّفَ مِنَ النَّارِ مُحَدِّرًا

About the Descendants of the Holy Prophet

أهل البيت (عليه السلام)

We are the tree of prophethood, staying place of (Divine) Message, descending place of angels, mines of knowledge and the sources of wisdom. Our supporter and lover awaits mercy while our enemy and he who hates us awaits wrath.

نَحْنُ شَجَرَةُ النُّبُوَّةِ، وَمَحَطُّ الرِّسَالَةِ، وَمُخْتَلَفُ الْمَلَائِكَةِ، وَمَعَادِنُ الْعِلْمِ، وَيَنَابِيعُ الْحُكْمِ،
نَاصِرُنَا وَمُحِبُّنَا يَنْتَظِرُ الرَّحْمَةَ، وَعَدُوْنَا وَمُبْغِضُنَا يَنْتَظِرُ السَّطْوَةَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 109

- (1) Ibn `Abd Rabbih, *al-`Iqd*, IV, 76;
- (2) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`*, *bab al-mala'ikah*;
- (3) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar*.

Sermon 110: The best means by which seekers of nearness to Allah...

About Islam

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في أركان الدين

الاسلام

The best means by which seekers of nearness to Allah, the Glorified, the Exalted, seek nearness, is the belief in Him and His Prophet, fighting in His cause, for it is the high pinnacle of Islam, and (to believe) in the kalimatu'l-'ikhlās (the expression of Divine purification) for it is just nature and the establishment of prayer for it is (the basis of) community, payment of zakat (Islamic tax) for it is a compulsory obligation, fasting for the month of Ramadan for it is the shield against chastisement, the performance of hajj of the House of Allah (i. e. Ka`bah) and its `umrah (other than annual visit) for these two acts banish poverty and wash away sins, regard for kinship for it increases wealth and length of life, to giving alms secretly for it covers shortcomings, giving alms openly for it protects against a bad death and extending benefits (to people) for it saves from positions of disgrace.

إِنَّ أَفْضَلَ مَا تَوَسَّلَ بِهِ الْمُتَوَسِّلُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ: الْإِيمَانُ بِهِ وَبِرَسُولِهِ، وَالْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَإِنَّهُ ذِرْوَةُ الْأَسْلَامِ، وَكَلِمَةُ الْأَخْلَاصِ فَإِنَّهَا الْفِطْرَةُ، وَإِقَامُ الصَّلَاةِ فَإِنَّهَا الْمِلَّةُ، وَإِيْتَاةُ الرِّكَاتِ فَإِنَّهَا فَرِيضَةٌ وَاجِبَةٌ، وَصَوْمُ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ فَإِنَّهُ جَنَّةٌ مِنَ الْعِقَابِ، وَحَجُّ الْبَيْتِ وَعَتِمَارُهُ فَإِنَّهُمَا يَنْفِيَانِ الْفَقْرَ وَيَرْحِضَانِ الدَّنْبَ، وَصِلَةُ الرَّحِمِ فَإِنَّهَا مَثْرَاءٌ فِي الْمَالِ وَمَنْسَأَةٌ فِي الْأَجْلِ، وَصَدَقَةُ السِّرِّ فَإِنَّهَا تُكْفِرُ الْخَطِيئَةَ، وَصَدَقَةُ الْعَلَانِيَةِ فَإِنَّهَا تَدْفَعُ مِيتَةَ السُّوءِ، وَصَنَائِعُ الْمَعْرُوفِ فَإِنَّهَا تَقِي مَصَارِعَ الْهَوَانِ.

About the Holy Qur'an and Sunnah

فضل القرآن

Go ahead with the remembrance of Allah for it is the best remembrance, and long for that which He has promised to the pious, for His promise is the most true promise. Tread the course of the Prophet for it is the most distinguished course. Follow the sunnah of the Prophet for it is the most right of all behaviours. Learn the Qur'an for it is the fairest of discourses and understand it thoroughly for it is the best blossoming of hearts. Seek cure with its light for it is the cure for hearts. Recite it beautifully for it is the most beautiful narration. Certainly, a scholar who acts not according to his knowledge is like the off-headed ignorant who does not find relief from his ignorance, but on the learned the plea of Allah is greater and grief more incumbent, and he is more blameworthy before Allah.

أَفِيضُوا فِي ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الذِّكْرِ، وَارْزَعُوا فِيمَا وَعَدَ الْمُتَّقِينَ فَإِنَّ وَعْدَهُ أَصْدَقُ الْوَعْدِ،
وَاقْتَدُوا بِهَدْيِ نَبِيِّكُمْ فَإِنَّهُ أَفْضَلُ الْهَدْيِ، وَاسْتَنْتُوا بِسُنَّتِهِ فَإِنَّهَا أَهْدَى السُّنَنِ. وَتَعَلَّمُوا الْقُرْآنَ
فَإِنَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْحَدِيثِ، وَتَفَقَّهُوا فِيهِ فَإِنَّهُ رَبِيعُ الْقُلُوبِ، وَاسْتَشْفُوا بِنُورِهِ فَإِنَّهُ شِفَاءُ الصُّدُورِ،
وَأَحْسِنُوا تِلَاوَتَهُ فَإِنَّهُ أَنْفَعُ الْقَصَصِ.
وَإِنَّ الْعَالِمَ الْعَامِلَ بَعِيرٌ عِلْمِهِ كَالْجَاهِلِ الْخَائِرِ الَّذِي لَا يَسْتَفِيدُ مِنْ جَهْلِهِ، بَلِ الْحُجَّةُ عَلَيْهِ
أَعْظَمُ، وَالْحَسْرَةُ لَهُ أَلْزَمُ، وَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَلْوَمُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 110

- (1) *Al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 104;*
- (2) *al-Saduq, Man la yahduruh, I, 131;*
- (3) *al-Saduq, `Ilal, 114;*
- (4) *al-Barqi, al-Mahasin, 233;*
- (5) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, I, 220.*

Sermon 111: So now, certainly I frighten you...

Caution about this world

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في ذم الدنيا

So now, certainly I frighten you from this world for it is sweet and green, surrounded by lusts, and liked for its immediate enjoyments. It excites wonder with small things, is ornamented with (false) hopes and decorated with deception. Its rejoicing does not last and its afflictions cannot be avoided. It is deceitful, harmful, changing, perishable, exhaustible, liable to destruction, eating away and destructive. When it reaches the extremity of desires of those who incline towards it and feel happy with it, the position is just what Allah, the Glorified, says (in the Qur'an):

... like the water which send We down from heaven, and the herbage of the earth mingleth with it, then it becometh dry stubble which the winds scatter; for Allah over all things hath power. (18:45)

أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَإِنِّي أَحَذِّرُكُمْ الدُّنْيَا، فَإِنَّهَا حُلْوَةٌ حَضْرَةٌ، خُفَّتْ بِالشَّهَوَاتِ، وَتَحَبَّبَتْ بِالْعَاجِلَةِ، وَرَافَقَتْ بِالْقَلِيلِ، وَتَحَلَّتْ بِالْأَمَالِ، وَتَزَيَّنَتْ بِالْغُرُورِ، لَا تَدُومُ حَبْرَتُهَا، وَلَا تُؤْمِنُ فَجَعَتُهَا، عَرَّازَةٌ ضَرَّارَةٌ، حَائِلَةٌ زَائِلَةٌ، نَافِدَةٌ بَائِدَةٌ، أَكَاالَةٌ عَوَالَةٌ، لَا تَعْدُو. إِذَا تَنَاهَتْ إِلَى أُمْنِيَّةِ أَهْلِ الرَّغْبَةِ فِيهَا وَالرَّضَى بِهَا. أَنْ تَكُونَ كَمَا قَالَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى: (كَمَا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَاخْتَلَطَ بِهِ نَبَاتُ الْأَرْضِ فَأَصْبَحَ هَشِيمًا تَذْرُوهُ الرِّيَّاحُ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مُقْتَدِرًا).

No person gets rejoicing from this world but tears come to him after it, and no one gets its comforts in the front but he has to face hardships in the rear. No one receives the light rain of ease in it but the heavy rain of distress pours upon him. It is just worthy of this world that in the morning it supports a man but in the evening it does not recognise him. If one side of it is sweet and pleasant the other side is bitter and distressing.

لَمْ يَكُنْ امْرُؤٌ مِنْهَا فِي حَبْرَةٍ إِلَّا أَعْقَبَتْهُ بَعْدَهَا عِبْرَةٌ وَمَنْ يَلْقُ مِنْ سَرَائِهَا بَطْنَانَفٍ إِلَّا مَنَحَتْهُ مِنْ ضَرَّائِهَا ظَهْرًا وَمَنْ تَطَّلَّهُ فِيهَا دِيمَةٌ رَحَاءٍ إِلَّا هَتَنْتَ عَلَيْهِ مُزْنَةً بَلَاءٍ! وَحَرِيٌّ إِذَا أَصْبَحَتْ لَهُ مُنْتَصِرَةٌ أَنْ تُمَسِّيَ لَهُ مُتَنَكِّرَةٌ، وَإِنْ جَانِبٌ مِنْهَا اعْدُوذِبٌ وَاحْلُوذِي، أَمَرَ مِنْهَا جَانِبٌ فَأَوَى.

No one secures enjoyment from its freshness but he has to face hardship from its calamities. No one would pass the evening under the wing of safety but that his morning would be under the feathers of the wing-tip of fear. It is deceitful, and all that is there in it is deception. It is perishable and all that is on it is to perish. There is no good in its provisions except in piety. Whoever takes little from it collects much of what would give him safety, while one who takes much from it takes much of what would ruin him. He would shortly depart from his collection. How many people relied on it but it distressed them; (how many) felt peaceful with it but it tumbled them down;

how many were prestigious but it made them low and how many were proud but it made them disgraceful.

لَا يَنَالُ امْرُؤٌ مِنْ غَضَارَتِهَا رَغَبًا إِلَّا أَزْهَقْتُهُ مِنْ نَوَائِبِهَا تَعْبًا! وَلَا يُمْسِي مِنْهَا فِي جَنَاحِ أَمْنٍ،
إِلَّا أَصْبَحَ عَلَى قَوَادِمِ خَوْفٍ! غَرَارَةٌ، غُرُورٌ مَا فِيهَا، فَائِبَةٌ، فَإِنْ مَنْ عَلَيْهَا، لَا خَيْرَ فِي شَيْءٍ
مِنْ أَرْوَادِهَا إِلَّا التَّقْوَى. مَنْ أَقَلَّ مِنْهَا اسْتَكْبَرَ بِمَا يُؤْمِنُهُ! وَمَنْ اسْتَكْبَرَ مِنْهَا اسْتَكْبَرَ بِمَا يُؤْبِقُهُ
وَرَالَ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ عَنْهُ. كُمْ مِنْ وَائِقٍ بِهَا قَدْ فَجَعْتُهُ، وَذِي طُمَأْنِينَةٍ إِلَيْهَا قَدْ صَرَعْتُهُ، وَذِي أُبْهَةِ
قَدْ جَعَلْتُهُ حَقِيرًا، وَذِي نَحْوَةٍ قَدْ رَدَّتَهُ ذَلِيلًا!

Its authority is changing. Its life is dirty. Its sweet water is bitter. Its sweetness is like myrrh. Its foods are poisons. Its means are weak. The living in it is exposed to death; the healthy in it is exposed to disease. Its realm is (liable to be) snatched away. The strong in it is (liable to be) defeated and the rich is (liable to be) afflicted with misfortune. The neighbour in it is (liable to be) plundered.

سُلْطَانُهَا دُوْلٌ وَعَيْشُهَا رَنْقٌ وَعَذْبُهَا أُجَاجٌ وَخُلُوقُهَا صَبْرٌ وَغِدَاؤُهَا سِمَامٌ وَأَسْبَابُهَا رِمَامٌ
حَيْثُهَا بَعْضُ مَوْتٍ، وَصَحِيحُهَا بَعْضُ سُقْمٍ! مُلْكُهَا مَسْلُوبٌ، وَعَزِيْرُهَا مَغْلُوبٌ، وَمَوْفُورُهَا
مَنْكُوبٌ، وَجَارُهَا مَخْرُوبٌ.

Are you not (residing) in the houses of those before you, who were of longer ages, better traces, had bigger desires, were more in numbers and had greater armies. How they devoted themselves to the world and how they showed preference to it! Then they left it without any provision that could convey them through, or the back (of a beast for riding) to carry them.

أَلَسْتُمْ فِي مَسَاكِينٍ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ أَطْوَلَ أَعْمَارًا، وَأَبْقَى آثَارًا، وَأَبْعَدَ آمَالًا، وَأَعَدَّ عَدِيدًا،
وَأَكْتَفَى جُنُودًا! تَعَبَدُوا لِلدُّنْيَا أَيَّ تَعَبُدٍ، وَأَثَرُهَا أَيَّ إِبْتَارٍ، ثُمَّ طَعَفُوا عَنْهَا بَعِيْرٍ زَادٍ مُبْلَغٍ وَلَا
ظَهْرٍ قَاطِعٍ.

Did you get the news that the world was ever generous enough to present ransom for them, or gave them any support or afforded them good company? It rather inflicted them with troubles, made them languid with calamities, molested them with catastrophes, threw them down on their noses, trampled them under hoofs and helped the “vicissitudes of time” (52:30) against them.

You have observed its strangeness towards those who went near it, acquired it and appropriated it, till they depart from it for good. Did it give them any provision other than starvation or make them stay in other than narrow places, or give them light other than gloom, or give them in the end anything other than repentance? Is this what you much ask for or remain satisfied with, or towards which you feel greedy? How bad is this abode for him who did not suspect it (to be so) and did not entertain fear from it?

فَهَلْ بَلَغْتُمْ أَنَّ الدُّنْيَا سَخَتْ لَهُمْ نَفْسًا بِفِدْيَةٍ أَوْ أَعَانَتْهُمْ بِمَعُونَةٍ؟ أَوْ أَحَسَسْتُمْ لَهُمْ
صُحْبَةً؟ بَلْ أَزْهَقْتَهُمْ بِالْفَوَادِحِ وَأَوْهَنْتَهُمْ بِالْقَوَارِعِ وَضَعَعْتَهُمْ بِالنَّوَائِبِ، وَعَقَّرْتَهُمْ لِلْمَنَاخِرِ،

وَوَطِّئْتُهُمْ بِالْمَنَاسِمِ وَأَعَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ (رَيْبَ الْمُنُونِ)، فَقَدْ رَأَيْتُمْ تَنَكَّرَهَا لِمَنْ دَانَ لَهَا وَأَثَرَهَا وَأُخْلِدَ إِلَيْهَا، حِينَ ظَعَنُوا عَنْهَا لِفِرَاقِ الْأَبَدِ. هَلْ زَوَّدْتُهُمْ إِلَّا السَّعْبَ أَوْ أَحَلَّتْهُمْ إِلَّا الضَّنْكَ أَوْ نَوَّرَتْ لَهُمْ إِلَّا الظُّلْمَةَ؟ أَوْ أَعَقَّبْتُهُمْ إِلَّا النَّدَامَةَ؟ أَفَهَذِهِ تُؤْتِرُونَ؟ أَمْ إِلَيْهَا تَطْمَئِنُّونَ؟ أَمْ عَلَيْهَا تَحْرِصُونَ؟ فَمَيَسَسَتِ الدَّارُ لِمَنْ لَمْ يَتَّهَمَهَا، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ فِيهَا عَلَى وَجَلٍ مِنْهَا!

You should know as you do know, that you have to leave it and depart from it. While in it, take lesson from those "who proclaimed 'who is more powerful than we'" (Qur'an 41:15) but they were carried to their graves, though not as riders. They were then made to stay in the graves, but not as guests. Graves were made for them from the surface of the ground. Their shrouds were made from earth. Old bones were made their neighbour. They are neighbours who do not answer a caller nor ward off trouble, nor pay heed to a mourner.

فَاعْلَمُوا . وَأَنْتُمْ تَعْلَمُونَ . بِأَنَّكُمْ تَارِكُوهَا وَظَاعِنُونَ عَنْهَا، وَاتَّعِظُوا فِيهَا بِاللَّذِينَ (قَالُوا مَنْ أَشَدُّ مِنَّا قُوَّةً): حُمِلُوا إِلَى قُبُورِهِمْ فَلَا يُدْعَوْنَ وَكِبَانًا وَأَنْزِلُوا الْأَجْدَاثَ فَلَا يُدْعَوْنَ ضَيْفَانًا، وَجَعِلَ لَهُمْ مِنَ الصَّفِيحِ أَجْنَانٌ وَمِنَ التُّرَابِ أَكْفَانٌ، وَمِنَ الرُّفَاتِ حِيرَانٌ . فَهُمْ حَيْرَةٌ لَا يُجِيبُونَ دَاعِيًا، وَلَا يَمْنَعُونَ ضَيْمًا، وَلَا يُبَالُونَ مَنَدَبَةً،

If they get rain they do not feel happy, and if they face famine they do not get disappointed. They are together but each one apart. They are close together but do not see each other. They are near but do not meet. They are enduring and have no hatred. They are ignorant and their malice has died away. There is no fear of trouble from them and no hope of their warding off (troubles). They have exchanged the back (surface) of the earth with its stomach (interior), vastness with narrowness, family with loneliness, and light with darkness.

They have come to it (this world) as they had left it with bare feet and naked bodies. They departed from it with their acts towards the continuing life and everlasting house as Allah has said:

. . . *As We caused the first creation, so will We get it return. (It is) a promise binding Us, verily We were doing it. (Qur'an, 21:104)*

إِنْ حِيدُوا لَمْ يَفْرَحُوا، وَإِنْ فُحِطُوا لَمْ يَقْنَطُوا، جَمِيعٌ وَهُمْ أَحَادٌ، وَحَيْرَةٌ وَهُمْ أَبْعَادٌ، مُتَدَانُونَ لَا يَتَزَاوَرُونَ، وَقَرِيبُونَ لَا يَتَقَارَبُونَ، حُلْمَاءٌ قَدْ ذَهَبَتْ أَضْعَانُهُمْ، وَجُهَلَاءٌ قَدْ مَاتَتْ أَحْقَادُهُمْ، لَا يُخْشَى فَجْعُهُمْ، وَلَا يُرْجَى دَفْعُهُمْ، اسْتَبَدَّلُوا بِظَهْرِ الْأَرْضِ بَطْنًا، وَبِالسَّعَةِ ضَيْقًا، وَبِالْأَهْلِ غُرْبَةً، وَبِالتُّورِ ظُلْمَةً، فَجَاوَوْهَا كَمَا فَارَقُوهَا، حُفَاءَ عُرَاءَ، قَدْ ظَعَنُوا عَنْهَا بِأَعْمَالِهِمْ إِلَى الْحَيَاةِ الدَّائِمَةِ وَالدَّارِ الْبَاقِيَةِ، كَمَا قَالَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ: (كَمَا بَدَأْنَا أَوَّلَ خَلْقٍ نُعِيدُهُ وَعَدًّا عَلَيْنَا إِنَّا كُنَّا فَاعِلِينَ).

Alternative Sources for Sermon 111

(1) Al-Marzbani, al-Munig, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, II, 242;

- (2) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 127;*
- (3) *al-Qadi al-Quda`i, Dustur, 51;*
- (4) *Ibn Talhah, Matalib, 144;*
- (5) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 18, 25, 308;*
- (6) *al-Jahiz, al-Bayan, II, 112;*
- (7) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, II, 250.*

Sermon 112: Do you feel it when the Angel of Death enters...

About the Angel of Death and departure of spirit [and man's incapacity to describe Allah]

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)
ذكر فيها ملك الموت وتوفية الانفس
[وعجز الخلق عن وصف الله]

Do you feel it when the Angel of Death enters a house, or do you see him when he takes out life of anyone? How does he take out the life of an embryo in the womb of his mother? Does he reach it through any part of her body or the spirit responded to his call with the permission of Allah? Or does he stay with him in the mother's interior? How can he who is unable to describe a creature like this, describe Allah?

هَلْ تُحِسُّ بِهِ إِذَا دَخَلَ مَنْزِلًا؟ أَمْ هَلْ تَرَاهُ إِذَا تَوَفَّى أَحَدًا؟ بَلْ كَيْفَ يَتَوَفَّى الْجَنِينَ فِي بَطْنِ
أُمِّهِ؟! أَيْلِجُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ بَعْضِ جَوَارِحِهَا؟ أَمْ الرُّوحُ أَجَابَتْهُ بِإِذْنِ رَبِّهَا؟ أَمْ هُوَ سَاكِنٌ مَعَهُ فِي
أَحْشَائِهَا؟ كَيْفَ يَصِفُ إِلَهُ مَنْ يَعْجُزُ عَنِ صِفَةِ مَخْلُوقٍ مِثْلِهِ!؟

Alternative Sources for Sermon 112

(1) *Al-Wasiti, `Uyun al-hikam, see al-Majlisi, Bihar, vol.77, p. 430.*

Sermon 113: I warn you of the world...

About this world and its people

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

[في ذم الدنيا]

I warn you of the world for it is the abode of the unsteady. It is not a house for foraging. It has decorated itself with deception and deceives with its decoration. It is a house which is low before Allah. So He has mixed its lawful with its unlawful, its good with its evil, its life with its death, and its sweetness with its bitterness. Allah has not kept it clear for His lovers, nor has He been niggardly with it towards His foes. Its good is sparing. Its evil is ready at hand. Its collection would dwindle away. Its authority would be snatched away. Its habitation would face desolation. What is the good in a house which falls down like fallen construction or in an age which expires as the provision exhausts, or in time which passes like walking?

وَأُحَذِرُكُمُ الدُّنْيَا، فَإِنَّهَا مَنْزِلٌ قُلْعَةٌ، وَلَيْسَتْ بِدَارِ نَجْعَةٍ، فَدَ تَزَيَّنَتْ بِعُرُورِهَا، وَعَرَّتْ بِزِينَتِهَا، دَارَهَا هَانَتْ عَلَى رَيْبِهَا، فَخَلَطَ خَلَاكُهَا بِحَرَامِهَا، وَخَيْرَهَا بِشَرِّهَا، وَحَيَاتِهَا بِمَوْتِهَا، وَخُلُوقَهَا بِمُرِّهَا، لَمْ يُصْنَفِهَا اللَّهُ لِأَوْلِيَائِهِ، وَلَمْ يَضِنَّ بِهَا عَلَى أَعْدَائِهِ، خَيْرُهَا زَهِيدٌ، وَشَرُّهَا عَتِيدٌ، وَجَمْعُهَا يَنْقُدُ، وَمُلْكُهَا يُسَلَبُ، وَعَامِرُهَا يَحْرَبُ. فَمَا خَيْرُ دَارٍ تُنْقَضُ نَفْصُ النَّبَاءِ، وَعُمْرُ يَفْقَى فَنَاءَ الزَّادِ، وَمُدَّةٌ تَنْقَطِعُ انْقِطَاعَ السَّيْرِ!

Include whatever Allah has made obligatory on you in your demands. Ask from Him fulfilment of what He has asked you to do. Make your ears hear the call of death before you are called by death. Surely the hearts of the abstemious weep in this world even though they may (apparently) laugh, and their grief increases even though they may appear happy. Their hatred for themselves is much even though they may be envied for the subsistence they are allowed.

Remembrance of death has disappeared from your hearts while false hopes are present in you. So this world has mastered you more than the next world, and the immediate end (of this world) has removed you away from the remote one (of the next life). You are brethren in the religion of Allah. Nothing but corrupt natures and bad conscience have separated you. Consequently you do not bear burdens of each other nor advise each other, nor spend on each other, nor love each other.

فاجعلوا ما افترض الله عليكم من طيباتكم، واسألوه من آداء حقه ما سألكم، واسمعوا دعوة الموت آذانكم قبل أن يدعى بكم. إن الزاهدين في الدنيا تبكي قلوبهم وإن ضحكوا، ويشند حزنهم وإن فرحوا، ويكثر مفتنهم أنفسهم وإن اغتبطوا بما رزقوا. قد غاب عن قلوبكم ذكر الأجل، وحصرتكم كواذب الآمال، فصارت الدنيا أملاك بكم من الآخرة، والعاجلة

أَذْهَبَ بِكُمْ مِنَ الْأَجَلَةِ، وَإِنَّمَا أَنْتُمْ إِخْوَانٌ عَلَى دِينِ اللَّهِ، مَا فَرَّقَ بَيْنَكُمْ إِلَّا حُبُّ السَّرَائِرِ،
وَسُوءُ الضَّمَائِرِ، فَلَا تَوَارِزُونَ، وَلَا تَنَاصِحُونَ، وَلَا تَبَادُلُونَ، وَلَا تَوَادُّونَ.

What is your condition? You feel satisfied with what little you have secured from this world while much of the next world of which you have been deprived does not grieve you. The little of this world which you lose pains you so much so that it becomes apparent in your faces, and in the lack of your endurance over whatever is taken away from you; as though this world is your permanent abode, and as though its wealth would stay with you for good.

Nothing prevents anyone among you to disclose to his comrade the shortcomings he is afraid of, except the fear that the comrade would also disclose to him similar defects. You have decided together on leaving the next world and loving this world. Your religion has become just licking with the tongue. It is like the work of one who has finished his job and secured satisfaction of his master.

مَا بِالْكُمْ تَفْرَحُونَ بِالْيَسِيرِ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا تُدْرِكُونَهُ، وَلَا يَحْزَنُكُمْ الْكَثِيرُ مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ تُحْرَمُونَهُ!
وَيُقْلِفُكُمْ الْيَسِيرُ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا يَفُوتُكُمْ، حَتَّى يَتَبَيَّنَ ذَلِكَ فِي وُجُوهِكُمْ، وَقَلَّةِ صَبْرِكُمْ عَمَّا رُويَ
مِنْهَا عَنْكُمْ! كَأَنَّهَا دَارُ مُقَامِكُمْ، وَكَأَنَّ مَتَاعَهَا بَاقٍ عَلَيْكُمْ. وَمَا يَمْنَعُ أَحَدَكُمْ أَنْ يَسْتَقْبِلَ
أَخَاهُ بِمَا يَخَافُ مِنْ عَيْبِهِ، إِلَّا خَافَهُ أَنْ يَسْتَقْبِلَهُ بِمِثْلِهِ، قَدْ تَصَافَيْتُمْ عَلَى رَفْضِ الْأَجْلِ وَحُبِّ
الْعَاجِلِ، وَصَارَ دِينُ أَحَدِكُمْ لُعْقَةً عَلَى لِسَانِهِ، صَنِيعَ مَنْ قَدْ فَرَعَ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ، وَأَحْرَزَ رِضَى
سَيِّدِهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 113

(1) *Al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, at the beginning;*

(2) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 86, 189.*

Sermon 114: Praise be to Him Who makes...

About abstemiousness, fear of Allah and importance of providing for the next life

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها مواظ للناس

Praise be to Him Who makes praise followed by bounty and bounty with gratefulness. We praise Him on His bounties as on His trials. We seek His help against these hearts which are slow to obey what they have been commended but quick towards what they have been desisted from. We seek His forgiveness from that which His knowledge covers and His document preserves - knowledge which does not leave anything and a document which does not omit anything. We believe in Him like the belief of one who has seen the unknown and has attained the promised rewards - belief, the purity whereof keeps off from belief in partners of Allah, and whose conviction removes doubt.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْوَاصِلِ الْحَمْدَ بِالنِّعَمِ وَالنِّعَمَ بِالشُّكْرِ، نَحْمَدُهُ عَلَى آيَاتِهِ كَمَا نَحْمَدُهُ عَلَى بَلَائِهِ، وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ عَلَى هَذِهِ النُّفُوسِ الْبِطَاءِ عَمَّا أُمِرَتْ بِهِ، السَّرِيعِ إِلَى مَا تُهَيِّئُ عَنْهُ، وَنَسْتَعْفِرُهُ مِمَّا أَحَاطَ بِهِ عِلْمُهُ، وَأَخْصَاهُ كِتَابُهُ: عِلْمٌ غَيْرُ قَاصِرٍ، وَكِتَابٌ غَيْرُ مُعَادِرٍ، وَتُؤْمِنُ بِهِ إِيمَانًا مَنِّ عَائِنَ الْغُيُوبِ، وَوَقَفَ عَلَى الْمَوْعُودِ، إِيمَانًا نَقَى إِخْلَاصُهُ الشِّرْكَ، وَيَقِينُهُ الشُّكَّ،

We stand witness that there is no god but Allah, the One, Who has no partner for Him, and that Muhammad is His slave and His Prophet, Allah may bless him and his descendants. These two testimonies heighten the utterance and raise the act. The scale wherein they would be placed would not be light while the scale from which they are removed would not become heavy.

وَنَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، شَهَادَتَيْنِ تُصْعَدَانِ الْقَوْلَ، وَتُرْفَعَانِ الْعَمَلَ، لَا يَخِفُ مِيزَانُ تَوْضَعَانِ فِيهِ، وَلَا يَثْقُلُ مِيزَانُ تُرْفَعَانِ مِنْهُ.

Enjoining people to Piety

O creatures of Allah! I advise you to have fear of Allah which is the provision (for the next world) and with it is (your) return. The provision would take you (to your destination) and the return would be successful. The best one who is able to make people listen has called towards it and the best listener has listened to it. So the caller has proclaimed and the listener has listened and preserved.

أَوْصِيكُمْ، عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ الَّتِي هِيَ الرِّزْقُ وَبِمَا الْمَعَادُ: زَادٌ مُبْلَغٌ وَمَعَادٌ مُنْجِحٌ، دَعَا إِلَيْهَا أَسْمَعُ دَاعٍ، وَوَعَاهَا خَيْرٌ وَاعٍ، فَاسْمَعْ دَاعِيَهَا، وَفَارَ وَاعِيَهَا .

O creations of Allah! Certainly fear of Allah has saved the lovers of Allah from unlawful items and gave His dread to their hearts till their nights are passed in wakefulness and their noons in thirst. So they achieve comfort through trouble and copious watering through thirst. They regarded death to be near and therefore hastened towards (good) actions. They rejected their desires and so they kept death in their sight.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ تَقْوَى اللَّهِ حَمَتِ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ تَحَارِمَهُ، وَالزَّمَتِ قُلُوبَهُمْ تَحَافَتَهُ، حَتَّى أَسْهَرَتْ لِيَالِيَهُمْ، وَأَظْمَأَتْ هَوَاجِرَهُمْ؛ فَأَخَذُوا الرَّاحَةَ بِالنَّصَبِ، وَالرِّيَّ بِالظَّمِّ، وَاسْتَفْرَبُوا الْأَجَلَ فَبَادَرُوا الْعَمَلَ، وَكَذَّبُوا الْأَمَلَ فَلَا حِطُّوا الْأَجَلَ.

Then, this world is a place of destruction, tribulations, changes and lessons. As for destruction, the time has its bow pressed (to readiness) and its dart does not go amiss, its wound does not heal; it afflicts the living with death, the healthy with ailment and the safe with distress. It is an eater who is not satisfied and a drinker whose thirst is never quenched. As for tribulation, a man collects what he does not eat and builds wherein he does not live. Then he goes out to Allah without carrying the wealth or shifting the building.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا دَارٌ فَنَاءٌ، وَعَنَاءٌ، وَغَيْرٌ، وَغَيْرٌ: فَمِنَ الْفَنَاءِ أَنَّ الدَّهْرَ مُوتِرٌ قَوْسُهُ، لَا تُحْطَى سِهَامُهُ، وَلَا تُؤَسَى جِرَاحُهُ، يَرْمِي الْحَيَّ بِالْمَوْتِ، وَالصَّحِيحَ بِالسَّقَمِ، وَالنَّاجِيَ بِالْعَطْبِ، آكِلٌ لَا يَشْبَعُ، وَشَارِبٌ لَا يَنْقَعُ. وَمِنَ الْعَنَاءِ أَنَّ الْمَرْءَ يَجْمَعُ مَا لَا يَأْكُلُ، وَيَبْنِي مَا لَا يَسْكُنُ، ثُمَّ يَخْرُجُ إِلَى اللَّهِ، لَا مَالًا حَمَلَ، وَلَا بِنَاءً نَقَلَ!

As for its changes, you see a pitiable man becoming enviable and an enviable man becoming pitiable. This is because the wealth has gone and misfortune has come to him. As for its lessons, a man reaches near (realisation of) his desires when (suddenly) the approach of his death cuts them; then neither the desire is achieved nor the desirer spared. Glory to Allah, how deceitful are its pleasures, how thirst-rousing its quenching and how sunny its shade. That which approaches (i.e. death) cannot be sent back, he who goes away does not return. Glory to Allah, how near is the living to the dead because he will meet him soon and how far is the dead from the living because he has gone away from him.

وَمِنْ غَيْرِهَا أَنَّكَ تَرَى الْمَرْحُومَ مَعْبُوطاً، وَالْمَعْبُوطَ مَرْحُوماً، لَيْسَ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا نَعِيماً زَلَّ، وَئُؤُوساً نَزَلَ. وَمِنْ غَيْرِهَا أَنَّ الْمَرْءَ يُشْرِفُ عَلَى أَمَلِهِ فَيَقْتَطِعُهُ حُضُورُ أَجَلِهِ، فَلَا أَمَلَ يُدْرِكُ، وَلَا مُؤَمَّلٍ يُشْرِكُ. فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، مَا أَعَزَّ سُورُهَا! وَأَظْمَأَ رِيَّهَا! وَأَضْحَى فَيْئَهَا! لَا جَاءَ يُرَدُّ، وَلَا مَاضٍ يَرْتَدُّ. فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ، مَا أَقْرَبَ الْحَيَّ مِنَ الْمَيِّتِ لِلْحَاقِقِ بِهِ، وَأَبْعَدَ الْمَيِّتِ مِنَ الْحَيِّ لِانْقِطَاعِهِ عَنْهُ!

Certainly nothing is viler than evil except its punishment and nothing is better than good except its reward. In this world everything that is heard is better than what is seen, while of everything of the next world that is seen is

better than what is heard. So you should satisfy yourself by hearing rather than seeing and by the news of the unknown. You should know that what is little in this world but much in the next is better than what is much in this world but little in the next. In how many cases little is profitable while much causes loss.

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ بِشَرِّ مِنَ الشَّرِّ إِلَّا عِقَابُهُ، وَلَيْسَ شَيْءٌ بِخَيْرٍ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ إِلَّا ثَوَابُهُ، وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا سَمَاعُهُ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ عِيَانِهِ، وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ عِيَانُهُ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ سَمَاعِهِ، فَلْيَكْفِكُمْ مِنَ الْعِيَانِ السَّمَاعُ، وَمِنَ الْعَيْبِ الْحَبِيرُ.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ مَا نَقَصَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَزَادَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا نَقَصَ مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ وَزَادَ فِي الدُّنْيَا: فَكَم مِّنْ مَّفُوصٍ رَابِحٍ وَمَزِيدٍ خَاسِرٍ!

Certainly that which you have been commanded to do is wider than what you have been refrained from, and what has been made lawful for you is more than what has been prohibited. Then give up what is less for what is much, and what is limited for what is vast. Allah has guaranteed your livelihood and has commanded you to act. Therefore, the pursuit of that which has been guaranteed to you should not get preference over that whose performance has been enjoined upon you.

إِنَّ الَّذِي أُمِرْتُمْ بِهِ أَوْسَعُ مِنَ الَّذِي نُهِيتُمْ عَنْهُ، وَمَا أُجِلَّ لَكُمْ أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ، فَذَرُوا مَا قَلَّ لِمَا كَثُرَ، وَمَا ضَاقَ لِمَا اتَّسَعَ. قَدْ تُكْفَلُ لَكُمْ بِالرِّزْقِ، وَأُمِرْتُمْ بِالْعَمَلِ، فَلَا يَكُونَنَّ الْمَضْمُونُ لَكُمْ طَلْبَهُ أَوْلَى بِكُمْ مِنَ الْمَفْرُوضِ عَلَيْكُمْ عَمَلُهُ،

But by Allah, most certainly the position is that doubt has overtaken and certainty has been shattered and it seems as if what has been guaranteed to you is obligatory on you and what was made obligatory on you has been taken away from you. So, hasten towards (good) actions and dread the suddenness of death, because the return of age cannot be hoped for, as the return of livelihood can be hoped for. Whatever is missed from livelihood today may be hoped tomorrow with increase, but whatever is lost from the age yesterday, its return cannot be expected today. Hope can be only for that which is to come, while about that which is passed there is only disappointment. So

"fear Allah as He ought to be feared and do not die until you are (true) Muslim." (Qur'an , 3:102)

مَعَ أَنَّهُ وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ اعْتَرَضَ الشُّكُّ، وَدَخَلَ الْيَقِينُ، حَتَّى كَأَنَّ الَّذِي ضَمِنَ لَكُمْ قَدْ فُرِضَ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَكَأَنَّ الَّذِي قَدْ فُرِضَ عَلَيْكُمْ قَدْ وُضِعَ عَنْكُمْ. فَبادِرُوا الْعَمَلَ، وَخَافُوا بَعْتَةَ الْأَجْلِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يُرْجَى مِنْ رَجْعَةِ الْعُمُرِ مَا يُرْجَى مِنْ رَجْعَةِ الرِّزْقِ، مَا فَاتَ الْيَوْمَ مِنَ الرِّزْقِ رُحِي عَدَا زِيَادَتُهُ، وَمَا فَاتَ أَمْسٍ مِنَ الْعُمُرِ لَمْ يُرْجَ الْيَوْمَ رَجْعَتُهُ. الرَّجَاءُ مَعَ الْجَانِي، وَالْيَأْسُ مَعَ الْمَاضِي، فَ (اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تَقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنْتُمْ مُسْلِمُونَ .)

Alternative Sources for Sermon 114

- (1) *Al-Yamani, al-Taraz, II, 335;*
- (2) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 156;*
- (3) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, II, at the beginning of each part;*
- (4) *al-Qadi al-Quda`i, Dustur, 33;*
- (5) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar;*
- (6) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, II, 107.*

Sermon 115: O my God! Surely our mountains...

Seeking rain

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في الاستسقاء

O my God! Surely our mountains have dried up and our earth has become dusty. Our cattle are thirsty and are bewildered in their enclosures. They are moaning like the moaning of mothers for their (dead) sons. They are tired of going to their meadows and longing for their watering places. O My God! Have mercy on the groan of the groaning and yearn of the yearning. O My God! Have mercy on their bewilderment and their passages and their groaning in their yards.

اللَّهُمَّ قَدْ انْصَحَتْ جِبَالُنَا، وَاعْبَرَتْ أَرْضُنَا، وَهَامَتْ دَوَابُّنَا، وَتَحَيَّرَتْ فِي مَرَابِضِهَا وَعَجَّتْ عَجِيجَ التَّكَالَى عَلَى أَوْلَادِهَا، وَمَلَّتِ التَّرْدُدَ فِي مَرَاتِعِهَا، وَالْحَيَنَ إِلَى مَوَارِدِهَا . اللَّهُمَّ فَارْحَمْ أُنَيْنَ الْأَنَّةِ وَحَيْنَ الْحَائَةِ اللَّهُمَّ فَارْحَمْ حَيْرَتَهَا فِي مَدَاهِبِهَا، وَأَيْنَهَا فِي مَوَالِجِهَا.

O My God! We have come out to Thee when the years of drought have crowded over us like (a herd of) thin camels, and rain clouds have abandoned us. Thou art the hope for the afflicted and succour for the seeker. We call Thee when the people have lost hopes, cloud has been denied and cattle have died, that do not seize us for our deeds and do not catch us for our sins, and spread Thy mercy over us through raining clouds, rain-fed blossoming, amazing vegetation, and heavy down-pours with which all that was dead regains life and all that was lost returns.

اللَّهُمَّ خَرَجْنَا إِلَيْكَ حِينَ اعْتَكَرَتْ عَلَيْنَا حَدَابِيرُ السَّيْنِينَ، وَأَخْلَقْتَنَا مَخَائِلُ الْجُودِ فَكُنْتَ الرَّجَاءَ لِلْمُبْتَسِسِ، وَالْبَلَاءَ لِلْمُلْتَمِسِ. نَدْعُوكَ حِينَ قَنَطَ الْأُنَامُ، وَمُنِعَ الْعِمَامُ، وَهَلَكَ السَّوَامُ أَلَّا تُؤَاخِذَنَا بِأَعْمَالِنَا، وَلَا تَأْخُذَنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا، وَأَنْشُرْ عَلَيْنَا رَحْمَتَكَ بِالسَّحَابِ الْمُنْبَعِقِ وَالرَّيْبِيعِ الْمُغْدِقِ وَالتَّيْبَاتِ الْمُونِقِ سَحًّا وَابِلًا تُحْيِي بِهِ مَا قَدْ مَاتَ، وَتُرْدُّ بِهِ مَا قَدْ فَاتَ

O My God! Give rain from Thee which should be life giving, satisfying, thorough, wide-scattered, purified, blissful, plentiful and invigorating. Its vegetation should be exuberant, its branches full of fruits and its leaves green. With it Thou reinvigorates the weak among Thy creatures and bringeth back to life the dead among Thy cities.

O My God! Give rain from Thee with which our high lands get covered with green herbage, streams get flowing, our sides grow green, our fruits thrive, our cattle prosper, our far-flung areas get watered and our dry areas get its benefit, with Thy vast blessing and immeasurable grant on Thy distressed universe and Thy untamed beasts.

And pour upon us rain which is drenching, continuous and heavy; wherein one cycle of rain clashes with the other and one rain drop pushes

another (into a continuous chain), its lightning should not be deceptive, its cheek not rainless, its white clouds not scattered and rain not light, so that the famine-stricken thrive with its abundant herbage and the drought stricken come to life with its bliss. Certainly, Thou pourest down rain after the people lose hopes and spreadest Thy mercy, since Thou art the Guardian, the praiseworthy.

اللَّهُمَّ سُقِيَا مِنْكَ مُحْيِيَّةً مُرْوِيَّةً، تَامَةً عَامَّةً، طَيِّبَةً مُبَارَكَةً، هَنِيئَةً مَرِيعةً زَاكِيًا نَبِيئًا،
ثَامِرًا فَرَعُهَا، نَاصِرًا وَرَفُهَا، تُنْعِشُ بِهَا الضَّعِيفَ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ، وَتُحْيِي بِهَا الْمَيِّتَ مِنْ بِلَادِكَ. اللَّهُمَّ
سُقِيَا مِنْكَ تُعْشِبُ بِهَا نِجَادُنَا وَتَجْرِي بِهَا وَهَادُنَا وَيُخْصِبُ بِهَا جَنَابُنَا وَتُقِيلُ بِهَا ثِمَارُنَا، وَتَعْبِشُ
بِهَا مَوَاشِينَا، وَتَنْدِي بِهَا أَقَاصِينَا وَتَسْتَعِينُ بِهَا ضَوَاحِينَا مِنْ بَرَكَاتِكَ الْوَاسِعَةِ، وَعَطَايَاكَ الْجُرْبَلَةِ،
عَلَى بَرِيَّتِكَ الْمُرْمَلَةِ وَوَحْشِكَ الْمُهْمَلَةِ. وَأَنْزِلْ عَلَيْنَا سَمَاءً مُخْضِلَةً مِدْرَارًا هَاطِلَةً، يُدَافِعُ الْوَدْقُ
مِنْهَا الْوَدْقَ، وَيَخْفِزُ الْقَطْرُ مِنْهَا الْقَطْرَ، غَيْرَ خُلْبٍ بَرُفُهَا وَلَا جَهَامٍ عَارِضُهَا وَلَا قَرَعٍ رَبَابُهَا،
وَلَا شَقَانٍ ذَهَابُهَا حَتَّى يُخْصِبَ لِأَمْرَاعِهَا الْمَجْدُبُونَ، وَيَجِيَا بِبَرَكَاتِهَا الْمَسْتَنْتُونَ فَإِنَّكَ تُنْزِلُ الْعَيْثَ
مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا قَنَطُوا، وَتَنْشُرُ رَحْمَتَكَ، وَأَنْتَ الْوَلِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: The wonderful expressions of this sermon:

Amir al-mu'minin's words "insahat jibaluna" means the mountains cracked on account of drought. It is said "insaha'ththawbu" when it is torn. It is also said "insaha'n-nabtu" or "saha" or "sawwaha" when vegetation withers and dries up.

قال السيد الشريف: تفسير ما في هذه الخطبة من الغريب. قوله عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «أَنْصَحَتْ جِبَالُنَا» أَيْ تَشَقَّقَتْ مِنَ الْمُحُولِ، يُقَالُ: «أَنْصَحَ التَّوْبُ» إِذَا انشَقَّ. وَ يُقَالُ أَيْضًا: «أَنْصَحَ النَّبْتُ» وَ «صَاحَ وَ صَوَّحَ» إِذَا جَفَّ وَ يَبَسَ. كُلُّهُ بِمَعْنَى.

His words "wa hamat dawabbuna" means became thirsty, as "huyam" means thirst.

His words "hadabiru's-sinin". This is plural of "hidbar". It means the camel whom treading has made thin. So Amir al-mu'minin likened with such a camel the year in which drought had occurred. The Arab poet Dhu ar-Rumamah has said:

These thin camels remain in their places, facing hardships and move only when we take them to some dry area.

وَقَوْلُهُ: «وَ هَامَتْ دَوَابُّنَا» أَيْ عَطِشَتْ، وَهِيَ أَيْضًا: الْعَطَشُ. وَ قَوْلُهُ: «حَدَابِيرُ السِّنِينَ» جَمْعُ «حَدْبَارٍ» وَ هِيَ النَّافَةُ الَّتِي أَنْصَاهَا السَّيْرُ، فَسَبَّهَ بِهَا السَّنَةَ الَّتِي فَشَا فِيهَا الْجُدْبُ. قَالَ دُوَالرُّمَّةُ: حَدَابِيرُ مَا تَنْفُكُ إِلَّا مُنَاحَةً *** عَلَى الْحَسْفِ أَوْ تَرْمِي بِهَا بَلَدًا قَفْرًا

His words "wa la qaza`in rababuha". Here "al-qaza" means small pieces of cloud scattered all round.

His words "wa la shaffanin dhihabuha". It stands for "wa la dhata shaffanin dhihabuha". "ash-shaffan" means the cold wind and "adh-dhihab"

means light rain. He omitted the word "dhata" from here because of the listener's knowledge of it.

وَ قَوْلُهُ: «وَلَا فَرَعَ رَبَائِهَا» الْفَرَعُ: الْقَطْعُ الصَّغَارُ الْمُتَفَرِّقَةُ مِنَ السَّحَابِ. وَ قَوْلُهُ: «وَلَا شَفَانَ ذِهَابُهَا» فَإِنَّ تَقْدِيرَهُ وَلَا ذَاتَ شَفَانَ ذِهَابُهَا. وَالشَّفَانُ: الرِّيحُ البَارِدَةُ، وَالدَّهَابُ: الأَمْطَارُ اللَّيْنَةُ. فَحَدَفَ «ذَاتَ» لِيَعْلَمَ السَّمَاعُ بِهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 115

- (1) *Al-Saduq, Man la yahduruh, I, 335;*
- (2) *al-Tusi, Misbah, adab salat al-'istisqa', see Kashif al-Ghita', Madarik, 250;*
- (3) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, bab al-sahab wa al-matar;*
- (4) *al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, V, 53;*
- (5) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, IV, 338;*
- (6) *al-Mufid, al-Jamal, 190, from (7)*
- (7) *al-Waqidi, al-Jamal;*
- (8) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 139, 159;*
- (9) *Ibn Miskawayh, Tajarib al-'umam, see Ta'sis al-Shi`ah, 415;*
- (10) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, I, 220.*

Sermon 116: Allah sent him (the Prophet) as a caller towards Truth...

About troubles which would arise and the Day of Judgement

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها ينصح أصحاب

Allah sent him (the Prophet) as a caller towards Truth and a witness over the creatures. The Prophet conveyed the messages of Allah tirelessly and without any negligence, and he fought His enemies in the cause of Allah unflinchingly and without pleading excuses. He is the foremost of all who practise piety and the power of perception of all those who achieve guidance.

أَرْسَلَهُ دَاعِيًا إِلَى الْحَقِّ، وَشَاهِدًا عَلَى الْخَلْقِ، فَبَلَغَ رِسَالَاتِ رَبِّهِ غَيْرَ وَاٍ وَلَا مُقَصِّرًا، وَجَاهِدَ فِي اللَّهِ أَعْدَاءَهُ غَيْرَ وَاٍ وَلَا مُعَدِّرًا، إِمَامًا مَنِ اتَّقَى، وَبَصُرَ مَنِ اهْتَدَى.

A part of the same sermon, complaining about his men

If you know what I know of the unknown that is kept wrapped up from you certainly you would have gone out into the open weeping over your deeds and beating yourselves in grief and you would have abandoned your properties without any guard for it or any substitute over it. Everyone would then have cared for his own self without paying attention to anyone else. But you have forgotten what was recalled to you and felt safe from what you had been warned. Consequently, your ideas went astray and your affairs were dispersed.

وَأَلَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ مَا أَعْلَمُ بِمَا طُوي عَنْكُمْ غَيْبُهُ، إِذَا خَرَجْتُمْ إِلَى الصُّعَدَاتِ، تَبْكُونَ عَلَى أَعْمَالِكُمْ، وَتَلْتَدِمُونَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَلَتَرَكْتُمْ أَمْوَالَكُمْ لَا حَارِسَ لَهَا وَلَا خَالِفَ عَلَيْهَا، وَهَمَمْتُمْ كُلَّ امْرِيءٍ مِنْكُمْ نَفْسُهُ، لَا يَلْتَفِتُ إِلَى غَيْرِهَا؛ وَلَكِنَّكُمْ نَسِيتُمْ مَا دُكِّرْتُمْ، وَأَمِنْتُمْ مَا حَذَرْتُمْ، فَتَاهَ عَنْكُمْ رَأْيِكُمْ، وَتَشَتَّتَ عَلَيْكُمْ أَمْرُكُمْ.

I do long that Allah may cause separation between me and you and give me those who have a better right to be with me than you. By Allah, they are people of blissful ideas, enduring wisdom and true speech. They keep aloof from revolt. They trod forward on the path (of Allah) and ran on the high road. Consequently, they achieved the everlasting next life and easeful honours.

Beware! by Allah, a tall lad of swinging gait from Banu Thaqif would be placed over you. He would eat away your vegetation and melt your fat. So, O Aba Wadhahah, is that all?

وَلَوِ دِدْتُ أَنَّ اللَّهَ فَزَّقَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ، وَالْحَقْفِي بَمَنْ هُوَ أَحَقُّ بِي مِنْكُمْ، فَوَمَّ وَاللَّهِ مَيَامِينُ الرَّأْيِ، مَرَاجِيحُ الْحِلْمِ، مَقَاوِيلُ بِالْحَقِّ، مَتَارِيكُ لِلْبَغْيِ. مَضَوْا قُدَمَا عَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ، وَأَوْجَفُوا عَلَى

الْمَحَجَّةَ، فَظَفَرُوا بِالْعُمَى الدَّائِمَةِ، وَالْكَرَامَةِ الْبَارِدَةِ. أَمَا وَاللَّهِ، لَيْسَلَطَنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ غَلَامٌ تَقِيفُ
الدِّيَالُ الْمِيَالُ، يَا أَكُلُ خَضِرَتِكُمْ، وَيُذِيبُ شَحْمَتَكُمْ، إِيهَ أَبَا وَدَّحَةَ!

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "al-Wadhahah" means "al-khunfusa' (dung-beetle)." In this sentence Amir al-mu'minin has referred to al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf ath-Thaqafi and he had an incident with "al-Khunfusa'", which need not be related here.¹

قال السيد الشريف: الودحة: الخنفساء. وهذا القول يومئ به إلى الحجاج، وله مع
الودحة حديث ليس هذا موضع ذكره.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 116

- (1) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, VI, 249;*
- (2) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, III, 150;*
- (3) *al-'Azharī, Tahdhib, VII, 101 (kh.d.r);*
- (4) *Ibn Faqih, al-Buldan, 181;*
- (5) *al-Harawi, al-Jam`, see Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, II, 41, V, 170;*
- (6) *al-Muttaqi, Kanz, VI, 87;*
- (7) *al-Daylami, al-'Irshad, I, 33.*

Notes

1. The detail of this incident is that one day al-Hajjaj stood up for saying prayers when al-khunfusa' advanced towards him. al-Hajjaj held out his hand to stop him but he bit him whereby his hand got swollen and eventually he died of it. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written that "al-Wadhahah" means the dung that remains sticking to the tail of an animal, and this surname is intended to disgrace him.

Sermon 117: You spent no wealth ...

Rebuking Misers

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

يوبخ البخلاء بالمال والنفس

You spend no wealth in the cause of Him Who gave it, nor do you risk your lives for the sake of Him Who created them. You enjoy honour through Allah among His creatures, but you do not honour Allah among His creatures. You should derive lessons from your occupying the places of those who were before you and from the departure of your nearest brothers.

فَلَا أَمْوَالَ بَدَلْتُمُوهَا لِلَّذِي رَزَقَهَا، وَلَا أَنْفُسَ حَاطَرْتُمْ بِهَا لِلَّذِي خَلَقَهَا، تَكْرُمُونَ بِاللَّهِ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ، وَلَا تُكْرِمُونَ اللَّهَ فِي عِبَادِهِ! فَاعْتَبِرُوا بِنُزُولِكُمْ مَنَازِلَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ، وَانْقِطَاعِكُمْ عَنْ أَصْلِ إِخْوَانِكُمْ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 117

See `Abd al-Zahra', II, 260.

Sermon 118: You are supporters of Truth and brethren in faith...

In praise of his faithful companions

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في الصالحين من أصحابه

You are supporters of Truth and brethren in faith. You are the shield on the day of tribulation, and (my) trustees among the rest of the people. With your support I strike the runner away and hope for the obedience of him who advances forward. Therefore, extend to me support which is free from deceit and pure from doubt because, by Allah, I am the most preferable of all for the people.

أَنْتُمْ الْأَنْصَارُ عَلَى الْحَقِّ، وَالْإِخْوَانُ فِي الدِّينِ، وَالْجُنُودُ يَوْمَ الْبَأْسِ، وَالْبَطَانَةُ دُونَ النَّاسِ،
بِكُمْ أَضْرِبُ الْمُدْبِرَ، وَأَرْجُو طَاعَةَ الْمُقْبِلِ، فَأَعِينُونِي بِمُنَاصَحَةِ حَلِيَّةٍ مِنَ الْغَيْشِ، سَلِيمَةٍ مِنَ
الرَّيْبِ؛ فَوَ اللَّهُ إِيَّيَّ لَأَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِالنَّاسِ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 118

(1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh;*

(2) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-'Imamah, I, 121;*

(3) *al-Waqidi, in al-Jamal and;*

(4) *al-Mada'ini in his book, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh, II, 259.*

Sermon 119: What has happened to you?....

Amir al-mu'minin collected the people and exhorted them¹ to jihad but they observed long silence. Then he said: "What is the matter with you. Have you become dumb?" A group of them replied: "O' Amir al-mu'minin if you go forth we shall be with you." Whereupon Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

وقد جمع الناس وحصّهم على الجهاد، فسكتوا ملياً، فقال (عليه السلام) ما بالكم أَمْخَرْتُمْ أَنْتُمْ؟ فقال قوم منهم: يا أميرالمؤمنين، إن سرت سرنا معك. فقال (عليه السلام):

What has happened to you? You may not be guided aright or shown the right path. Should in these circumstances I go forth? In fact, at this time one of the brave and the valorous among you whom I select should go out. It does not suit me to leave the army, the city, the public treasury, the land revenue, the dispensation of justice among Muslims and looking after the demands of the claimants and to follow one contingent after the other moving here and there like a featherless arrow moving in the quiver.

ما بالكم! لا سُدِّدْتُمْ لِرُشْدٍ! وَلَا هُدَيْتُمْ لِقَصْدٍ! أَي مِثْلِ هَذَا يَنْبَغِي لِي أَنْ أَخْرُجَ؟ إِنَّمَا يَخْرُجُ فِي مِثْلِ هَذَا رَجُلٌ مِمَّنْ أَرْضَاهُ مِنْ شُجْعَانِكُمْ وَذَوِي بَأْسِكُمْ، وَلَا يَنْبَغِي لِي أَنْ أَدْعَ الْجُنُودَ وَالْمَصْرَ، وَبَيْتَ الْمَالِ، وَجَبَايَةَ الْأَرْضِ، وَالْقَضَاءَ بَيْنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَالنَّظَرَ فِي حُقُوقِ الْمُطَالِبِينَ، ثُمَّ أَخْرُجَ فِي كَتِيبَةٍ اتَّبَعُ أُخْرَى، أَتَقَلُّقُلُ تَقَلُّقُلَ الْقِدْحِ فِي الْجَنْفِيرِ الْفَارِغِ،

I am the axis of the mill. It rotates on me while I remain in my position. As soon as I leave it the centre of its rotation would be disturbed and its lower stone would also be disturbed. By Allah, this is a very bad advice. By Allah, if I had not been hoping for martyrdom by my meeting with the enemy - and my meeting with him has been ordained, I would have secured my carrier and gone away from you and would not have sought you so long as North and South differed.

وَأَيُّمَا أَنَا قُطْبُ الرَّحَا، تَدُورُ عَلَيَّ وَأَنَا بِمَكَانِي، فَإِذَا فَارَقْتُهُ اسْتَحَارَ مَدَارُهَا، وَاضْطَرَبَ ثِقَالُهَا. هَذَا لَعَمْرُ اللَّهِ الرَّأْيُ السُّوْءُ. وَاللَّهِ لَوْ لَا رَجَائِي الشَّهَادَةَ عِنْدَ لِقَائِي الْعَدُوِّ. وَلَوْ قَدْ حُمَّ لِي لِقَاؤُهُ. لَقَرَّبْتُ رِكَابِي ثُمَّ شَخَّصْتُ عَنْكُمْ، فَلَا أَطْلُبُكُمْ مَا اخْتَلَفَ جَنُوبٌ وَسَمَائِلٌ.

(You are) calumniators, fault-finders, deviators (from the truth) and guileful! There is no benefit in the majority of your numbers because of lack of unity of your hearts. I have put you on the clear path whereon no one will perish except who perishes by himself. He who sticks to it would achieve Paradise and he who deviates goes to Hell.

طَعَانِينَ عِيَابِينَ حَيَّادِينَ رَوَّاعِينَ! إِنَّهُ لَا عَنَاءَ فِي كَثْرَةِ عَدَدِكُمْ مَعَ قَلَّةِ اجْتِمَاعِ قُلُوبِكُمْ. لَقَدْ
حَمَلْتُمْ عَلَى الطَّرِيقِ الْوَاضِحِ الَّتِي لَا يَهْلِكُ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا هَالِكٌ، مَنْ اسْتَقَامَ فَإِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، وَمَنْ زَلَّ
فَإِلَى النَّارِ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 119

Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 215 (th.f.l) .

Notes

1. When after the Battle of Siffin, Mu'awiyah's forces began to attack various places in Amir al-mu'minin's area, he asked the Iraqis to check them but they declined on the plea that they would follow him if he himself came forward. Thereupon he delivered this sermon, and clarified his limitations, that if he himself went out it was impossible to run the affairs of the state, and that the enemy's attacks had already started on all sides. In these circumstances it was impolitic to keep the centre unguarded. But what could be hoped from those who changed the victory at Siffin into defeat and opened the door for these attacks.

Sermon 120: By Allah, I have knowledge of...

About the greatness of Ahlul Bayt and the importance of the laws of Islam

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

يذكر فضله ويعظ الناس

By Allah, I have knowledge of the conveyance of messages, fulfilment of promises and of entire expressions. We the people of the house (of the Prophet - Ahlul Bayt) possess the doors of wisdom and light of governance. Beware that the paths of religion are one and its highways are straight. He who follows them achieves (the aim) and secures (the objective). And he who stood away from it went astray and incurred repentance.

تَاللّٰهِ لَقَدْ عَلِمْتُ تَبْلِيغَ الرِّسَالَاتِ، وَإِتْمَامَ الْعِدَاتِ، وَتَمَامَ الْكَلِمَاتِ. وَعِنْدَنَا . أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ .
أَبْوَابَ الْحُكْمِ وَضِيَاءَ الْأَمْرِ. أَلَا وَإِنَّ شَرَائِعَ الدِّينِ وَاحِدَةٌ، وَسُبُلُهُ قَاصِدَةٌ، مَنْ أَحَدَ بِهَا لِحَقِّ
وَعَنَمٍ، وَمَنْ وَقَفَ عَنْهَا ضَلَّ وَنَدِمَ.

Act for the day for which provisions are stored, and when the intentions would be tested. If a person's own intelligence which is present with him does not help him, the wits (of others) which are remote from him are more unhelpful and those which are away from him more useless. Dread the fire whose flame is severe, whose hollow is deep, whose dress is iron and whose drink is bloody pus. Beware! The ¹ good name of a man retained by Allah, the Sublime, among the people is better than wealth inherited by those who would not praise him.

اعْمَلُوا لِيَوْمٍ تُدْخِرُ لَهُ الدَّخَائِرُ، وَتُبْلَى فِيهِ السَّرَائِرُ، وَمَنْ لَا يَنْفَعُهُ حَاضِرٌ لُبِّهِ فَعَازِيهِ عَنْهُ
أَعَجُزٌ، وَعَاقِبَتُهُ أَعْوَزُ. وَاتَّقُوا نَاراً حَرُّهَا شَدِيدٌ، وَقَعْرُهَا بَعِيدٌ، وَحَلِيَّتُهَا حَدِيدٌ، وَشَرَائِبُهَا صَدِيدٌ.
أَلَا وَإِنَّ اللِّسَانَ الصَّالِحَ يَجْعَلُهُ اللهُ لِلْمَرْءِ فِي النَّاسِ، خَيْرٌ لَهُ مِنَ الْمَالِ يُورِثُهُ مَنْ لَا يَحْمَدُهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 120

(1) *Kitab Sulaym ibn Qays*. 142;

(2) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar*, 81, 82, 83.

Notes

1. If a person gives away something in his life time then the recipient feels obliged to him. But if wealth is extracted by force then the extractor does not feel himself under his obligation, nor does he praise it. The same is the case of one who dies. His successors think that whatever he had left behind was their right and they should have received it. In this there is no obligation of his to be acknowledged. But if he had done some good act with this very wealth his name would have remained behind him and people would have praised him also.

A Persian couplet says: Happy is he who is remembered well after himself, for nothing save the name remains after the man is dead.

Sermon 121: This is the reward of one who breaks a pledge...

After Laylatu'l Harir (in Siffin)

A man from among the companions of Amir al-mu'minin stood up and said, "O Amir al-mu'minin, you first stopped us from Arbitration and thereafter gave order for it. We do not know which of these two was more appropriate." Amir al-mu'minin struck one hand over the other and said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

بعد ليلة الهريير

وقد قام رجل من أصحابه فقال: نهيئنا عن الحكومة ثم أمرتنا بها، فما ندري أيّ الأمرين

أرشد؟

فصفق (عليه السلام) إحدى يديه على الأخرى ثم قال:

This is the reward of one who breaks a pledge. By Allah, when I gave you my orders (namely) to abide by arbitration I had led you to an undesirable thing (namely war) in which Allah had ordained good. If you had been steadfast I would have guided you, if you had been bent I would have straightened you and if you had refused I would have rectified you. This was the surest way. But with whom and to whom? I wanted my treatment from you but you proved to be my disease, like the extractor of thorn with the thorn when he knows that the thorn bends towards itself.

My God, the physicians have despaired of this fatal ailment and water-drawers have become tired with the rope of this well.

هذا جزاء من ترك العقده! أما والله لو أبي حين أمرتكم بما أمرتكم به حملتكم على المكروه الذي يجعل الله فيه خيراً، فإن استقمتم هديتكم وإن اعوججتم قوئتمكم وإن أبيتم تداركتكم، لكانت الوثقى، ولكن بمن وإلى من؟ أريد أن أداوي بكم وأنتم دائي، كناقش الشوكة بالشوكة، وهو يعلم أن ضلعها معها!

اللهم قد ملئت أطباء هذا الداء الدوي، وكلت النزع بأشطان الركي!

Where ¹ are those who were invited to Islam and they accepted it? They read the Qur'an and decided according to it. They were exhorted to fight and they leapt (towards it) as she-camels leap towards their young. They took their swords out of the sheaths and went out into the world in groups and rows. Some of them perished and some survived. The good news of survival does not please them nor do they get condoled about the dead. Their eyes have turned white with weeping. Their bellies are emaciated because of fasting. Their lips are dry because of (constant) praying. Their colour is pale because of wakefulness. Their faces bear the dust of God-fearing. These are my comrades who have departed. We should be justified if we feel eager for them and bite our hands in their separation.

أَيُّنَ الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ دُعُوا إِلَى الْإِسْلَامِ فَقَبِلُوهُ؟ وَقَرَأُوا الْقُرْآنَ فَأَحْكَمُوهُ؟ وَهَيَّجُوا إِلَى الْجِهَادِ
فَوَهَّوُوا اللَّيَّاحَ أَوْلَادَهَا، وَسَلَبُوا السُّيُوفَ أَعْمَادَهَا، وَأَخَذُوا بِأَطْرَافِ الْأَرْضِ رَحْفًا رَحْفًا وَصَفًّا
صَفًّا! بَعْضُ هَلْكَ، وَبَعْضُ نَجَا.

لَا يُبَشِّرُونَ بِالْأَحْيَاءِ، وَلَا يُعَزِّوْنَ عَنِ الْمَوْتَى، مُرَّةُ الْعُيُونِ مِنَ الْبُكَاءِ، خُمُصُ الْبُطُونِ مِنَ
الصَّيَامِ، ذُبُلُ الشَّفَاهِ مِنَ الدَّعَاءِ، صُفْرُ الْأَلْوَانِ مِنَ السَّهْرِ، عَلَى وَجُوهِهِمْ غَبْرَةٌ الْخَاشِعِينَ،
أُولَئِكَ إِخْوَانِي الدَّاهِبُونَ، فَحَقَّ لَنَا أَنْ نَنْظُمَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَنَعُضَّ الْأَيْدِي عَلَى فِرَاقِهِمْ!

Certainly, Satan has made his ways easy for you and wants to unfasten the knots of religion one by one and to cause division among you in place of unity. Keep away from his evil ideas and enchantments and accept good advice of one who offers it to you and preserve it in your minds.

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ يُسَيِّ لَكُمْ طُرُقَهُ، وَيُرِيدُ أَنْ يَخْلَّ دِينَكُمْ عُقْدَةً عُقْدَةً، وَيُعْطِيكُمْ بِالْجَمَاعَةِ
الْفُرْقَةَ، وَبِالْفُرْقَةِ الْقَتْنَةَ؛ فَاصْدِفُوا عَنْ نَزْعَاتِهِ وَنَفَقَاتِهِ، وَاقْبَلُوا النَّصِيحَةَ بِمَنْ أَهْدَاهَا إِلَيْكُمْ،
وَاعْقِلُوهَا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 121

- (1) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, II, 165;*
- (2) *Ibn Talhah, Matalib, I, 100;*
- (3) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 139;*
- (4) *al-Mufid, al-'Ikhtisas, 153, quoted from Ibn Da'b's work;*
- (5) *al-Tabarsi, al-'Ihtijaj, I, 273;*
- (6) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, 130;*
- (7) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar;*
- (8) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, * 135.*

Notes

1. Although all those who fought under the banner of Amir al-mu'minin were called Shi'ahs of `Ali, yet only those who had tears in their eyes, paleness on their faces, the Qur'anic verses on their tongues, zeal of religion in their hearts, steadfastness in their feet, determination and courage in their spirits, and patience and endurance in their minds could in true sense he called Shi'ahs of `Ali. These were the people in whose separation Amir al-mu'minin's feelings were coming out in the shape of sighs through the breath, while the flames of the fire of separation were consuming his heart and spirit. These were the people who leapt towards death like mad men and did not feel happy if they survived. Rather, their heart's slogan was as the Persian hemistich says: We are ashamed why we have remained alive.

He who has even a slight brilliance of these qualities can alone be called the follower of the Descendants of the Prophet or the Shi'ah of `Ali, otherwise it would be a word which has lost its meaning and been bereft of its dignity through misuse. Thus tradition has it that Amir al-mu'minin saw a group of men at his door and enquired from Qanbar who they were and he answered they were his Shi'ahs. On hearing this Amir al-mu'minin had a frown on his forehead and said. "Why are they called Shi'ahs? They have no sign of Shi'ahs." Thereupon Qanbar enquired what were the signs of Shi'ahs and Amir al-mu'minin replied:

Their bellies are thin through hunger, their lips dry through thirst and their eyes bleared through weeping.

Sermon 122: Were all of you with us in Siffin?...

When the Kharijites persisted in their rejecting the Arbitration, Amir al-mu'minin went to their camp and addressed them thus:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

قاله للخوارج، وقد خرج إلى معسكرهم وهم مقيمون على إنكار الحكومة، فقال (عليه

السلام)

Were all of you ¹ with us in Siffin? They replied that some of them were but some of them were not.

Amir al-mu'minin said: Then you divide yourselves into two groups. One of those who were in Siffin and other of those who were not present there, so that I may address each as I see suitable. Then he shouted to the people: Stop talking and keep quiet to listen to what I say. Turn your hearts to me. Whomever we ask for evidence, he should give it according to his knowledge about it.

أَكُلُّكُمْ شَهِدَ مَعَنَا صِفِّينَ؟ فَقَالُوا: مِنَّا مَنْ شَهِدَ وَمِنَّا مَنْ لَمْ يَشْهَدْ.

قَالَ: فَأَمَّا زُؤَا فِرْقَتَيْنِ، فَلْيَكُنْ مَنْ شَهِدَ صِفِّينَ فِرْقَةً، وَمَنْ لَمْ يَشْهَدْهَا فِرْقَةً، حَتَّى أَكَلِمَ كَلَامًا

مِنْكُمْ بِكَلَامِهِ.

وَ نَادَى النَّاسَ، فَقَالَ: أَمْسِكُوا عَنِ الْكَلَامِ، وَأَنْصِتُوا لِقَوْلِي، وَأَقْبِلُوا بِأَفْئِدَتِكُمْ إِلَيَّ، فَمَنْ

نَشَدْنَا شَهَادَةً فَلْيُفْلِحْ بِعِلْمِهِ فِيهَا.

Then he had a long conversation with them during which he said:

When they had raised the Qur'an by way of deceit, craft, artifice and cheat, did you not say "They are our brothers and our comrades in accepting Islam. They want us to cease fighting, and ask for protection through the Book of Allah, the Glorified. Our opinion is to agree with them and to end their troubles?" Then I said to you, "In this affair the outer side is Faith but the inner side is enmity. Its beginning is pity and the end is repentance. Consequently you should stick to your position, and remain steadfast on your path. You should press your teeth (to put all your might) in jihad and should not pay heed to the shouts of the shouter.² If he is answered he would mislead, but if he is left (unanswered) he would be disgraced."

ثُمَّ كَلَّمَهُمْ (عليه السلام) بِكَلَامٍ طَوِيلٍ، مِنْ جُمْلَتِهِ أَنْ قَالَ:

أَلَمْ تَقُولُوا عِنْدَ رَفْعِهِمُ الْمَصَاحِفَ . حِيَلَةٌ وَغِيَلَةٌ وَمَكْرًا وَخَدِيعَةً .: إِخْوَانُنَا وَأَهْلُ دَعْوَتِنَا،

اسْتَقَالُونَا وَاسْتَرَاخُوا إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ، فَالرَّأْيُ الْقَبُولُ مِنْهُمْ وَالتَّنْفِيسُ عَنْهُمْ؟

فَقُلْتُ لَكُمْ: هَذَا أَمْرٌ ظَاهِرُهُ إِيمَانٌ، وَبَاطِنُهُ عُدْوَانٌ، وَأَوَّلُهُ رَحْمَةٌ، وَآخِرُهُ نَدَامَةٌ، فَأَقْبِلُوا عَلَيَّ شَأْنَكُمْ، وَالزُّمُوا طَرِيقَتَكُمْ، وَعَضُّوا عَلَيَّ الْجِهَادِ بِنَوَاجِدِكُمْ، وَلَا تَلْتَفِتُوا إِلَى نَاعِقِ نَعَقٍ: إِنَّ أُحْيِبَ أَضَلَّ، وَإِنْ تُرِكَ ذَلَّ.

But when this thing (Arbitration) was done I found that you agreed to it. By Allah, if I had refused it, it would not have been obligatory on me. Nor would Allah have laid its sin on me. And by Allah, now that I have accepted it, I alone am the rightful person who should be followed, for certainly the Qur'an is with me. I have never forsaken it since I adopted its company. We have been with the Prophet in battles wherein those killed were fathers, sons, brothers and relations of one another. Nevertheless, every trouble and hardship just increased us in our belief, in our treading on the right path, in submission to (divine) command and in endurance of the pain of wounds.

وَقَدْ كَانَتْ هَذِهِ الْفَعْلَةُ، وَقَدْ رَأَيْتُكُمْ أَعْطَيْتُمُوهَا، وَاللَّهُ لَئِنْ أَبَيْتُهَا مَا وَجِبَتْ عَلَيَّ فَرِيضَتُهَا وَلَا حَمَلِي اللَّهُ ذَنْبَهَا، وَاللَّهُ إِنْ جِئْتُهَا إِنِّي لِلْمُحِقِّ الَّذِي يُتَّبَعُ، وَإِنَّ الْكِتَابَ لَمَعِي، مَا فَارَقْتُهُ مُذْ صَحِبْتُهُ. فَلَقَدْ كُنَّا مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، وَإِنَّ الْقَتْلَ لَيَدُورُ بَيْنَ الْأَبَاءِ وَالْأَبْنَاءِ وَالْأَخْوَانَ وَالْقَرَابَاتِ، فَمَا نَزْدَادُ عَلَى كُلِّ مُصِيبَةٍ وَشِدَّةٍ إِلَّا إِيمَانًا، وَمُضِيًّا عَلَى الْحَقِّ، وَتَسْلِيمًا لِلْأَمْرِ، وَصَبْرًا عَلَى مَضَضِ الْحِرَاحِ.

We now had to fight our brethren in Islam because of entry into Islam of misguidance, crookedness, doubts and (wrong) interpretation. However, if we find any way by which Allah may collect us together in our disorder and by which we may come near each other in whatever common remains between us, we would accept it and would give up everything else.

وَلَكِنَّا إِنَّمَا أَصْبَحْنَا نُقَاتِلُ إِخْوَانَنَا فِي الْأَسْلَامِ عَلَى مَا دَخَلَ فِيهِ مِنَ الرَّيْغَلَةِ يَلُمُّ اللَّهُ بِهَا شَعْنَنَا، وَالْأَعْوَجَاجِ، وَالشُّبُهَةِ وَالْتَّأْوِيلِ، فَإِذَا طَمِعْنَا فِي حِصِّ وَتَنَدَانِي بِهَا إِلَى الْبَقِيَّةِ فِيمَا بَيْنَنَا، رَغِبْنَا فِيهَا، وَأَمْسَكْنَا عَمَّا سِوَاهَا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 122

(1) *Al-Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj, I, 274;*

(2) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-Ma`arif, II, 136.*

Notes

1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes that this sermon comprises three parts which do not fit together, because as-Sayyid ar-Radi selected some parts of Amir al-mu'minin's sermons and did not record other parts as a result of which the continuity of utterance was not maintained. Thus, one part ends at "if he is left unanswered he would be disgraced", the other at "and endurance at the pain of wound" and the third runs till the end of the sermon.
2. This reference is to Mu`awiyah or `Amr ibn al-`As.

Sermon 123: Whoever among you feels spiritedness of heart...

**Amir al-mu'minin's address to his followers on the battlefield of Siffin
(About supporting the weak and the low-spirited during the fighting)**

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

قاله لاصحابه في ساعة الحرب بصفين

Whoever among you feels spiritedness of heart during the action and finds any of his comrades feeling disheartened should ward off (the enemies) from him just as he would do from himself, because of the superiority he enjoys over the other, for if Allah had willed He would have made the former also like him. Certainly death is a quick seeker. Neither does the steadfast escape it nor can the runner-away defy it. The best death is to be killed. By Allah in Whose hand (power) lies the life of the son of Abu Talib, certainly a thousand strikings of the sword on me are easier to me than a death in bed which is not in obedience to Allah.

وَأَيُّ امْرِئٍ مِنْكُمْ أَحْسَنُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ رَبَاطَةَ جَأَشٍ عِنْدَ اللَّقَاءِ، وَرَأَى مِنْ أَحَدٍ مِنْ إِخْوَانِهِ فَشَلًّا، فَلْيَدُبَّ عَنْ أَخِيهِ بِفَضْلِ نَجْدَتِهِ الَّتِي فَضَّلَ بِهَا عَلَيْهِ كَمَا يَدُبُّ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ، فَلَوْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لَجَعَلَهُ مِثْلَهُ. إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ طَالِبٌ حَثِيثٌ لَا يَفُوتُهُ الْمُقِيمُ، وَلَا يُعْجِزُهُ الْهَارِبُ. إِنَّ أَكْرَمَ الْمَوْتِ الْقَتْلُ! وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ ابْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ بِيَدِهِ، لَأَلْفُ ضَرْبَةٍ بِالسَّيْفِ أَهْوَنُ مِنْ مِيتَةٍ عَلَى الْفِرَاشِ فِي غَيْرِ طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ!

A part of the same sermon

It is as if I see you uttering voices like the rustling sound of lizards! You do not seek your own claims nor do you defend against oppression. You have been let free on the path. He who rushes (into the battle) achieves salvation, while he who lags behind, hesitating, gets destruction.

وَكَأَنِّي أَنْظُرُ إِلَيْكُمْ تَكِشُونَ كَشْيَشَ الضَّبَابِ: لَا تَأْخُذُونَ حَقًّا، وَلَا تَمْنَعُونَ ضَيْمًا. قَدْ حُلَيْبْتُمْ وَالطَّرِيقَ، فَالْنَّجَاةُ لِلْمُقْتَحِمِ، وَالْهَلَكَةُ لِلْمُتَلَوِّمِ

Alternative Sources for Sermon 123

- (1) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, IV, 338;*
- (2) *al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, V, 53;*
- (3) *al-Mufid, al-Jamal, 190, from al-Waqidi's al-Jamal;*
- (4) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 139, 159;*
- (5) *Ibn Miskawayh, Tajarib al-'umam, see Ta'sis al-Shi`ah, 415;*
- (6) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, I, 220.*

Sermon 124: Put the armoured man forward...

Exhorting his followers to fight ¹

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في حضّ أصحابه على القتال

Put the armoured man forward and keep the unarmoured one behind. Grit your teeth because this will make the swords skip off the skull, and dodge on the sides of the spears for it changes the direction of their blades. Close the eyes because it strengthens the spirit and gives peace to the heart. Kill the voices because this will keep off spiritlessness.

فَقَدِّمُوا الدَّارِعَ، وَأَخْرِجُوا الحَاسِرَ، وَعَضُّوا عَلَى الأَصْرَاسِ فَإِنَّهُ أَنْبَى لِلسُّيُوفِ عَنِ الهَامِ، وَالتَّوَوَّا فِي أَطْرَافِ الرِّمَاحِ فَإِنَّهُ أَمُورٌ لِلأَسِنَّةِ، وَعَضُّوا الأَبْصَارَ فَإِنَّهُ أَرْبَطُ لِلجَاشِ وَأَسْكَنُ لِلْقُلُوبِ، وَأَمِيتُوا الأَصْوَاتَ فَإِنَّهُ أَطْرُدُ لِلْفَسْتَلِ.

Do not let your banner bend down, nor leave it alone. Do not give it to anyone except the brave and the defenders of honour among you because they alone endure the befalling of troubles; they surround the banners and encircle them on both sides, their rear and their front. They do not separate from them lest they give them over (to the enemy). They do not go ahead of them lest they leave them alone. Everyone should deal with his adversary and also help his comrade by his own life, and should not leave the adversary to his comrade lest both his own adversary and his comrade join against him.

وَرَايَتِكُمْ فَلَا تُمِيلُوهَا وَلَا تُخْلُوهَا، وَلَا تَجْعَلُوهَا إِلَّا بِأَيْدِي شُجْعَانِكُمْ، وَالْمَانِعِينَ الدِّمَارَ مِنْكُمْ، فَإِنَّ الصَّابِرِينَ عَلَى نُزُولِ الحَقَائِقِ هُمُ الَّذِينَ يَحْفُونَ بِرَأْيَاتِهِمْ، وَيَكْتَنِفُونَهَا: حَقَائِقِهَا، وَوَرَاءَهَا، وَأَمَامَهَا، لَا يَتَأَخَّرُونَ عَنْهَا فَيَسْلِمُوهَا، وَلَا يَتَقَدِّمُونَ عَلَيْهَا فَيُفْرِدُوهَا. أَجْزَأُ امْرُؤٌ قِرْنَهُ، وَأَسَى أَحَاهُ بِنَفْسِهِ، وَمَنْ يَكِلْ قِرْنَهُ إِلَى أَخِيهِ فَيَجْتَمِعَ عَلَيْهِ قِرْنُهُ وَقِرْنُ أَخِيهِ.

By Allah, even if you run away from the sword of today you would not remain safe from the sword of the next world. You are the foremost among the Arabs and great figures. Certainly in running away there is the wrath of Allah, unceasing disgrace and lasting shame.

And certainly a runner-away does not lengthen his life, nor does any thing come to intervene between him and his day (of death). Who is there to go towards Allah like the thirsty going to the water? Paradise lies under the edges of spears. Today the reputations (about the valour of warriors) will be tested.

By Allah! I am more eager to meet them (in combat) than they are for (returning to) their houses. O My God! If they reject truth disperse their group, divide their words (opinion) and destroy them on account of their sins.

وَأَيْمُ اللَّهِ لَئِن فَرَرْتُمْ مِنْ سَيْفِ الْعَاجِلَةِ، لَا تَسْلَمُوا مِنْ سَيْفِ الْأَخِرَةِ، أَنْتُمْ هَامِيمٌ الْعَرَبِ،
وَالسَّنَامُ الْأَعْظَمُ، إِنَّ فِي الْفِرَارِ مَوْجِدَةَ اللَّهِ، وَالذُّلَّ اللَّارِمَ، وَالْعَارَ الْبَاقِيَّ، وَإِنَّ الْقَارَّ لَعَيْرٌ مَزِيدٌ
فِي عُمُرِهِ، وَلَا تَحْجُوزُ بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ يَوْمِهِ. مَنْ رَائِحٌ إِلَى اللَّهِ كَالظَّمَانِ يَرِدُ الْمَاءَ؟ الْجَنَّةُ تَحْتَ
أَطْرَافِ الْعَوَالِي! الْيَوْمَ تُبْلَى الْأَحْبَارُ! وَاللَّهِ لَأَنَا أَشَوْقٌ إِلَى لِقَائِهِمْ مِنْهُمْ إِلَى دِيَارِهِمْ. اللَّهُمَّ
فَإِنْ رَدُّوا الْحَقَّ فَافْضُضْ جَمَاعَتَهُمْ، وَشَتِّتْ كَلِمَتَهُمْ، وَأَبْسِلْهُمْ بِحَطَايَاهُمْ.

They will not budge from their stand till the continuous striking of spears causes piercings (of wounds) through which wind may pass, and the hitting of swords cuts through the skull, cleaves bones and breaks forearms and legs, till they are attacked by contingent after contingent and assaulted by detachments which are followed by reserves for support, till their cities are continuously assailed by force after force, and till the horses trample even the extreme ends of the lands, the tracks of their beast and their meadows.

إِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَزُولُوا عَنْ مَوَاقِفِهِمْ دُونَ طَعْنِ دِرَاكٍ يَخْرُجُ مِنْهُ النَّسِيمُ، وَضَرْبِ يَفْلِقُ الْهَامَ، وَيُطِيحُ
الْعِظَامَ، وَيُنْدِرُ السَّوَاعِدَ وَالْأَقْدَامَ، وَحَتَّى يُرْمَوْا بِالْمَنَاسِرِ تَتَّبِعُهَا الْمَنَاسِرُ، وَيُرْجَمُوا بِالْكَتَائِبِ،
تَقْفُوها الْحَلَائِبُ حَتَّى يُجْرَّ بِيَلَادِهِمُ الْحَمِيسُ يَتَلَوُّهُ الْحَمِيسُ، وَحَتَّى تَدْعَقَ الْحَيْوُلُ فِي نَوَاحِرِ
أَرْضِهِمْ، وَبِأَعْنَانٍ مَسَارِحِهِمْ وَمَسَارِحِهِمْ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "ad-da`q" means trampling, e.g., "taduquu'l-khuyulu bihawafiriha ardahum" (the horses trample the ground with their hoofs). "nawahini ardihim" means lands opposite each other, it is said, "manazilu bani fulanin tatanaharu" meaning the 'houses of so-and-so are opposite each other.'

قال الشريف: الدَّعَقُ: الدَّقُّ، أَي: تَدَقُّ الْحَيْوُلُ بِحَوَافِرِهَا أَرْضَهُمْ. نَوَاحِرُ أَرْضِهِمْ:
مُتَقَابِلَاتُهَا، يُقَالُ: مَنَازِلُ بَنِي فُلَانٍ تَتَنَاحَرُ، أَي: تَتَقَابَلُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 124

- (1) *Nasr ibn Muzahim, Siffin, 235;*
- (2) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 9, events of 37 H.;*
- (3) *al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, V, 39;*
- (4) *Ibn A`tham al-Kufi, al-Futuh, III, 73;*
- (5) *Ibn Miskawayh, Tajarib, I, 583;*
- (6) *Al-Tawhidi, al-Basa'ir, 185;*
- (7) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 154.*

Notes

1. Amir al-mu'minin delivered this Sermon on the occasion of the battle of Siffin. This battle was fought in the year 37 A.H. between Amir al-mu'minin and the Governor of Syria (ash-Sham), Mu`awiyah, for the so-called avenging for the killing of Caliph `Uthman. But in reality it was nothing more than Mu`awiyah who had been the Autonomous Governor of Syria from Caliph `Umar's days not wanting to lose that position by swearing allegiance to Amir al-mu'minin but wanting to keep his authority intact by exploiting the killing of Caliph `Uthman, for later events proved that after securing the government he did not take any practical step to avenge `Uthman's blood, and never spoke, not even through omission, about the killers of `Uthman.

Although from the first day Amir al-mu'minin realised that war was inevitable, it was still necessary to exhaust all pleas. Therefore when on Monday the 12th Rajeb, 36 A.H. he returned to Kufah after the battle of Jamal he sent Jarir ibn `Abdallah al-Bajali with a letter to Mu`awiyah at Damascus wherein he wrote that the muhajirun and the ansar had sworn allegiance to him and that he too should first swear him allegiance and thereafter place the case of `Uthman's killing before him so that he could pass verdict thereon according to the Qur'an and Sunnah. But Mu`awiyah detained Jarir on several pretexts and after consulting `Amr ibn al-`As staged a revolt on the excuse of `Uthman's killing, and with the help of important persons of Syria convinced the ignorant people that the liability for `Uthman's life lay on `Ali (p.b.u.h) and that he, with his conduct had encouraged the besiegers and had given them protection. Meanwhile he hung the blood-stained shirt of `Uthman and the amputated fingers of his wife Na'ilah bint al-Farafisah on the pulpit in the Central Mosque of Damascus around which seventy thousand Syrians cried and swore the pledge to avenge `Uthman's blood. When Mu`awiyah had roused the feelings of the Syrians to such an extent that they were determined to lay down their lives and be killed, he secured their allegiance on the cause of avenging `Uthman's blood and busied himself in equipping for the battle. Thereafter, he showed all this to Jarir and then sent him back mortified.

When Amir al-mu'minin learnt of these matters through Jarir ibn `Abdallah al-Bajali he was forced to rise against Mu`awiyah, and ordered Malik ibn Habib al-Yarbu`i to mobilise the forces in the valley of An-Nukhaylah. Consequently, people from the suburbs of Kufah began arriving there in large numbers, till they exceeded eighty thousand. First of all, Amir al-mu'minin sent a vanguard contingent, eight thousand strong, under Ziyad ibn an-Nadr al-Harithi and another of four thousand strong under Shurayh ibn Hani al-Harithi towards Syria. After the departure of this vanguard contingent he himself set out for Syria at the head of the remaining army on Wednesday the 5th of Shawwal. When he was out of the boundary of Kufah he offered zuhr (noon) prayer and after staying at Dayr Abi Musa, Nahr (river) Nars, Qubbat Qubbin, Babil, Dayr Ka`b, Karbala', Sabat, Bahurasini, al-Anbar and al-Jazirah arrived at ar-Riqqah. The people of this place were in favour of `Uthman, and at this very place Simak ibn Makhtamah al-Asadi was putting up with his eight hundred men. These people had left Kufah to join Mu`awiyah after deserting Amir al-mu'minin; when they had seen Amir al-mu'minin's force they had dismantled the bridge over the River Euphrates so that Amir al-mu'minin's army should not cross over to the other side of the River. But at the threatening of Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar an-Nakha`i they were frightened, and after consultations among themselves they put the bridge together again and Amir al-mu'minin passed over it with his army. When he alighted on the other side of the River he saw that Ziyad and Shurayh were also putting up there along with their men since both of them had adopted the land route. When, on reaching here, they found that Mu`awiyah was advancing with his armies towards the Euphrates and thinking that they would not be able to face him, they stopped there waiting for Amir al-mu'minin. When they had given the reason for their stopping there, Amir al-mu'minin accepted their plea and sent them forward. When they reached Sur ar-Rum they found that Abu al-A`war as-Sulami was camping there with his army. Both of them informed Amir al-mu'minin of this, whereupon he despatched Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar an-Nakha`i in their wake as the Officer in Command and cautioned him not to initiate the fighting but to try to counsel them and apprise them of the correct position as far as possible. In this way, on reaching there Malik al-Ashtar encamped a little distance away. Fighting could have commenced any moment, but he did not interfere with the other side nor did he take any step by which fighting could have been commenced. But Abu al-A`war suddenly attacked them at night, whereupon they took their swords out of the sheaths and prepared to repulse them. Clashes between the two sides went on for sometime but in the end, taking benefit of the darkness of night Abu al-A`war fled away. Since fighting had already commenced, soon after the appearance of dawn an Iraqi commander, Hashim ibn `Utbah al-Mirqal az-Zuhri, took his position in the battlefield. From the other side also a contingent came to face him, and the flames of fighting rose high. At last Malik al-Ashtar challenged Abu al-A`war to fight him, but he did not dare to face him, and towards the evening Malik al-Ashtar went onwards with his men. The next day Amir al-mu'minin reached there with his force and set off for Siffin with the vanguard contingent and other forces. Mu`awiyah had already reached there and had set up his bases. He had also placed a guard on the Euphrates and had occupied it. On reaching

there Amir al-mu'minin sent him word to remove the guard from Euphrates, but he refused, whereupon the Iraqis took out their swords and in a courageous attack captured the Euphrates. When this stage was over Amir al-mu'minin sent Bashir ibn `Amr al-Ansari, Sa'id ibn Qays al-Hamdani and Shabath ibn Rib'i at-Tamimi to Mu'awiyah to apprise him of the consequences of war and to make him agree to settlement and allegiance. But his reply was that they could not by any means let `Uthman's blood remain neglected, and that now the sword alone would arbitrate between them. Consequently in the month of Dhi'l-hijjah 36 A.H. both the parties decided on war and warriors from each side came out into the field to face their adversary. Those who entered the battlefield from Amir al-mu'minin's side were: Hujr ibn `Adi al-Kindi, Shabath ibn Rib'i at-Tamimi, Khalid ibn al-Mu'ammarr, Ziyad ibn an-Nadr al-Harithi, Ziyad ibn Khasafah at-Taymi, Sa'id ibn Qays al-Hamdani, Qays ibn Sa'd al-Ansari and Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar an-Nakha'i while from the Syrians there were, `Abd ar-Rahman ibn Khalid ibn Walid al-Makhzuni, Abu al-A`war as-Sulami, Habib ibn Maslamah al-Fihri, `Abdallah ibn Dhi'l-Kala` al-Himyari, `Ubaydallah ibn `Umar ibn al-Khattab, Shurahbil ibn Simt al-Kindi, and Hamzah ibn Malik al-Hamdani. When the month of Dhi'l-hijjah came to end the fighting had to be stopped for Muharram, but from the first of Safar fighting was resumed and both parties arrayed themselves opposite each other, equipped with swords, spears and other weapons. On Amir al-mu'minin's side Malik al-Ashtar was in command of the horsemen and `Ammar ibn Yasir of the foot soldiers of Kufah while Sahl ibn Hunayf al-Ansari was in command of the horsemen and Qays ibn Sa'd of the foot soldiers of Basrah. The banner of the army was given to Hashim ibn `Utbah. In the army of the Syrians on the right hand contingent Ibn Dhi'l-Kala` was in command, while on the left hand contingent Habib ibn Maslamah, on horsemen `Amr ibn al-`As and on foot soldiers ad-Dahhak ibn Qays al-Fihri were in command.

On the first day Malik ibn al-Ashtar entered the battle-field with his men, and from the other side Habib ibn Maslamah came out with his men to face him and from both sides a fierce battle ensued. Throughout the day swords clashed with swords and spears with spears.

Next day, Hashim ibn `Utbah came out with `Ali's army and from the other side Abu al-A`war with his footmen came to face him. When the two armies approached near to each other, horsemen fell upon horsemen and footmen upon footmen and continued attacking each other. and they endured with great patience and steadfastness.

On the third day, `Ammar ibn Yasir and Ziyad ibn an-Nadr came out with horsemen and foot soldiers and from the other side `Amr ibn al-`As came forward with a big force. Ziyad attacked the horsemen of the opposite side and Malik al-Ashtar attacked the foot soldiers so furiously that the enemy's men lost ground and, failing to offer resistance, returned to their camps.

On the fourth day Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyah appeared on the battle-field with his men. From the other side `Ubaydallah ibn `Umar came forward with the Syrian army and both the armies had a serious encounter.

On the fifth day `Abdallah ibn `Abbas came forward and from the other side al-Walid ibn `Uqba ibn Abi Mu`ayt came to face him. `Abdallah ibn `Abbas carried the assaults with great steadfastness and courage and gave such a brave fight that the enemy left the field in retreat.

On the sixth day Qays ibn Sa'd al-Ansari came forward with the army and to face him Ibn Dhi'l-Kala` came out with his contingent, and such a severe fighting ensued that at every step bodies were seen falling and blood flowing like streams. At last the darkness of the night separated the two armies.

On the seventh day Malik al-Ashtar came out and to face him, Habib ibn Maslamah came forward with his men, and fighting raged till zuhr (noon).

On the eighth day Amir al-mu'minin himself came out with the army and made such an assault that the entire battlefield quaked, and piercing through the ranks and warding off shots of arrows and spears he came and stood between both the lines. Then he challenged Mu'awiyah, whereupon the latter, along with `Amr ibn al-`As, came a bit closer. Then Amir al-mu'minin said to him: "Come out and face me. Let whoever kills the other be the ruler." Whereupon `Amr ibn al-`As said to Mu'awiyah: "`Ali is right. Gather up a little courage and face him. Mu'awiyah replied: "I am not prepared to waste my life ar your

taunting." Saying this he went back. When Amir al-mu'minin saw him retreating he smiled and himself too returned. The daring with which Amir al-mu'minin led the attacks in Siffin can only be called a miraculous feat. Thus, whenever he came out challenging in the battlefield, the enemy lines were dispersed into utter disarray and confusion, and even courageous combatants hesitated to appear against him. That is why on a few occasions he came onto the battlefield in changed dress so that the enemy should not recognise him and someone should be prepared to engage with him personally. Once `Arar ibn Ad'ham came from the other side to engage with al-`Abbas ibn Rabi`ah al-Harith ibn `Abd al-Muttalib. They remained engaged but neither could defeat the other, until al-`Abbas chanced to see that a link of his adversary's armour was loose. With a swift stroke he entangled the point of his sword in it, and then with a quick jerk he cut through a few more links. Then with true aim he gave such a blow that his sword went straight into his bosom. Seeing this, people raised the call of takbir. Mu`awiyah was startled at this noise and on coming to know that `Arar ibn Ad'ham had been slain he was much disturbed and shouted if there was anyone to take revenge for `Arar ibn Ad'ham and kill al-`Abbas, whereupon some tired swordsmen of the tribe of Lakhm came out challenging al-`Abbas. Al-`Abbas said he would come after taking his Chief's permission. Saying al-`Abbas came to Amir al-mu'minin to seek permission. Amir al-mu'minin detained him, put on al-`Abbas's dress. and riding on al-`Abbas's horse entered the battlefield. Taking him to be al-`Abbas, the Lakhms said: "So you have got your Chief's permission." In reply Amir al-mu'minin recited the following verse:

Permission (to fight) is given unto those upon whom war is made for they have been oppressed, and verily, to help them, Allah is Most Potent. (Qur'an, 22:39)

Now one man came out from the other side shouting like an elephant, ran amok and assaulted Amir al-mu'minin, but he avoided the blow and then gave such a clean cut with his sword to the other's back that he was split into two. People thought the blow had gone without avail, but when his horse jumped his two separate parts fell on the ground. After him another man came out but he too was finished in the twinkling of an eye. Then Amir al-mu'minin challenged others but from the strokes of his sword the enemy came to know that it was Amir al-mu'minin in the dress of al-`Abbas and so none dared come to face him.

On the ninth day the right wing was under the command of `Abdullah ibn Budayl and the left wing under that of `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas. In the centre was Amir al-mu'minin himself. On the other side Habib ibn Maslamah commanded the Syrian army. When both the lines had come face to face with each other, the valiant soldiers drew out their swords and pounced upon one another like ferocious lions, and fighting raged on all sides. The banner of the right wing Amir al-mu'minin's army was revolving in the hands of Banu Hamdan. Whenever anyone of them fell, martyred, someone else would pick up the banner. First of all Kurayb ibn Shurayh raised the banner, on his fall Shurahbil ibn Shurayh took it up, then Marthad ibn Shurayh, then Hubayrah ibn Shurayh then Yarim ibn Shurayh, then Sumayr ibn Shurayh and after the killing of all these six brothers the banner was taken up by Sufyan, then `Abd, then Kurayb, the three sons of Zayd, who all fell martyred. After that the banner was lifted by two brothers (sons) of Bashir namely `Umayr and al-Harith and when they too fell martyred, Wahb ibn Kurayb took up the banner. On this day the enemy's greater attention was on the right wing and its assaults were so fierce that the men lost ground and began to retreat from the battlefield. Only three hundred men remained with the Officer in Command `Abdullah ibn Budayl. On seeing this Amir al-mu'minin asked Malik al-Ashtar to call them back and challenge them as to where they were fleeing. "If the days of life are over they cannot avoid death by running away." Now the defeat of the right wing could not be without effect on the left wing, so Amir al-mu'minin turned to the left wing and advanced forward, forcing through the enemy lines, whereupon a slave of Banu Umayyah named Ahmar said to him, "Allah may make me die if I fail to slay you today." On hearing this Amir al-mu'minin's slave Kaysan leapt over him but was killed by him. When Amir al-mu'minin saw this he caught him by the skirt of his armour and, picking him up, threw him down so forcefully that all his joints were smashed, whereupon Imam Hasan (p.b.u.h.) and Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah came forward and despatched him to Hell. Meanwhile, after having been called to Malik al-Ashtar and his having made them feel ashamed, the retreaters came back and again assaulted so steadfastly that pushing back the enemy they reached the place where `Abdullah ibn Budayl was surrounded by the enemy.

When he saw his own men he picked up courage and leapt towards Mu`awiyah's tent with drawn sword. Malik al-Ashtar tried to stop him but he couldn't, and, killing seven Syrians, he reached the tent of Mu`awiyah. When Mu`awiyah noticed him close by he ordered him to be stoned, as a result of which he was overpowered and the Syrians crowded over him and killed him. When Malik al-Ashtar saw this he proceeded forward with the combatants of Banu Hamdan and Banu Madh'hij for an attack on Mu`awiyah, and began dispersing the contingent on guard around him. When, out of the five circles of his guards only one remained to be dispersed, Mu`awiyah put his foot in the stirrup of his horse in order to run away, but on someone's encouragement again stopped. On another side of the battlefield a tumult was raging from one end to the other by the swords of `Ammar ibn Yasir and Hashim ibn `Utbah. From whatever side `Ammar passed, the companions (of the Holy Prophet) flocked around him and then made such a joint assault that destruction spread throughout the enemy lines. When Mu`awiyah saw them advancing he threw his fresh forces towards them. But he continued displaying the excellence of his bravery under the storm of swords and spears. At last Abu al-`Adiyah al-Juhani hit him with a spear from which he could not balance himself and then Ibn Hawiy (Jawn as-Saksiki) came forward and slew him. `Ammar ibn Yasir's death caused tumult in Mu`awiyah's ranks because about him they had heard the Holy Prophet (S) having said: " `Ammar will be killed at the hands of a rebellious party." Thus before he fell as martyr Dhu'l-Kala` had said to `Amr ibn al-`As: "I see `Ammar on `Ali's side; are we that rebellious party?" `Amr ibn al-`As had assured him that eventually `Ammar would join them, but when he killed fighting on `Ali's side the rebellious party stood exposed and no scope was left for any other interpretation. Nevertheless Mu`awiyah started telling the Syrians that: "We did not kill `Ammar, but `Ali did it because he brought him to the battlefield." When Amir al-mu'minin heard this cunning sentence he remarked: "In that case the Holy Prophet (S) killed Hamzah as he had brought him to the battlefield of Uhud." Hashim ibn `Utbah also fell in this conflict. He was killed by al-Harith ibn Mundhir at-Tanukhi. After him the banner of the contingent was taken over by his son `Abdullah.

When such fearless warriors were gone Amir al-mu'minin said to the warriors from the tribes of Hamdan and Rabi`ah: "To me you are like armour and spear. Get up and teach these rebels a lesson. " Consequently, twelve thousand combatants of the tribes of Rabi`ah and Hamdan stood up, swords in hand. The banner was taken up by Hudayn ibn al-Mundhir. Entering the lines of the enemy, they used their swords in such a way that heads began to drop, bodies fell in huge heaps and on every side streams of blood flowed. And the assaults of these swordsmen knew no stopping till the day began to end with all its devastation and the gloom of eve set in, ushering in that fearful night which is known in history as the night of al-Harir, wherein the clashing of weapons, the hoofs of horses and the hue and cry of the Syrians created such notice that even voices reaching the ears could not be heard. On Amir al-mu'minin's side, his wrong-crushing slogans raised waves of courage and valour, and on the enemy's side they shook the hearts in their bosoms. The battle was at its zenith. The quivers of the bowmen had become empty. The stalks of the spears had been broken. Hand to hand fighting went on with swords only and dead bodies collected in heaps, till by morning the number of killed had exceeded thirty thousand.

On the tenth day Amir al-mu'minin's men showed the same morale. On the right wing Malik al-Ashtar held the command and on the left wing `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas.

Assaults went on like the assaults of new soldiers. Signs of defeat appeared on the Syrians, and they were about to leave the battlefield and run away, when five hundred Qur'ans were raised on spears changing the entire face of the battle. Moving swords stopped, the weapon of deceit was successful, and the way was clear for wrong to hold its sway.

In this battle forty-five thousand Syrians were killed while twenty-five thousand Iraqis fell as martyrs. (Kitab Siffin by Nasr ibn Muzahim al-Minqari [d. 212 A.H.] and at-Tarikh at-Tabari, vol. 1, pp. 3256-3349).

Sermon 125: We did not name people as arbitrators...

About the Kharijites and their opinion on Arbitration

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في معنى الخوارج لما أنكروا تحكيم الرجال ويذم فيه أصحابه، قال (عليه السلام):

We did not name people as arbitrators but we named the Qur'an the arbitrator. The Qur'an is a book, covered, between two flaps, and it does not speak. It should therefore necessarily have an interpreter. Men alone can be such interpreters. When these people invited us to name the Qur'an as the arbitrator between us, we could not be the party turning away from the Book of Allah. since Allah has said:

. . . And then if ye quarrel about anything refer it to Allah and the Prophet . . (Qur'an, 4:59)

Reference to Allah means that we decide according to the Qur'an while reference to the Prophet means that we follow his Sunnah. Now therefore, if arbitration were truly done through the Book of Allah (Qur'an). we would be the most rightful of all people for the Caliphate; or if it were done by the Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (S), we would be the most preferable of them.

إِنَّمَا لَمْ نُحْكِمِ الرِّجَالَ، وَإِنَّمَا حَكَّمْنَا الْقُرْآنَ. وَهَذَا الْقُرْآنُ إِنَّمَا هُوَ حَظٌّ مَسْئُورٌ بَيْنَ الدَّفْعَتَيْنِ، لَا يَنْطِقُ بِلِسَانٍ، وَلَا بُدَّ لَهُ مِنْ تَرْجُمَانٍ، وَإِنَّمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنْهُ الرِّجَالُ. وَلَمَّا دَعَانَا الْقَوْمُ إِلَى أَنْ نُحْكِمَ بَيْنَنَا الْقُرْآنَ لَمْ نَكُنِ الْفَرِيقَ الْمُتَوَلِّينَ عَنِ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ، وَقَالَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ: (فَإِنْ تَنَارَظْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ)، فَرُدُّهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَنْ نُحْكِمَ بِكِتَابِهِ، وَرُدُّهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ أَنْ نَأْخُذَ بِسُنَّتِهِ؛ فَإِذَا حُكِمَ بِالصِّدْقِ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ، فَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ النَّاسِ بِهِ، وَإِنْ حُكِمَ بِسُنَّةِ رَسُولِهِ فَنَحْنُ أَوْلَاهُمْ بِهِ.

Concerning your point why I allowed a time lag between myself and them with regard to the Arbitration, I did so in order that the ignorant may find out (the truth) and one who already knows may hold with it firmly. Possibly Allah may, as a result of this peace, improve the condition of these people, and they will not be caught by the throats and will not, before indication of the right, fall into rebellion as before. Certainly the best man before Allah is he who loves most to act according to right, even though it causes him hardship and grief rather than according to wrong, even though it gives him benefit and increase.

وَأَمَّا قَوْلُكُمْ: لِمَ جَعَلْتَ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُمْ أَجَلًا فِي التَّحْكِيمِ؟ فَإِنَّمَا فَعَلْتُ ذَلِكَ لِيَتَبَيَّنَ الْجَاهِلُ، وَيَتَّيَّبَتِ الْعَالِمُ، وَلَعَلَّ اللَّهَ أَنْ يُصْلِحَ فِي هَذِهِ الْهُدْنَةِ أَمْرَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ، وَلَا تُؤْخَذَ بِأَكْطَامِهَا، فَتَعْجَلَ عَنِ تَبَيُّنِ الْحَقِّ، وَتَنْفَادَ لِأَوَّلِ الْعَيِّ. إِنَّ أَفْضَلَ النَّاسِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ كَانَ الْعَمَلُ بِالْحَقِّ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ. وَإِنْ نَقَصَهُ وَكَرَّهَهُ. مِنَ الْبَاطِلِ وَإِنْ جَرَّ إِلَيْهِ فَابْتَدَأَ وَزَادَهُ،

So, where are you being misled and from where have you been brought (to this state)? Be prepared to march to the people who have deviated from the right and do not see it, have been entangled in wrong-doing and are not corrected. They are away from the Book and turned from the (right) path. You are not trustworthy to rely upon, nor are you holders of honour to be adhered to. You are very bad in kindling the fire of fighting. Woe to you! I had to bear a lot of worries from you. Some day I call you (to jihad) and some day I speak to you in confidence, you are neither true free men at the time of call, nor trustworthy brothers at the time of speaking in confidence.

فَأَيْنَ يُتَاهُ بِكُمْ؟! وَمِنْ أَيْنَ أَتَيْتُمْ؟! اسْتَعِدُّوا لِلْمَسِيرِ إِلَى قَوْمٍ حَيَارَى عَنِ الْحَقِّ لَا يُبْصِرُونَهُ،
وَمُوزَعِينَ بِالْجُورِ لَا يَعْدِلُونَ بِهِ، جُفَاءَ عَنِ الْكِتَابِ، نُكِبَ عَنِ الطَّرِيقِ. مَا أَنْتُمْ بِوَثِيقَةٍ يُعَلَّقُ
بِهَا، وَلَا زَوَافِرَ يُعْتَصَمُ إِلَيْهَا، لَيْسَ حُشَّاشُ نَارِ الْحَرْبِ أَنْتُمْ! أَفِّ لَكُمْ! لَقَدْ لَقِيتُ مِنْكُمْ
بَرَحًا، يَوْمًا أَنْادِيكُمْ وَيَوْمًا أَنْاجِيكُمْ، فَلَا أحرَارُ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ الْبِدَاءِ، وَلَا إِخْوَانُ ثِقَّةٍ عِنْدَ
النَّجَاءِ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 125

- (1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 37, events of 37 H.;*
- (2) *Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, Tadhkirah, 100;*
- (3) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 157;*
- (4) *al-Tabarsi, al-'Ihtijaj, I, 275.*

Sermon 126: Do you command me that I should seek....

When Amir al-mu'minin was spoken ill of for showing equality in the distribution (of shares from Bayt al-mal or the Muslim Public Treasury) he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لما عوتب على تصييره الناس أسوة في العطاء من غير تفضيل إلى السابقات والشرف،

قال:

Do you command me that I should seek support by oppressing those over whom I have been placed? By Allah, I won't do so as long as the world goes on, and as long as one star leads another in the sky. Even if it were my property, I would have distributed it equally among them, then why not when the property is that of Allah.

Beware; certainly that giving of wealth without any right for it is wastefulness and lavishness. It raises its doer in this world, but lowers him in the next world. It honours him before people, but disgraces him with Allah. If a man gives his property to those who have no right for it or do not deserve it, Allah deprives him of their gratefulness, and their love too would be for others. Then if he falls on bad days and needs their help, they would prove the worst comrades and ignoble friends.

أَتَأْمُرُونِي أَنْ أَطْلُبَ النَّصْرَ بِالْجَوْرِ فِيمَنْ وُلِّيْتُ عَلَيْهِ! وَاللَّهِ لَا أَطُورُ بِهِ مَا سَمَرَ سَمِيرٌ وَمَا أَمَّ نَجْمٌ فِي السَّمَاءِ نَجْمًا! لَوْ كَانَ الْمَالُ لِي لَسَوَّيْتُ بَيْنَهُمْ، فَكَيْفَ وَإِنَّمَا الْمَالُ مَالُ اللَّهِ! أَلَا وَإِنَّ إِعْطَاءَ الْمَالِ فِي غَيْرِ حَقِّهِ تَبْدِيرٌ وَإِسْرَافٌ، وَهُوَ يَرْفَعُ صَاحِبَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَيَضَعُهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ، وَيُكْرِمُهُ فِي النَّاسِ وَيُهِينُهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ، وَمَنْ يَضَعِ امْرُؤٌ مَالَهُ فِي غَيْرِ حَقِّهِ وَعِنْدَ غَيْرِ أَهْلِهِ إِلَّا حَزَمَهُ اللَّهُ شُكْرَهُمْ وَكَانَ لِعَيْبِهِمْ وَدُهُمْ، فَإِنْ زَلَّتْ بِهِ النَّعْلُ يَوْمًا فَاحْتَاجَ إِلَى مَعُونَتِهِمْ فَشَرُّ حَلِيلٍ وَالْأَمَّ حَدِيدِينَ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 126

- (1) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-'Imamah, I, 153;*
- (2) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 131;*
- (3) *al-Kulayni, Furu` al-Kafi, IV, 31;*
- (4) *al-Mufid, al-Majalis, 95;*
- (5) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, I, 197;*
- (6) *al-Mada'ini, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, I, 182;*
- (7) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, I, 75.*

Sermon 127: If you refuse to stop claiming ...

About the Kharijites

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)
للخوارج أيضاً

If you refuse to stop claiming that I have gone wrong and been misled, why do you consider that the common men among the followers of the Prophet Muhammad (S) have gone astray like me, and accuse them with my wrong, and hold them unbelievers on account of my sins. You are holding your swords on your shoulders and using them right and wrong. You are confusing those who have committed sins with those who have not. You know that the Prophet (S) stoned the protected (married) adulterer, then he also said his burial prayer and allowed his successors to inherit from him. He killed the murderer and allowed his successors to inherit from him.

He amputated (the hand of) the thief and whipped the unprotected (unmarried) adulterer, but thereafter allowed their shares from the booty, and they married Muslim women. Thus the Prophet (S) took them to task for their sins and also abided by Allah's commands about them, but did not disallow them their rights created by Islam, nor did he remove their names from its followers.

فإِنَّ أَبِيئِمُّمَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَزْعُمُوا أَبِيَّ أَخْطَأْتُ وَضَلَلْتُ، فَلِمَ تُضَلِّلُونَ عَامَّةَ أُمَّةِ مُحَمَّدٍ (صلى الله عليه وآله) بِضَلَالِي، وَتَأْخُذُونَهُمْ بِخَطِيئِي، وَتُكْفِرُونَهُمْ بِذُنُوبِي! سُبُوفُكُمْ عَلَى عَوَاتِقِكُمْ تَضَعُونَهَا مَوَاضِعَ الْبِرَاءَةِ وَالسُّقْمِ، وَتَحْلِطُونَ مَنْ أَدْنَبَ بِمَنْ لَمْ يُذْنِبْ. وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) رَجَمَ الزَّانِيَ [الْمُحْصَنَ] ثُمَّ صَلَّى عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ وَرَّثَهُ أَهْلَهُ، وَقَتَلَ الْقَاتِلَ وَوَرَّثَ مِيرَاثَهُ أَهْلَهُ، وَقَطَعَ السَّارِقَ وَجَلَدَ الزَّانِيَ غَيْرَ الْمُحْصَنِ ثُمَّ قَسَمَ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنَ الْفَيْءِ وَنَكَحَا الْمُسْلِمَاتِ; فَأَخَذَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) بِذُنُوبِهِمْ، وَأَقَامَ حَقَّ اللَّهِ فِيهِمْ، وَلَمْ يَمْنَعْهُمْ سَهْمَهُمْ مِنَ الْأَسْلَامِ، وَلَمْ يُخْرِجْ أَسْمَاءَهُمْ مِنْ بَيْنِ أَهْلِهِ.

Certainly you are the most evil of all persons and are those whom Satan has put on his lines and thrown out into his wayless land. With regard to me, two categories of people will be ruined, namely he who loves me too much and the love takes him away from rightfulness, and he who hates me too much and the hatred takes him away from rightfulness. The best man with regard to me is he who is on the middle course. So be with him and be with the great majority (of Muslims) because Allah's hand (of protection) is on keeping unity. You should beware of division because the one isolated from the group is (a prey) to Satan just as the one isolated from the flock of sheep is (a prey) to the wolf.

ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ شِرَارُ النَّاسِ، وَمَنْ رَمَى بِهِ الشَّيْطَانُ مَرَامِيَهُ، وَضَرَبَ بِهِ تِيهَهُ ! وَسَيَهْلِكُ فِي صِنْفَانِ: مُحِبُّ مُفْرِطٌ يَذْهَبُ بِهِ الْحُبُّ إِلَى غَيْرِ الْحَقِّ، وَمُنْغِضٌ مُفْرِطٌ يَذْهَبُ بِهِ الْبُغْضُ إِلَى غَيْرِ الْحَقِّ، وَخَيْرُ النَّاسِ فِي حَالِ النَّمَطِ الْأَوْسَطِ فَالزُّمُّوهُ، وَالزُّمُّوا السَّوَادَ الْأَعْظَمَ فَإِنَّ يَدَ اللَّهِ مَعَ الْجَمَاعَةِ، وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالْفُرْقَةَ! فَإِنَّ الشَّاذَّ مِنَ النَّاسِ لِلشَّيْطَانِ، كَمَا أَنَّ الشَّاذَّةَ مِنَ الْغَنَمِ لِلذِّئْبِ.

Beware; whoever calls to this course, kill him, even though he may be under this headband of mine. Certainly the two arbitrators were appointed to revive what the Qur'an revives and to destroy what the Qur'an destroys. Revival means to unite on it (in a matter) and destruction means to divide on a matter. If the Qur'an drives us to them we should follow them, and if it drives them to us they should follow up.

May you have no father! (Woe to you), I did not cause you any misfortune, nor have I deceived you in any matter, nor created any confusion. Your own group had unanimously suggested in favour of these two men and we bound them that they would not exceed the Qur'an but they deviated from it and abandoned the right although both of them were conversant with it. This wrong-doing was the dictate of their hearts and so they trod upon it, although we had stipulated that in arbitrating with justice and sticking to rightfulness they would avoid the evil of their own views and the mischief of their own verdict (but since this has happened the award is not acceptable to us).

أَلَا مَنْ دَعَا إِلَى هَذَا الشِّعَارِ فَاقْتُلُوهُ، وَلَوْ كَانَ تَحْتَ عِمَامَتِي هَذِهِ، فَإِنَّمَا حُكِمَ الْحُكَمَانِ لِيُحْيِيَا مَا أَحْيَا الْقُرْآنُ، وَيُمَيِّتَا مَا أَمَاتَ الْقُرْآنُ، وَإِخْيَاؤُهُ الْاجْتِمَاعَ عَلَيَّهِ، وَإِمَاتَتُهُ الْاِفْتِرَاقُ عَنْهُ، فَإِنْ جَرْنَا الْقُرْآنَ إِلَيْهِمْ اتَّبَعْنَاهُمْ، وَإِنْ جَرَّهُمْ إِلَيْنَا اتَّبَعُونَا.

فَلَمْ آتِ . لِأَبَاكُمْ . بُجْرًا، وَلَا حَتَلْتُمْ عَنْ أَمْرِكُمْ، وَلَا لَبَسْتُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ، إِنَّمَا اجْتَمَعَ رَأْيِي مَلَائِكُمْ عَلَى اخْتِيَارِ رَجُلَيْنِ، أَخَذْنَا عَلَيْهِمَا أَلَّا يَتَعَدَّيَا الْقُرْآنَ، فَتَاهَا عَنْهُ، وَتَرَكََا الْحَقَّ وَهُمَا يُبْصِرَانِهِ، وَكَانَ الْجَوْرُ هَوَاهُمَا فَمَضَيَا عَلَيْهِ، وَقَدْ سَبَقَ اسْتِثْنَاؤُنَا عَلَيْهِمَا . فِي الْحُكُومَةِ بِالْعَدْلِ، وَالصَّمْدِ لِلْحَقِّ . سُوءَ رَأْيِهِمَا، وَجَوْرَ حُكْمِهِمَا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 127

- (1) Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 48, events of 37 H.;
- (2) Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, (b.j.r);
- (3) al-Jahiz, al-Hayawan, II, 90;
- (4) al-Bayhaqi, al-Mahasin, 41;
- (5) al-Saduq, al-'Amali;
- (6) al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 329;
- (7) al-Karajiki, Ma'dan, 226.

Sermon 128: O Ahnaf!....

About important future events in Basrah

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

وهو مما كان يخبر به عن الملاحم بالبصرة

O Ahnaf! It is as though I see him advancing with an army which has neither dust nor noise, nor rustling of reins, nor neighing of horses. They are trampling the ground with their feet as if they are the feet of ostriches.

يَا أَحْنَفُ، كَأَنِّي بِهِ وَقَدْ سَارَ بِالْجَيْشِ الَّذِي لَا يَكُونُ لَهُ عُبَارٌ وَلَا جَبْتُ، وَلَا فَعْفَعَةُ الْجُمْ، وَلَا حَمْحَمَةُ خَيْلٍ، يُبِيرُونَ الْأَرْضَ بِأَقْدَامِهِمْ كَأَنَّهَا أَقْدَامُ النَّعَامِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Amir al-mu'minin pointed to the Chief of the Negroes, (Sahibu'z-Zanj).¹

يومئذ يومئذ بذلك (عليه السلام) إلى صاحب الزنج.

Then Amir al -mu'minin said:

Woe to you (the people of Basrah's) inhabited streets and decorated houses which possess wings like the wings of vultures and trunks like the trunks of elephants; they are the people from among whom if one is killed he is not mourned and if one is lost he is not searched for. I turn this world over on its face, value it only according to its (low) value, and look at it with an eye suitable to it.

ثُمَّ قَالَ (عليه السلام): وَيْلٌ لِسِكِّكُمْ الْعَامِرَةِ، وَدُورِكُمْ الْمُرْحَرَفَةِ الَّتِي لَهَا أَجْنِحَةٌ كَأَجْنِحَةِ الشُّسُورِ، وَخَرَاطِيمٌ كَخَرَاطِيمِ الْفَيْلَةِ، مِنْ أَوْلِيَاكَ الَّذِينَ لَا يُنْدَبُ قَتِيلُهُمْ، وَلَا يُفْقَدُ غَائِبُهُمْ. أَنَا كَأَبُ الدُّنْيَا لَوَجْهِهَا، وَقَادِرُهَا بِقَدْرِهَا، وَنَاطِرُهَا بِعَيْنِهَا.

A part of the same sermon referring to the Turks (Mongols)

منه: ويومئذ به إلى وصف الاتراك

I² can see a people whose faces are like shields covered with rough-scraped skins. They dress themselves in silken and woollen clothes and hold dear excellent horses. Their killing and bloodshed shall take place freely till the wounded shall walk over the dead and the number of runners-away shall be less than those taken prisoner:

كَأَنِّي أَرَاهُمْ قَوْمًا كَأَنَّ وَجُوهَهُمُ الْمَجَانُّ الْمَطْرَقَةُ، يَلْبَسُونَ السَّرَقَ وَالْدِّيَابِخَ، وَيَعْتَقِبُونَ الْحَيْلَ الْعَتَاقَ، وَيَكُونُ هُنَاكَ اسْتِحْرَازُ قَتْلِ، حَتَّى يَمْشِيَ الْمَجْرُوحُ عَلَى الْمَقْتُولِ، وَيَكُونُ الْمُفْلِتُ أَقَلَّ مِنَ الْمَأْسُورِ!

One of his companions said to him: O Amir al-mu'minin, you have been given knowledge of hidden things. Whereupon Amir al-mu'minin laughed and said to the man who belonged to the tribe of Banu Kalb:

فقال له بعض أصحابه: لقد أعطيت يا أميرالمؤمنين علم الغيب! فضحك (عليه السلام)، وقال للرجل . وكان كليباً .:

O brother of Kalb! This is not knowledge of hidden things (‘ilmu-l-ghayb),³ these matters have been acquired from him (namely in Prophet) who knew them. As regard knowledge of hidden things, that means knowledge of the Day of Judgement, and the things covered by Allah in the verse:

“Verily, Allah is He with Whom is the knowledge of the Hour; He sends down the rain, and He knows what is in the wombs. No soul knows what it will earn tomorrow, and no soul knows in what land it will die..” (Qur'an, 31:34)

Therefore, Allah alone knows what is there in the wombs, whether male or female, ugly or handsome, generous or miserly, mischievous or pious, and who will be the fuel for Hell and who will be in the company of the Prophets in Paradise. This is the knowledge of the hidden things which is not known to anyone save Allah. All else is that whose knowledge Allah passed on to His Prophet and he passed it on to me, and prayed for me that my bosom may retain it and my ribs may hold it.

يَا أَخَا كَلْبِ، لَيْسَ هُوَ بِعِلْمِ غَيْبٍ، وَإِنَّمَا هُوَ تَعَلَّمَ مِنْ ذِي عِلْمٍ، وَإِنَّمَا عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ، وَمَا عَدَدَهُ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ بِقَوْلِهِ: (إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَ يُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ، وَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ، وَ لَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَآذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا، وَ مَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ..). الآية. فَيَعْلَمُ سُبْحَانَهُ مَا فِي الْأَرْحَامِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أَنْثَى، وَفَيْحٍ أَوْ جَمِيلٍ، وَسَخِيٍّ أَوْ بَخِيلٍ، وَشَقِيٍّ أَوْ سَعِيدٍ، وَمَنْ يَكُونُ فِي النَّارِ حَطْبًا، أَوْ فِي الْجَنَّةِ لِنَسِيٍّ مُرَافِقًا؛ فَهَذَا عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ الَّذِي لَا يَعْلَمُهُ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، وَمَا سِوَى ذَلِكَ فَعَلِمَ عَلَّمَهُ اللَّهُ نَبِيِّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَعَلَّمَنِيهِ، وَدَعَا لِي بِأَنْ يَعْينَهُ صَدْرِي، وَتَضَطَّمَ عَلَيَّ جَوَانِحِي.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 128

- (1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 48;*
- (2) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, (b.j.r);*
- (3) *al-Saduq, al-'Amali;*
- (4) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 329;*
- (5) *al-Karajiki, Ma'dan, 226;*
- (6) *al-Bayhaqi, al-Mahasin, 41;*
- (7) *al-Jahiz, al-Hayawan, II, 90.*

Notes

1. `Ali ibn Muhammad was born in the village of Warzanin in the suburbs of Ray and belonged to the Azariqah sect of the Kharijites. He claimed to be a sayyid (descendant of the Holy Prophet) by showing himself the son of Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Mukhtafi ibn `Isa ibn Zayd ibn `Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn `Ali ibn Abi Talib, but the experts on lineality and biographers have not accepted his claim to being a sayyid and have given his father's name as Muhammad ibn `Abd ar-Rahim instead of Muhammad ibn Ahmad. The former was from the tribe of `Abd al-Qays and had been born of a Sindi maid-slave. `Ali ibn Muhammad rose as an insurgent in 255 A.H. in the reign of al-Muhtadi Billah and associated with him

the people from the suburbs of Basrah on promise of money, wealth and freedom. He entered Basrah on the 17th Shuwwal, 255 A.H. killing and looting, and in only two days he put to death thirty thousand individuals, men, women and children, and displayed extreme oppression, bloodshed, savageness and ferocity. He dismantled houses, burnt mosques, and after continuous killing and devastation for fourteen years, was killed in the month of Safar, 270 A.H. in the reign of Muwaffaq Billah. Then people got rid of his devastating deeds.

Amir al-mu'minin's prophecy is one of those prophecies which throw light on his knowledge of the unknown. The details of his army given by Amir al-mu'minin namely that there would be neither neighing of horses nor rustling of weapons therein is a historical fact. The historian at-Tabari has written that when this man reached near al-Karkh (a sector of Baghdad) with the intention of insurrection, the people of that place welcomed him, and a man presented him a horse for which no rein could be found despite a search. At last he rode it using a rope for the rein. Similarly there were at that time only three swords in his force - one with himself, one with `Ali ibn Aban al-Muhallabi, and one with Muhammad ibn Salm, but later they collected some more weapons by marauding.

2. This prophecy of Amir al-mu'minin is about the attack of the Tartars (Mongols) who were inhabitants of the Mongolian desert in the north west of Turkistan. These semi-savage tribes lived by marauding, killing and devastating. They used to fight among themselves and attack neighbouring areas. Each tribe had a separate chief who was deemed responsible for their protection. Chingiz Khan (Temujin) who was one of the ruling chiefs of these tribes and was very brave and courageous had risen to organise all their divided tribes into one, and, despite their opposition he succeeded in overpowering them through his might and sagacity. Collecting a large number under his banner he rose in 606 A.H. like a torrent and went on dominating cities and ruining populations till he conquered the area upto North China.

When his authority was established he offered his terms of settlement to `Alau'd-Din Khwarazm Shah, ruler of the neighbouring country of Turkistan, and through a deputation concluded an agreement with him that the Tartar traders would be allowed to visit his country for trade and their life and property would not be subject to any harm. For some time they traded freely without fear but on one occasion `Alau'd-Din accused them of spying, seized their goods and had them killed by the Chief of Atrar. When Chingiz Khan learnt of the breach of the agreement and the killing of Tartar merchants his eyes cast forth flames and he began trembling with rage.

He sent word to `Alau'd-Din to return the goods of the Tartar merchants and to hand over to him the ruler of Atrar. `Alau'd-Din, who was mad with power and authority, did not pay any heed, and acting short-sightedly killed even the plenipotentiary of Chingiz Khan. Now Chingiz Khan lost all patience and his eyes filled with blood. He rose with his sword in hand, and the Tartar warriors leapt towards Bukhara on their speedy stallions. `Alau'd-Din came out with four hundred thousand combatants to face him but could not resist the incessant assaults of the Tartars, and having been vanquished only after a few attacks ran away to Nishabur across the river Jaxartes (Sihun). The Tartars smashed Bukhara and razed it to the ground. They pulled down schools and mosques, burning to ashes the houses and killing men and women without distinction. Next year they assaulted Samarqand and devastated it completely. After the flight of `Alau'd-Din, his son Jalalu'd-Din Khwarazm Shah had assumed the reins of government The Tartars chased him also, and for ten years he fled from one place to the other but did not fall in their hands. At last he crossed over the river out of the boundaries of his realm. During this time the Tartars did their utmost to ruin populated lands and to annihilate humanity. No city escaped their ruining and no populace could avoid their trampling. Wherever they went they upset the kingdom, overthrew governments, and in a short time established their authority over the northern portion of Asia. When Chingiz Khan died in 622 A.H. his own son Ogedei Khan succeeded him. He searched out Jalalu'd-Din in 628 A.H. and killed him. After him Mongka Khan, the son of the other son of Chingiz Khan, occupied the throne. After Mongka Khan, Qubilai Khan succeeded to a part of the country and the control of Asia fell to the share of his brother Hulagu Khan. On the division of the whole realm among the grandsons of Chingiz Khan, Hulagu Khan was thinking of conquering Muslims areas when the Hanafite of Khurasan in enmity with the Shafi'ite invited him to attack Khurasan. He therefore led an assault on Khurasan, and the Hanafite, thinking themselves to be safe from the Tartars, opened the

city gates for them. But the Tartars did not make any distinction between Hanafite and Shafi`ite and killed whoever fell to their hands. After killing most of its population they took it in occupation. These very differences between the Hanafite and the Shafi`ite opened for him the door of conquest upto Iraq. Consequently, after conquering Khurasan his courage increased and in 656 A.H. he marched on Baghdad with two hundred thousand Tartars. Al-Musta`sim Billah's army and the people of Baghdad jointly faced them, but it was not in their power to stop this torrent of calamity. The result was that the Tartars entered Baghdad on the day of `Ashura' carrying with them bloodshed and ruin. They remained busy in killing for forty days. Rivers of blood flowed in the streets and all the alleys were filled with dead bodies. Hundred of thousands of people were put to the sword while al-Musta`sim Billah was trampled to death under foot. Only those people who hid themselves in wells or underground places and hid from their sight could survive. This was the devastation of Baghdad which shook the `Abbasid Kingdom to its foundation, so that its flag could never fly thereafter.

Some historians have laid the blame of this ruin on Ibn al-`Alqami (Abu Talib, Muhammad ibn Ahmad al-Baghdadi), the minister of al-Musta`sim Billah, by holding that, moved by the general masses of the Shi`ahs and the ruin of al-Karkh sector (of Baghdad), he invited Hulagu Khan through the latter's minister, the great scholar Nasiru'd-Din Muhammad ibn Muhammad at-Tusi, to march on Baghdad. Even if it be so, it is not possible to ignore the historical fact that before this the `Abbasid Caliph an-Nasir Lidini'llah had initiated the move for the attack on the Muslim areas. When the Khwarazm Shahs declined to acknowledge the authority of the Caliphate he had sent word to Chingiz Khan to march on Khwarazm, from which the Tartars had understood that there was no unity and co-operation among the Muslims. Thereafter the Hanafite had sent for Hulagu Khan to crush the Shafi`ite as a consequence of which the Tartars secured control over Khurasan, and prepared the way to march towards Baghdad. In these circumstances to hold only Ibn al-`Alqami responsible for the ruination of Baghdad and to ignore the move of an-Nasir Lidini'llah and the dispute between the Hanafite and the Shafi`ite would be covering up the facts, when in fact the cause for the ruin of Baghdad was this very conquest of Khurasan, whose real movers were the Hanafite inhabitants of the place. It was by this conquest that Hulagu Khan had the courage to march on the centre of Islam; otherwise it cannot have been the result of a single individual's message that he assaulted an old capital like Baghdad, the awe of whose power and grandeur was seated in the hearts of a large part of the world.

3. To know hidden things on a personal level is one thing, while to be gifted by Allah with knowledge of any matter and to convey it to others is different. The knowledge of the future which the prophets and vicegerents possess is gained by them through Allah's teaching and informing. Allah alone has knowledge of events which are to happen in the future. Of course, He passes this knowledge on to whoever He wills. Thus He says:

(He alone is) the "Knower of the unseen, neither doth He reveal His secrets unto any (one else) save unto that one of the Messengers whom He chooseth..." (Qur'an, 72:26-27)

In this way Amir al-mu'minin also received knowledge of the future through the instructions of the Prophet or inspiration from Allah, for which these words of Amir al-mu'minin stand evidence. Of course, sometimes it is not proper or expedient to disclose certain matters and they are allowed to remain under a veil. Then no one can be acquainted with them as Allah says: Verily, Allah is He with Whom is the knowledge of the Hour and He sendeth down the rain, and knoweth He what is in the wombs; and knoweth not any soul what he shall earn the morrow, and knoweth not any soul in what lands he shall die: Verily Allah is All-knowing, All- aware. (Qur'an, 31:34)

Sermon 129: O servants of Allah!....

About measures and weights, the transience of this world and the condition of its people

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في ذكر المكايل والموازين

O servants of Allah! You and whatever you desire from this world are like guests with fixed period of stay, and like debtors called upon to pay. Life is getting short while (the records of) actions are being preserved. Many strivers are wasting (their efforts) and many of those who exert are heading towards harm. You are in a period when steps of virtue are moving backwards, steps of evil are moving forward and Satan is increasing his eagerness to ruin people. This is the time that his equipment is strong, his traps have been spread and his prey has become easy (to catch).

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّكُمْ . وَمَا تَأْمَلُونَ مِنْ هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا . أَتَوِيَاءُ مُؤَجَّلُونَ، وَمَدِينُونَ مُفْتَضُونَ: أَجَلٌ مَنْفُوسٌ، وَعَمَلٌ مَحْفُوظٌ، قَرَبَ دَائِبٍ مُضَيِّعٌ، وَرُبَّ كَادِحٍ حَاسِرٍ. قَدْ أَصْبَحْتُمْ فِي زَمَنٍ لَا يَزِدَادُ الْحَيْرُ فِيهِ إِلَّا إِذْبَارًا، وَالشَّرُّ إِلَّا إِقْبَالَ، وَالشَّيْطَانُ فِي هَلَاقِ النَّاسِ إِلَّا طَمَعًا، فَهَذَا أَوْ أَنَّ قَوِيَّتَ عَدْنَتِهِ، وَعَمَّتْ مَكِيدَتُهُ، وَأَمَكَّنَتْ فَرِيستَهُ.

Cast your glance over people wherever you like, you will see either a poor man suffering from poverty, or a rich man ignoring Allah despite His bounty over him, or a miser increasing his wealth by trampling on Allah's obligations, or an unruly person closing his ears to all counsel. Where are your good people; where are your virtuous people? Where are your high spirited men and generous men? Where are those of you who avoid deceit in their business and remain pure in their behaviour? Have they not all departed from this ignoble, transitory and troublesome world? Have you not been left among people who are just like rubbish and so low that lips avoid mention of them and do not move even to condemn their low position.

... "Verily we are Allah's and verily unto Him shall we return."
(Qur'an, 2:156)

"Mischief has appeared.." (30:41) and there is no one to oppose and change it, nor anyone to dissuade from it or desist from it.

اضْرِبْ بِطَرْفِكَ حَيْثُ شِئْتَ مِنَ النَّاسِ، فَهَلْ تُبْصِرُ إِلَّا فَقِيرًا يُكَابِدُ فَقْرًا، أَوْ غَنِيًّا بَدَلْ نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ كُفْرًا، أَوْ بَجِيلاً اتَّخَذَ الْبُحْلَ بِحَقِّ اللَّهِ وَفْرًا، أَوْ مُتَمَرِّدًا كَأَنَّ بَأْذِنَهُ عَنِ سَمْعِ الْمَوَاعِظِ وَفْرًا! أَيْنَ خِيَارِكُمْ وَصَلَحَاؤُكُمْ؟! وَأَيْنَ أَخْرَارِكُمْ وَمُحَاوَلَاتِكُمْ؟! وَأَيْنَ الْمُتَوَرِّعُونَ فِي مَكَاسِيهِمْ، وَالْمُتَنَزِّهُونَ فِي مَدَاهِبِهِمْ؟! أَلَيْسَ قَدْ طَعَنُوا جَمِيعًا عَنِ هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا الدَّنِيَّةِ، وَالْعَاجِلَةِ الْمُنْعَصَةِ،

وَهَلْ خُلِفْتُمْ إِلَّا فِي حُثَالَةٍ لَا تَلْتَقِي بِذِمَّتِهِمُ الشَّقَاتَانِ، اسْتِصْعَارًا لِقُدْرِهِمْ، وَذَهَابًا عَنِ ذِكْرِهِمْ؟! فَ إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ، (ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ) فَلَا مُنْكَرَ مُعَيَّرٍ، وَلَا رَاجِرٌ مُزْدَجِرٌ.

Do you, with these qualities, hope to secure abode in the purified neighbourhood of Allah and to be regarded His staunch lovers? Alas! Allah cannot be deceived about His paradise and His will cannot be secured save by His obedience. May Allah curse those who advise good but they themselves avoid it, and those who desist others from evil but they themselves act upon it.

أَفَبِهَذَا تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تُجَاوِرُوا اللَّهَ فِي دَارِ قُدْسِهِ، وَتَكُونُوا أَعَزَّ أَوْلِيَائِهِ عِنْدَهُ؟ هَبْهَات! لَا يُخَدَعُ اللَّهُ عَنِ جَنَّتِهِ، وَلَا تُنَالُ مَرْضَاتُهُ إِلَّا بِطَاعَتِهِ. لَعَنَ اللَّهُ الْأَمْرِينَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ التَّارِكِينَ لَهُ، وَالتَّاهِبِينَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ الْعَامِلِينَ بِهِ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 129

(1) *Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 320;*

(2) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, bab tabaddul al-'ahwal.*

Sermon 130: O Abu Dharr!...

Delivered when Abu Dharr¹ was exiled towards ar-Rabadhah

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لأبي ذر (رحمه الله) لما أخرج إلى الريدة

O Abu Dharr! You showed anger in the name of Allah therefore have hope in Him for Whom you became angry. The people were afraid of you in the matter of their (pleasure of this) world while you feared them for your faith. Then leave to them that for which they are afraid of you and get away from them taking away what you fear them about. How needy are they for what you dissuade them from and how heedless are you towards what they are denying you.

You will shortly know who is the gainer tomorrow (on the Day of Judgement) and who is more enviable. Even if these skies and earth were closed to some individual and he feared Allah, then Allah would open them for him. Only rightfulness should attract you while wrongfulness should detract you. If you had accepted their worldly attractions they would have loved you and if you had shared in it they would have given you asylum.

يَا أَبَا ذَرٍّ، إِنَّكَ غَضِبْتَ لِلَّهِ، فَارْجُ مَنْ غَضِبْتَ لَهُ، إِنَّ الْقَوْمَ خَافُوكَ عَلَى دُنْيَاهُمْ، وَخَفْتَهُمْ عَلَى دِينِكَ، فَاتْرُكْ فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ مَا خَافُوكَ عَلَيْهِ، وَاهْرُبْ مِنْهُمْ بِمَا خَفْتَهُمْ عَلَيْهِ؛ فَمَا أَحْوَجَهُمْ إِلَيَّ مَا مَنَعْتَهُمْ، وَأَعْنَاكَ عَمَّا مَنَعُوكَ! وَسَتَعْلَمُ مِنَ الرَّابِحِ عَدَا، وَالْأَكْثَرُ حَسَدًا. وَلَوْ أَنَّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِينَ كَانَتَا عَلَى عَبْدٍ رَثِقًا، ثُمَّ اتَّقَى اللَّهَ، لَجَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ مِنْهُمَا مَخْرَجًا! لَا يُؤْنِسُكَ إِلَّا الْحَقُّ، وَلَا يُوحِشُكَ إِلَّا الْبَاطِلُ، فَلَوْ قَبِلْتَ دُنْيَاهُمْ لِأَحْبُوكَ، وَلَوْ قَرَضْتَ مِنْهَا لِأَمْنُوكَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 130

- (1) *Al-Kulayni, Rawdah*, 206;
- (2) *al-Jawhari, Kitab al-Saqifah*, see *Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh*, II, 375;
- (3) *al-Ya`qubi, Ta'rikh*, II, 120.

Notes

1. Abu Dharr al-Ghifari's name was Jundab ibn Junadah. He was an inhabitant of ar-Rabadhah which was a small village on the east side of Medina. When he heard about the proclamation of the Prophet, he came to Mecca and after making enquiries saw the Prophet and accepted Islam whereupon the unbelievers of Quraysh gave him all sorts of troubles and inflicted pain after pain, but he remained steadfast. Among the acceptors of Islam he is the third, fourth or fifth. Along with this precedence in Islam his renunciation and piety was so high that the Prophet said: "Among my people Abu Dharr is the like of `Isa (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary) in renunciation and piety".

In the reign of Caliph `Umar, Abu Dharr left for Syria and during `Uthman's reign also remained there. He spent his days in counselling, preaching, acquainting people with the greatness of the members of the Prophet's family and guiding the people to the rightful path. The traces of Shi`ism now found in Syria and Jabal `Amil (north of Lebanon) are the result of his preaching and activity and the fruit of seeds sown by him.

The Governor of Syria, Mu`awiyah, did not like the conduct of Abu Dharr and was much disgusted with his open criticism and mention of the money-making and other wrongful activities of `Uthman. But he could do nothing. At last he wrote to `Uthman that if he remained there any longer he would rouse the people against the Caliph. There should therefore be some remedy against this. On this, `Uthman wrote to him that Abu Dharr should be seated on an unsaddled camel and dispatched to Medina. The order was obeyed and Abu Dharr was sent to Medina. On reaching Medina he resumed his preaching of righteousness and truth. He would recall to the people the days of the Holy Prophet and refrain them from displays of kingly pageantry, whereupon `Uthman was much perturbed and tried to restrict his speaking. One day he sent for him and said: "I have come to know that you go about propagating that the Holy Prophet said that:

"When Banu Umayyah will become thirty in number they will regard the cities of Allah as their property, His creatures their slaves and His religion the tool of their treachery."

Abu Dharr replied that he had heard the Prophet say so. `Uthman said that he was speaking a lie and enquired from those beside him if any one had heard this tradition and all replied in the negative. Abu Dharr then said that enquiry should be made from Amir al-mu'minin `Ali ibn Abi Talib (p.b.u.h.). He was sent for and asked about it. He said it was correct and Abu Dharr was telling the truth. `Uthman enquired on what basis he gave evidence for the correctness of this tradition. Amir al-mu'minin replied that he had heard the Holy Prophet say that:

"There is no speaker under the sky or over the earth more truthful than Abu Dharr".

Now `Uthman could do nothing. If he still held him to be liar it would mean falsification of the Prophet. He therefore kept quiet despite much perturbation, since he could not refute him. On the other side Abu Dharr began speaking against the usurping of Muslims' property quite openly and whenever he saw `Uthman he would recite this verse:

And those who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in Allah's way; announce thou unto them a painful chastisement. On the Day (of Judgement) when it shall be heated in the fire of hell, then shall be branded with it their foreheads and their sides and their backs; (saying unto them) "This is what ye hoarded up for yourselves, taste ye then what ye did hoard up." (Qur'an, 9:34-35)

`Uthman promised him money but could not entrap this free man in his golden net, then resorted to repression but could not stop his truth-speaking tongue. At last he ordered him to leave and go to ar-Rabadhah and deputised Marwan, son of the man (al-Hakam) exiled by the Prophet, to turn him out of Medina. At the same time he issued the inhuman order that no one should speak to him nor see him off. But Amir al-mu'minin, Imam Hasan, Imam Husayn, `Aqil ibn Abi Talib, `Abdullah ibn Ja'far and `Ammar ibn Yasir did not pay any heed to this order and accompanied him to see him off, and Amir al-mu'minin uttered these sentences (i.e., the above sermon) on that occasion.

In ar-Rabadhah, Abu Dharr had to put up with a very hard life. It was here that his son Dharr and his wife died and the sheep and goats that he was keeping for his livelihood also died. Of his children only one daughter remained, who equally shared his starvation and troubles. When the means of subsistence were fully exhausted and day after day passed without food she said to Abu Dharr: "Father, how long shall we go on like this. We should go somewhere in search of livelihood." Abu Dharr took her with him and set off for the wilderness. He could not find even any foliage. At last he was tired and sat down at a certain place. Then he collected some sand and, putting his head on it, lay down. Soon he began gasping, his eyes rolled up and pangs of death gripped him.

When the daughter saw this condition she was perplexed and said, "Father, if you die in this vast wilderness, how shall I manage for your burial quite alone." He replied, "Do not get upset. The Prophet told me that I shall die in helplessness and some Iraqis would arrange for my burial. After my death you put a sheet over me and then sit by the roadway and when some caravan passes that way tell them that the Prophet's companion Abu Dharr has died." Consequently, after his death she went and sat by the roadside. After some time a caravan passed that way. It included Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar an-Nakha'i, Hujr ibn `Adi at-Ta'i, `Alqamah ibn Qays an-Nakha'i, Sa'sa'ah ibn Suhan al-`Abdi, al-Aswad ibn Yazid an-Nakha'i etc. who were all fourteen persons in number. When they heard about the passing away of Abu Dharr they were shocked at his helpless death. They stopped their riding beasts and postponed the onward journey for his burial. Malik al-Ashtar gave a sheet

of cloth for his shroud. It was valued at four thousand Dirhams. After his funeral rites and burial they departed. This happened in the month of Dhi'l-hijjah, 32 A.H.

Sermon 131: O (people of) differing minds and divided hearts...

Grounds for accepting the Caliphate and the qualities of a ruler and governor

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

وفيه يبين سبب طلبه الحكم ويصف الامام الحق

O (people of) differing minds and divided hearts, whose bodies are present but wits are absent. I am leading you (amicably) towards truthfulness, but you run away from it like goats and sheep running away from the howling of a lion. How hard it is for me to uncover for you the secrets of justice, or to straighten the curve of truthfulness.

أَيَّتْهَا النُّفُوسُ الْمُخْتَلِفَةُ، وَالْقُلُوبُ الْمُتَشَتِّتَةُ، الشَّاهِدَةُ أَبْدَانُهُمْ، وَالْعَائِيَةُ عَنْهُمْ عُقُوبُهُمْ،
أَطَّأْرَكُمْ عَلَى الْحَقِّ وَأَنْتُمْ تَنْفِرُونَ عَنْهُ نُفُورَ الْمِعْرَى مِنْ وَعْوَعَةِ الْأَسَدِ! هَيْهَاتَ أَنْ أُطْلَعَ بِكُمْ
سِرَّارَ الْعَدْلِ، أَوْ أُقِيمَ اعْوِجَاجَ الْحَقِّ.

O my God! Thou knowest that what we did was not to seek power nor to acquire anything from the vanities of the world. We rather wanted to restore the signs of Thy religion and to usher prosperity into Thy cities so that the oppressed among Thy creatures might be safe and Thy forsaken commands might be established. O My God! I am the first who leaned (towards Thee) and who heard and responded (to the call of Islam). No one preceded me in prayer (salat) except the Prophet.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَكُنِ الَّذِي كَانَ مِنَّا مُنَافَسَةً فِي سُلْطَانٍ، وَلَا التَّمَاسَ شَيْءٍ مِنْ
فُضُولِ الْخَطَامِ، وَلَكِنْ لِنَرِدَ الْمَعَالِمَ مِنْ دِينِكَ، وَنُظْهِرَ الْأَصْلَاحَ فِي بِلَادِكَ، فَيَأْمَنَ الْمَظْلُومُونَ
مِنْ عِبَادِكَ، وَتُقَامَ الْمُعْطَلَّةُ مِنْ حُدُودِكَ.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَوَّلُ مَنْ أَنْابَ، وَسَمِعَ وَأَجَابَ، لَمْ يَسْبِقْنِي إِلَّا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله)
بِالصَّلَاةِ.

You certainly know that he who is in charge of honour, life, booty, (enforcement of) legal commandments and the leadership of the Muslims should not be a miser as his greed would aim at their wealth, nor be ignorant as he would then mislead them with his ignorance, nor be of rude behaviour who would estrange them with his rudeness, nor should he deal unjustly with wealth thus preferring one group over another, nor should he accept a bribe while taking decisions, as he would forfeit (others) rights and hold them up without finality, nor should he ignore sunnah as he would ruin the people.

وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ أَنَّهُ لَا يَنْبَغِي أَنْ يَكُونَ عَلَى الْفُرُوجِ وَالِدِمَاءِ وَالْمَعَانِمِ وَالْأَحْكَامِ وَإِمَامَةِ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ الْبَخِيلِ، فَتَكُونَ فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ نَهْمْتُهُ، وَلَا الْجَاهِلُ فَيُضِلُّهُمْ بِجَهْلِهِ، وَلَا الْجَانِي فَيَقْطَعَهُمْ
بِجَفَائِهِ، وَلَا الْجَائِفُ لِلدُّوَلِ فَيَتَّخِذَ قَوْمًا دُونَ قَوْمِ، وَلَا الْمُرْتَشِي فِي الْحُكْمِ فَيَذْهَبَ بِالْحُقُوقِ
وَيَقِفَ بِهَا دُونَ الْمَقَاطِعِ، وَلَا الْمَعْطَلُ لِلسُّنَّةِ فَيُهْلِكَ الْأُمَّةَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 131

(1) *Sibt, Tadhkirah, 120;*

(2) *al-Qadi al-Nu`man, Da`a'im, 531;*

(3) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, III,154 (z.'a.r), V, 270 (w.`a.a).*

Sermon 132: We praise Him for whatever He takes or gives...

Warning about death and counselling

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يعظ فيها ويزهد في الدنيا

We praise Him for whatever He takes or gives or whatever He inflicts on us or tries us with. He is aware of all that is hidden and He sees all that is concealed. He knows all that breasts contain or eyes hide. We render evidence that there is no god except He and that Muhammad - peace be upon him and his progeny - has been chosen by Him and deputised by Him - evidence tendered both secretly and openly, by heart and by tongue.

تَحْمَدُهُ عَلَى مَا أَخَذَ وَأَعْطَى، وَعَلَى مَا أَلْبَى وَابْتَلَى، الْبَاطِنُ لِكُلِّ حَفِيَّةٍ، الْحَاضِرُ لِكُلِّ سَرِيْرَةٍ، الْعَالَمُ بِمَا تُكِنُّ الصُّدُورُ، وَمَا تَخُونُ الْعُيُونُ. وَنَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا نَبِيُّهُ وَبَعِيْتُهُ، شَهَادَةً يُوَافِقُ فِيهَا السِّرُّ الْأَعْلَانُ، وَالْقَلْبُ اللَّسَانُ.

A part of the same sermon

منها: في عظة الناس

By Allah, certainly it is reality not play, truth not falsehood. It is none else than death. Its caller is making himself heard and its dragsman is making haste. The majority of the people should not deceive you. You have seen those who lived before you, amassed wealth, feared poverty and felt safe from its (evil) consequences, the longevity of desires and the (apparent) distance from death. How, then, death overtook them, turned them out of their homelands and took them out of their places of safety. They were borne on coffins, people were busy about them one after another, carrying them on their shoulders and supporting them with their hands.

فَإِنَّهُ وَاللَّهِ الْجِدُّ لَا اللَّعِبُ، وَالْحَقُّ لَا الْكُذِبُ، وَمَا هُوَ إِلَّا الْمَوْتُ أَسْمَعُ دَاعِيَهُ، وَأَعْجَلَ حَادِيَهُ، فَلَا يَغُرَّتْكَ سَوَادُ النَّاسِ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ، فَقَدْ رَأَيْتَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكَ مِمَّنْ جَمَعَ الْمَالَ وَحَذَرَ الْأَقْلَالَ، وَأَمِنَ الْعَوَاقِبَ . طُولَ أَمَلٍ وَاسْتِبْعَادَ أَجَلٍ . كَيْفَ نَزَلَ بِهِ الْمَوْتُ فَأَزْعَجَهُ عَنْ وَطَنِهِ، وَأَخَذَهُ مِنْ مَأْمَنِهِ، مُحْمُولًا عَلَى أَعْوَادِ الْمَنَائِيَا يَتَعَاطَى بِهِ الرَّجَالُ الرَّجَالَ، حَمَلًا عَلَى الْمَنَاكِبِ وَإِمْسَاكًا بِالْأَنَامِلِ.

Did you not witness those who engaged in long-reaching desires, built strong buildings, amassed much wealth but their houses turned to graves and their collections turned into ruin. Their property devolved on the successors and their spouses on those who came after them. They cannot (now) add to their good acts nor invoke (Allah's) mercy in respect of evil acts. Therefore, whoever makes his heart habituated to fear Allah achieves a forward position and his action is successful.

Prepare yourself for it and do all that you can for Paradise. Certainly this world has not been made a place of permanent stay for you. But it has been created as a pathway in order that you may take from it the provisions of your (good) actions for the permanent house (in Paradise). Be ready for departure from here and keep close your riding animals for setting off.

أَمَا رَأَيْتُمُ الَّذِينَ يَأْمُلُونَ بَعِيداً، وَيَبْنُونَ مَشِيداً، وَيَجْمَعُونَ كَثِيراً! أَصَبَحَتْ بُيُوتُهُمْ قُبُوراً، وَمَا جَمَعُوا بُوراً، وَصَارَتْ أَمْوَالُهُمْ لِلْوَارِثِينَ، وَأَزْوَاجُهُمْ لِقَوْمٍ آخَرِينَ، لَا فِي حَسَنَةٍ يَزِيدُونَ، وَلَا مِنْ سَيِّئَةٍ يَسْتَعْتَبُونَ! فَمَنْ أَشَعَرَ التَّقْوَى قَلْبَهُ بَرَّرَ مَهَلُهُ، وَفَارَ عَمَلُهُ. فَاهْتَبِلُوا هَبْلَهَا، وَاعْمَلُوا لِلْجَنَّةِ عَمَلَهَا، فَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا لَمْ تُخْلَقْ لَكُمْ دَارَ مَقَامٍ، بَلْ خُلِقَتْ لَكُمْ مَجَازاً لِتَرْوُدُوا مِنْهَا الْأَعْمَالَ إِلَى دَارِ الْقَرَارِ؛ فَكُونُوا مِنْهَا عَلَى أَوْفَازٍ، وَقَرَّبُوا الظُّهُورَ لِلزِّيَالِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 132

(1) *Al-'Amidi, Ghurar*, 282;

(2) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, II, 210 (w.f.z), V, 239 (h.b.1).*

Sermon 133: This world and the Hereafter have submitted to Him...

On the Glory of Allah

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يعظم الله سبحانه ويذكر القرآن والنبي ويعظ الناس

This world and the Hereafter have submitted to Him their reins, and the skies and earths have flung their keys towards Him. The thriving trees bow to Him in the morning and evening, and produce for Him flaming fire from their branches, and at His command, turn their own feed into ripe fruits.

وَأَقَادَتْ لَهُ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةُ بِأَرْمَتَيْهَا، وَقَدَفَتْ إِلَيْهِ السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُونَ مَقَالِيدَهَا،
وَسَجَدَتْ لَهُ بِالْعُدُودِ وَالْأَصَالِ الْأَشْجَارُ النَّاصِرَةُ، وَقَدَحَتْ لَهُ مِنْ قُضْبَانِهَا النَّيِّرَانَ الْمُضِيئَةَ،
وَأَتَتْ أَكْلَهَا بِكَلِمَاتِهِ الْيَتَامُ الْيَانِعَةَ.

A part of the same sermon about the Holy Qur'an

منها: في القرآن

The Book of Allah is among you. It speaks and its tongue does not falter. It is a house whose pillars do not fall down, and a power whose supporters are never routed.

وَكِتَابُ اللَّهِ بَيْنَ أَظْهُرِكُمْ، نَاطِقٌ لَا يَعْيًا لِسَانُهُ، وَبَيْتٌ لَا تُهْدَمُ أَرْكَانُهُ، وَعِزٌّ لَا تُهْزَمُ أَعْوَانُهُ.

A part of the same sermon about the Holy Prophet

منها: في رسول الله

Allah deputised the Prophet after a gap from the previous prophets when there was much talk (among the people). With him Allah exhausted the series of prophets and ended the revelation. He then fought for Him those who were turning away from Him and were equating others with Him.

أَرْسَلَهُ عَلَى حِينِ فِتْرَةٍ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ، وَتَنَازَعِ مِنَ الْأَلْسُنِ، فَقَفَى بِهِ الرُّسُلَ، وَحَتَمَ بِهِ الْوَحْيَ،
فَجَاهَدَ فِي اللَّهِ الْمُدْبِرِينَ عَنْهُ، وَالْعَادِلِينَ بِهِ.

A part of the same sermon about this world

منها: في الدنيا

Certainly this world is the end of the sight of the (mentally) blind who see nothing beyond it. The sight of a looker (who looks with the eye of his mind) pierces through and realises that the (real) house is beyond this world. The looker therefore wants to get out of it while the blind wants to get into it. The looker collects provision from it (for the next world) while the blind collects provision for this very world.

وَأَمَّا الدُّنْيَا مَنَّتْهُي بَصَرِ الْأَعْمَى، لَا يُبْصِرُ مِمَّا وَرَاءَهَا شَيْئاً، وَالْبَصِيرُ يَنْفُذُهَا بَصَرُهُ، وَيَعْلَمُ أَنَّ الدَّارَ وَرَاءَهَا، فَالْبَصِيرُ مِنْهَا شَاخِصٌ، وَالْأَعْمَى إِلَيْهَا شَاخِصٌ، وَالْبَصِيرُ مِنْهَا مُتَزَوِّدٌ، وَالْأَعْمَى لَهَا مُتَزَوِّدٌ.

A part of the same sermon - A caution

منها: في عظة الناس

You should know that a man gets satiated and wearied with everything except life, because he does not find for himself any pleasure in death. It is in the position of life for a dead heart, sight for the blind eye, hearing for the deaf ear, quenching for the thirsty and it contains complete sufficiency and safety.

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا وَيَكَاذُ صَاحِبُهُ يَشْبَعُ مِنْهُ وَيَمْلَأُهُ، إِلَّا الْحَيَاةَ فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَجِدُ لَهُ فِي الْمَوْتِ رَاحَةً، وَإِنَّمَا ذَلِكَ بِمِثْلَةِ الْحِكْمَةِ الَّتِي هِيَ حَيَاةٌ لِلْقَلْبِ الْمَيِّتِ، وَبَصَرٌ لِلْعَيْنِ الْعَمِيَاءِ، وَسَمْعٌ لِلْأُذُنِ الصَّمَاءِ، وَرِيٌّ لِلظَّمآنِ، وَفِيهَا الْعَيْ كُلُّهُ وَالسَّلَامَةُ.

The Book of Allah is that through which you see, you speak and you hear. Its one part speaks for the other part, and one part testifies to the other. It does not create differences about Allah nor does it mislead its own follower from (the path of) Allah. You are joined together in hatred of each other and in the growing of herbage on your filth (i.e., for covering inner dirt by good appearance outside). You are sincere with one another in your love of desires and bear enmity against each other in earning wealth. The evil spirit (Satan) has perplexed you and deceit has misled you. I seek the help of Allah for myself and you.

كِتَابُ اللَّهِ تُبْصِرُونَ بِهِ، وَتَنْطِقُونَ بِهِ، وَتَسْمَعُونَ بِهِ، وَيَنْطِقُ بَعْضُهُ بِبَعْضٍ، وَيَشْهَدُ بَعْضُهُ عَلَى بَعْضٍ، وَلَا يَخْتَلِفُ فِي اللَّهِ، وَلَا يُخَالِفُ بِصَاحِبِهِ عَنِ اللَّهِ. قَدْ اصْطَلَحْتُمْ عَلَى الْغُلِّ فِيمَا بَيْنَكُمْ، وَنَبَتَ الْمَرْعَى عَلَى دِمْنِكُمْ، وَتَصَافَيْتُمْ عَلَى حُبِّ الْأَمَالِ، وَتَعَادَيْتُمْ فِي كَسْبِ الْأَمْوَالِ. لَقَدْ اسْتَهَمَ بِكُمْ الْحَبِيثُ، وَتَاهَ بِكُمْ الْعُرُورُ، وَاللَّهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَى نَفْسِي وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 133

(1) *Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 77;*

(2) *See Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh, II, 386.*

Sermon 134: Allah has taken upon Himself ...

Delivered when Caliph `Umar ibn al-Khattab consulted ¹ Amir al-mu'minin about himself, taking part in the march towards Rome (Byzantine Empire).

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

وقد شاوره عمر بن الخطاب في الخروج إلى غزواروم

Allah has taken upon Himself for the followers of this religion the strengthening of boundaries and hiding of the secret places. Allah helped them when they were few and could not protect themselves. He is Living and will not die. If you will your self proceed towards the enemy and clash with them and fall into some trouble, there will be no place of refuge for the Muslims other than their remote cities, nor any place they would return to. Therefore, you should send there an experienced man and send with him people of good performance who are well-intentioned. If Allah grants you victory, then this is what you want. If it is otherwise, you would serve as a support for the people and a returning place for the Muslims.

وَقَدْ تَوَكَّلَ اللَّهُ لِأَهْلِ هَذَا الدِّينِ بِإِعْزَازِ الْحُوْزَةِ، وَسِتْرِ الْعُوْرَةِ، وَالَّذِي نَصَرَهُمْ وَهُمْ قَلِيلٌ لَا يَنْتَصِرُونَ، وَمَنْعَهُمْ وَهُمْ قَلِيلٌ لَا يَمْتَنِعُونَ، حَيْثُ لَا يَمُوتُ. إِنَّكَ مَتَى تَسِيرَ إِلَى هَذَا الْعَدُوِّ بِنَفْسِكَ، فَتَلْقَهُمْ بِشَخْصِكَ فَتُنْكَبَ، لَا تَكُنْ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ كَانِفَةً دُونَ أَقْصَى بِلَادِهِمْ، وَلَيْسَ بَعْدَكَ مَرْجِعٌ يَرْجِعُونَ إِلَيْهِ، فَأَبْعَثْ إِلَيْهِمْ رَجُلًا مُحْرَبًا، وَاحْفَظْ مَعَهُ أَهْلَ الْبَلَاءِ وَالنَّصِيحَةِ، فَإِنَّ أَظْهَرَ اللَّهِ فَذَلِكَ مَا تُحِبُّ، وَإِنْ تَكُنْ الْأُخْرَى، كُنْتَ رِذَاءً لِلنَّاسِ وَمَثَابَةً لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 134

(1) *Ibn al- 'Athir, al-Nihayah, IV, 250;*

(2) *Abu `Ubayd, al-'Amwal, 252.*

Notes

1. About Amir al-mu'minin, the strange position is adopted that on the one hand, it is said that he was ignorant of practical politics and unacquainted with ways of administration from which it is intended that the revolts created by the Umayyad's lust for power should be shown to be the outcome of Amir al-mu'minin's weak administration. On the other hand, much is made of the various occasions when the then Caliphs consulted Amir al-mu'minin in important affairs of State in the matter of wars with unbelievers. The aim in this is not to exhibit his correctness of thinking and judgement or deep sagacity but to show that there was unity and concord between him and the Caliphs so that attention should not be paid to the fact that in some matters they also differed and that mutual clashes had also occurred. History shows that Amir al-mu'minin did have differences of principles with the Caliphs and did not approve every step of theirs. In the sermon of ash-Shiqshiqiyah he has expressed in loud words his difference of opinion and anger about each regime. Nevertheless, this difference does not mean that correct guidance should be withheld in collective Islamic problems. Again, Amir al-mu'minin's character was so high that no one could imagine that he would ever evade giving counsel which concerned the common weal, or would give such counsel which would damage public interests. That is why, despite differences of principle, he was consulted. This throws light on the greatness of his

character and the correctness of his thinking and judgement. Similarly, it is a prominent trait of the Holy Prophet's character that despite rejecting his claim to prophethood the unbelievers acknowledged him the best trustee and could never doubt his trustworthiness. Rather, even during clashes of mutual opposition they entrusted to him their property without fear and never suspected that their property would be misappropriated. Similarly, Amir al-mu'minin was held to occupy so high a position of trust and confidence that friend and foe both trusted in the correctness of his counsel. So, just as the Prophet's conduct shows his height of trustworthiness, and just as it cannot be inferred from it that there was mutual accord between him and the unbelievers, because trust has its own place while the clash of Islam and unbelief has another, in the same way, despite having differences with the Caliphs, Amir al-mu'minin was regarded as the protector of national and community interests and as the guardian of Islam's wellbeing and prosperity. Thus when national interests were involved he was consulted and he tendered his unbiased advice raising himself above personal ends and keeping in view the Prophet's tradition to the effect that "He who is consulted is a trustee" never allowed any dishonesty or duplicity to interfere. When on the occasion of the battle of Palestine, the Caliph `Umar consulted him about his taking part in it himself, then, irrespective of whether or not his opinion would accord with `Umar's feelings, he kept in view Islam's prestige and existence and counselled him to stay in his place and to send to the battlefield such a man who should be experienced and wellversed in the art of fighting, because the going of an inexperienced man would have damaged the established prestige of Islam and the awe in which the Muslims were held which had existed from the Prophet's days would have vanished. In fact, in the Caliph `Umar's going there Amir al-mu'minin saw signs of defeat and vanquishment. He therefore found Islam's interest to lie in detaining him and indicated his view in the words that:

"If you have to retreat from the battlefield, it would not be your personal defeat only, but the Muslims would lose heart by it and leave the battle-field and disperse here and there, because with the officer in command leaving the field the army too would lose ground. Furthermore, with the centre being without the Caliph there would be no hope of any further assistance from behind which could sustain courage of the combatants."

This is that counsel which is put forth as a proof of mutual accord although this advice was tendered in view of Islam's prestige and life which was dearer to Amir al-mu'minin than any other interest. No particular individual's life was dear to him for which he might have advised against participation in the battle.

Sermon 135: O son of the accursed....

There was some exchange of words between `Uthman ibn `Affan and Amir al-mu'minin when al-Mughirah ibn al-Akhnas¹ said to `Uthman that he would deal with Amir al-mu'minin on his behalf whereupon Amir al-mu'minin said to al-Mughirah:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

وقد وقعت مشاجرة بينه وبين عثمان، فقال المغيرة بن الاخنس لعثمان: أنا أكفيك،

فقال أمير المؤمنين صلوات الله عليه للمغيرة:

O son of the accursed and issueless, and of a tree which has neither root nor branch. Will you deal with me? By Allah, Allah will not grant victory to him whom you support, nor will he be able to stand up whom you raise. Get away from us. Allah may keep you away from your purpose. Then do whatever you like. Allah may not have mercy on you if you have pity on me.

يَابْنَ اللَّعِينِ الْأُبْتَرِ، وَالشَّجَرَةِ الَّتِي لَا أَصْلَ لَهَا وَلَا فَرْعَ، أَنْتَ تَكْفِينِي، فَوَاللَّهِ مَا أَعَزَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ أَنْتَ نَاصِرُهُ، وَلَا قَامَ مَنْ أَنْتَ مُنْهَضُهُ، اخْرُجْ عَنَّا أَبْعَدَ اللَّهُ نَوَاكِ، ثُمَّ ابْلُغْ جَهْدَكَ، فَلَا أَبْقَى اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ إِنْ أَبْقَيْتَ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 135

(1) *Ibn A`tham al-Kufi, al-Futuh, II, 165.*

Notes

1. Al-Mughirah ibn al-Akhnas ath-Thaqafi was among the wellwishers of `Uthman ibn `Affan and the son of his paternal aunt. His brother Abu'l Hakam ibn al-Akhnas was killed at the hands of Amir al-mu'minin in the battle of Uhud, because of which he bore malice against Amir al-mu'minin. His father was one of those people who accepted Islam at the time of the fall of Mecca but retained heresy and hypocrisy in heart. That is why Amir al-mu'minin called him accursed, and he called him issueless because he who has a son like al-Mughirah deserves to be called issueless.

Sermon 136: Your allegiance to me was not without thinking...

About the sincerity of his own intention and support of the oppressed (regarding the allegiance paid to him)

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في أمر البيعة

Your allegiance to me was not without thinking,¹ nor is my and your position the same. I seek you for Allah's sake but you seek me for your own benefits. O people! Support me despite your hearts' desires. By Allah, I will take revenge for the oppressed from the oppressor and will put a string in the nose of the oppressor and drag him to the spring of truthfulness even though he may grudge it.

لَمْ تَكُنْ بَيَعْتُمْ إِيَّايَ فُلْتَهُ، وَلَيْسَ أَمْرِي وَأَمْرُكُمْ وَاحِدًا، إِيَّيْ أُرِيدُكُمْ اللَّهُ وَأَنْتُمْ تُرِيدُونِي لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ. أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، أَعِينُونِي عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَإِيْمَ اللَّهُ لَأَنْصِفَنَّ الْمَظْلُومَ، وَلَا أَقُودَنَّ الظَّالِمَ بِخِزَامَتِهِ حَتَّى أُورِدَهُ مِنْهَلِ الْحَقِّ وَإِنْ كَانَ كَارِهًا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 136

(1) *Al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 142;*

(2) *Ibn al-'Athir, III, 467 (f.l.t).*

Notes

1. Here Amir almu'minin points to the view of `Umar ibn al-Khattab which he had on the allegiance of Abu Bakr on the day of Saqifah when he said: ". . . let me clarify this to you that the allegiance with Abu Bakr was a mistake and without thinking (faltah) but Allah saved us from its evil. Therefore, whoever (intends to) acts like this you must kill him. . ." (as-Sahih, al-Bukhari, vol. 8, p. 211; as-Sirah an-Nabawiyah, Ibn Hisham, vol. 4, pp. 308309; at-Tarikh, at-Tabari, vol. 1, p. 1822; al-Kamil, Ibn al-Athir, vol. 2, p. 327; at-Tarikh, Ibn Kathir, vol. 5, pp. 245246; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol. 1, p. 55; as-Sirah al-Halabiyah, vol. 3, pp. 388, 392; al-Ansab, al-Baladhuri, vol. 5, p. 15; at-Tamhid, al-Baqilani, p. 196; ash-Sharh, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 2, p. 23)

Sermon 137: By Allah, they did not find any disagreeable thing in me...

About Talhah and az-Zubayr

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في معنى طلحة والزبير

By Allah, they did not find any disagreeable thing in me, nor did they do justice between me and themselves. Surely, they are now demanding a right which they have abandoned and blood which they have themselves shed. If I partook in it with them then they too have a share in it, but if they committed it without me the demand should be against them. The first step of their justice should be that they pass verdict against themselves. I have my intelligence with me.

وَاللَّهِ مَا أَنْكَرُوا عَلَيَّ مُنْكَرًا، وَلَا جَعَلُوا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُمْ نَصْفًا، وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَطْلُبُونَ حَقًّا هُمْ تَرَكَوهُ، وَدَمًا هُمْ سَفَكُوهُ، فَإِنْ كُنْتُ شَرِيكُهُمْ فِيهِ فَإِنَّ هُمْ نَصِيبُهُمْ مِنْهُ، وَإِنْ كَانُوا وَلَوْهُ دُونِي فَمَا الطَّلِبَةُ إِلَّا قِبَلَهُمْ، وَإِنَّ أَوَّلَ عَذَابِهِمْ لِلْحُكْمِ عَلَيَّ أَنْفُسِهِمْ، وَإِنَّ مَعِيَ لَبَصِيرَتِي،

I have never mixed matters nor have they appeared mixed to me. Certainly, this is the rebellious group in which there is the near one (az-Zubayr), the scorpion's venom (A'ishah) and doubts which cast a veil (on facts). But the matter is clear, and the wrong has been shaken from its foundation. Its tongue has stopped uttering mischief. By Allah, I will prepare for them a cistern from which I alone will draw water. They will not be able to drink from it nor would they be able to drink from any other place.

مَا لَبَسْتُ وَلَا لَبَسَ عَلَيَّ، وَإِنَّهَا لَلْفَيْقَةُ الْبَاغِيَّةُ، فِيهَا الْحَمَاءُ وَالْحَمَةُ وَالشُّبْهَةُ الْمُغْدِقَةُ، وَإِنَّ الْأَمْرَ لَوَاضِحٌ، وَقَدْ رَاحَ الْبَاطِلُ عَنْ نَصَابِهِ، وَأَنْقَطَعَ لِسَانُهُ عَنْ شَعْبِهِ. وَإِيمَ اللَّهِ لَا فَرِطَنَ لَهُمْ حَوْضًا أَنَا مَا تَحْتُهُ، لَا يَصُدُّوْنَ عَنْهُ بَرِيٌّ، وَلَا يَعْبُونَ بَعْدَهُ فِي حَسْبِي.

A part of the same sermon

منه: في أمر البيعة

You advanced towards me shouting "allegiance, allegiance" like she-camels having delivered newly born young ones leaping towards their young. I held back my hand but you pulled it towards you. I drew back my hand but you dragged it. O My God! These two have ignored my rights and did injustice to me. They both have broken allegiance to me, and roused people against me. Unfasten Thou what they have fastened, and do not make strong what they have woven. Show them the evil in what they aimed at and acted upon. Before fighting I asked them to be steadfast in allegiance and behaved with them with consideration but they belittled the blessing and refused (to adopt the course of) safety.

فَأَقْبَلْتُمْ إِلَيَّ إِقْبَالَ الْعُودِ الْمَطْفِيلِ عَلَى أَوْلَادِهَا، تَقُولُونَ: الْبَيْعَةُ الْبَيْعَةُ! فَبَصُتُ كَفِّي
فَبَسَطْتُهَا، وَنَارَعْتُكُمْ يَدِي فَجَادَتْكُمْ يَدِي. اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّهُمَا قَطَعَانِي وَظَلَمَانِي، وَنَكَّنَا بَيْعِي، وَالْبَا
النَّاسَ عَلَيَّ؛ فَاحْلُلْ مَا عَقَّدَا، وَلَا تُحْكِمْ لُهُمَا مَا أُبْرِمَا، وَأَرْهِمَا الْمَسَاءَةَ فِيمَا أَمَّلَا وَعَمَلَا، وَلَقَدْ
اسْتَبْتُهُمَا قَبْلَ الْقِتَالِ، وَاسْتَأْنَيْتُ بِهِمَا أَمَامَ الْوَقَاعِ، فَعَمَطَا النَّعْمَةَ، وَرَدَّ الْعَاقِبَةَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 137

- (1) *Ibn `Abd al-Birr, al-'Isti`ab, II, 211;*
- (2) *Ibn al-'Athir, Usd al-ghabah, II, 61;*
- (3) *al-Mufid in al-'Irshad, 146, 142, and al-Jamal, 143, from al-Waqidi;*
- (4) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, III, 318 (`a.w.dh);*
- (5) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-'Imamah, I, 154;*
- (6) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, I, 310;*
- (7) *al-Tabari, al-Mustarshid, 95;*
- (8) *Ibn Tawus, Kashf, 173;*
- (9) *Safwah, Jamharah;*
- (10) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, * VI, 3143.*

Sermon 138: He will direct desires towards...

Referring to events in the future

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يوميء فيها إلى ذكر الملاحم

He will direct desires towards (the path of) guidance while people will have turned guidance towards desires, and he will turn their views to the direction of the Qur'an while the people will have turned the Qur'an to their views.

يَعْطِفُ الْهُوَى عَلَى الْهُدَى إِذَا عَطَفُوا الْهُدَى عَلَى الْهُوَى، وَيَعْطِفُ الرَّأْيَ عَلَى الْقُرْآنِ إِذَا عَطَفُوا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَى الرَّأْيِ.

A part of the same sermon

(Before this Enjoiner of Good ¹, matters will deteriorate) till war will rage among you with full force, showing forth its teeth, with udders full of sweet milk but with a sour tip. Beware, it will be tomorrow and the morrow will come soon with things which you do not know. The Man in power, not from this crowd, will take to task all those were formerly appointed for their ill deeds and the earth will pour forth its eternal treasures and fling before him easily her keys. He will show you the just way of behaviour and revive the Qur'an and sunnah which have become lifeless (among people).

حَتَّى تَقُومَ الْحَرْبُ بِكُمْ عَلَى سَاقٍ، بَادِيًا نَوَاجِدُهَا، مَمْلُوءَةً أَخْلَافُهَا، حُلُومًا رِضَاعُهَا، عَاقِمًا عَاقِبَتُهَا.

أَلَا وَفِي عَدِّ . وَسَيَأْتِي عَدُّ بِمَا لَا تَعْرِفُونَ . يَأْخُذُ الْوَالِي مِنْ غَيْرِهَا عُمَّالَهَا عَلَى مَسَاوِيءِ أَعْمَالِهَا، وَتُخْرَجُ لَهُ الْأَرْضُ أَفَالِيدَ كَبِدِهَا، وَتُلْقَى إِلَيْهِ سِلْمًا مَقَالِيدِهَا، فَيُرِيكُمْ كَيْفَ عَدُلُ السَّيْرَةِ وَ يُجِيبِي مَيْتَ الْكِتَابِ وَالسُّنَّةِ.

A part of the same sermon

As if I see (him), he (the Enjoiner of Evil), ² is shouting in Syria (ash-Sham) and is extending his banners to the outskirts of Kufah. He is bent towards it like the biting of the she-camel. He has covered the ground with heads. His mouth is wide open and (the trampling of) his footsteps on the ground have become heavy. His advance is broad and his attacks are severe.

كَأَنِّي بِهِ قَدْ نَعَقَ بِالسَّامِ، وَفَحَصَ بِرَأْيَاتِهِ فِي ضَوَاحِي كُوفَانَ، فَعَطَفَ عَلَيْهَا عَطْفَ الضَّرُوسِ، وَفَرَشَ الْأَرْضَ بِالرُّؤُوسِ، قَدْ فَعَرَتْ فَاعْرَتْهُ، وَثَقَلَتْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَطَائَتْهُ، بَعِيدَ الْجَوْلَةِ، عَظِيمَ الصَّوْلَةِ.

By Allah, he will disperse you throughout the earth till only a few of you remain, like kohl in the eye. You will continue like this till the Arabs return

to their senses. You should therefore stick to established ways, clear signs and the early period which has the lasting virtues of the Prophethood. You should know that Satan makes his ways easy so that you may follow him on his heels.

وَاللّٰهُ لِيُشْرِدَنَّكُمْ فِيْ اَطْرَافِ الْاَرْضِ حَتّٰى لَا يَبْقٰى مِنْكُمْ اِلَّا قَلِيْلٌ، كَالْكُحْلِ فِي الْعَيْنِ، فَلَا تَزَالُوْنَ كَذٰلِكَ، حَتّٰى تَتُوْبَ اِلَى الْعَرَبِ عَوَازِبَ اَحْلَامِهَا! فَالزُّمُوْا السُّنَنَ الْقَائِمَةَ، وَالْاَثَارَ الْبَيِّنَةَ، وَالْعَهْدَ الْقَرِيْبَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ بَاقِي النُّبُوَّةِ. وَاَعْلَمُوْا اَنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ اِيْمًا يُّسَيِّ لَكُمْ طُرُقَهُ لِتَتَّبِعُوْا عَقْبَهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 138

(1) *Al- 'Amidi, Ghurar, 296.*

Notes

1. This prophecy of Amir al-mu'minin is with regard to the appearance of the Twelfth Imam, Abu'l-Qasim Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Mahdi (p.b.u.h.).

2. This refers to `Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan who came to power in Syria (ash-Sham) after his father Marwan ibn al-Hakam and then after the killing of al-Mukhtar ibn Abi `Ubayd ath-Thaqafi in his encounter with Mus`ab ibn az-Zubayr he proceeded towards Iraq. He clashed with Mus`ab's force at Maskin near Dayru'l-jathaliq in the outskirts of Kufah. After defeating him he made a victorious entry into Kufah and took allegiance from its inhabitants. Then he sent al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf ath-Thaqafi to Mecca to fight with `Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr. Consequently this man besieged Mecca and stoned it, and shed the blood of thousands of innocent persons like water. He killed Ibn az-Zubayr and hung his body on the gallows. He perpetrated such atrocities on the people that one shudders at the thought of them.

Sermon 139: No one preceded me in inviting people to truthfulness...

On the occasion of the Consultative Committee (after the death of `Umar ibn al-Khattab)

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في وقت الشورى

No one preceded me in inviting people to truthfulness, in giving consideration to kinship and practising generosity. So, hear my word and preserve what I say. Maybe you will see soon after today that over this matter swords will be drawn and pledges will be broken, so much so that some of you will become leaders of the people of misguidance and followers of people of ignorance.

لَنْ يُسْرِعَ أَحَدٌ قَبْلِي إِلَى دَعْوَةِ حَقٍّ، وَصِلَةٍ رَجِمَ، وَعَائِدَةٍ كَرِمَ. فَاسْمَعُوا قَوْلِي، وَعُوا مَنْطِقِي، عَسَى أَنْ تَرَوْا هَذَا الْأَمْرَ مِنْ بَعْدِ هَذَا الْيَوْمِ تُنْتَضَى فِيهِ السُّيُوفُ، وَتُخَانُ فِيهِ الْعُهُودُ، حَتَّى يَكُونَ بَعْضُكُمْ أئِمَّةً لِأَهْلِ الضَّلَالَةِ، وَشِيعَةً لِأَهْلِ الْجَهَالَةِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 139

- (1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, V, 39, events of 23 H.;*
- (2) *al-'Azharī, Tahdhib, I, 241;*
- (3) *al-Shaykh Warram, Tanbih;*
- (4) *al-Harawī, al-Jam`;*
- (5) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah.*

Sermon 140: Those who do not commit sins...

About backbiting and speaking ill of others ¹

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في النهي عن عيب الناس

Those who do not commit sins and have been gifted with safety (from sins) should take pity on sinners and other disobedient people. Gratefulness should be mostly their indulgence and it should prevent them from (finding faults with) others. What about the backbiter who blames his brother and finds fault with him? Does he not remember that Allah has concealed the sins which he committed while they were bigger than his brother's sins pointed out by him? How can he vilify him about his sins when he has himself committed one like it? Even if he has not committed a similar sin he must have committed bigger ones. By Allah, even if he did not commit big sins but committed only small sins, his exposing the sins of people is itself a big sin.

وَإِنَّمَا يَنْبَغِي لِأَهْلِ الْعِصْمَةِ وَالْمَصْنُوعِ إِلَيْهِمْ فِي السَّلَامَةِ أَنْ يَرْحَمُوا أَهْلَ الذُّنُوبِ وَالْمَعْصِيَةِ، وَيَكُونَ الشُّكْرُ هُوَ الْعَالِبَ عَلَيْهِمْ وَالْحَاجِزَ هُمْ عَنْهُمْ، فَكَيْفَ بِالْعَائِبِ الَّذِي عَابَ أَحَاهُ وَعَيْرَهُ يَبْلُؤَاهُ! أَمَا ذَكَرَ مَوْضِعَ سِتْرِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ مَنْ ذُنُوبِهِ [م] مَا هُوَ أَعْظَمُ مِنَ الذَّنْبِ الَّذِي عَابَهُ بِهِ! وَكَيْفَ يَذُمَّهُ بِذَنْبٍ قَدْ رَكِبَ مِثْلَهُ؟! فَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ رَكِبَ ذَلِكَ الذَّنْبَ بَعَيْنِهِ فَقَدْ عَصَى اللَّهَ فِيمَا سِوَاهُ، مِمَّا هُوَ أَعْظَمُ مِنْهُ، وَإِنَّمَا اللَّهُ لَئِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ عَصَاهُ فِي الْكَبِيرِ، وَعَصَاهُ فِي الصَّغِيرِ، لَجَزَائِئُهُ عَلَى عَيْبِ النَّاسِ أَكْبَرُ!

O creature of Allah, do not be quick in exposition anyone's sin for he may be forgiven for it, and do not feel yourself safe even for a small sin because you may be punished for it. Therefore, every one of you who comes to know the faults of others should not expose them in view of what he knows about his own faults, and he should remain busy in thanks that he has been saved from what others have been indulging in.

يَا عَبْدَ اللَّهِ، لَا تَعْجَلْ فِي عَيْبِ أَحَدٍ بِذَنْبِهِ، فَلَعَلَّهُ مَعْفُورٌ لَهُ، وَلَا تَأْمَنْ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ صَغِيرَ مَعْصِيَةٍ، فَلَعَلَّكَ مُعَذَّبٌ عَلَيْهِ؛ فَلْيَكْفُفْ مَنْ عَلِمَ مِنْكُمْ عَيْبَ غَيْرِهِ لِمَا يَعْلَمُ مِنْ عَيْبِ نَفْسِهِ، وَلْيَكُنِ الشُّكْرُ شَاغِلًا لَهُ عَلَى مُعَافَاتِهِ مِمَّا ابْتُلِيَ بِهِ غَيْرُهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 140

(1) Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 135, 359.

Notes

1. The habit of fault finding and backbiting has become so common that even the feeling of its evilness has disappeared. And at present neither the high avoid it nor the low; neither the high position of the pulpit prevents it nor the sacredness of the mosque. Whenever a few companions sit together their topic of conversation and engaging interest is

just to discuss the faults of their opponents with added colourisation, and to listen to them attentively. Although the fault finder is himself involved in the faults which he picks up in others, yet he does not like that his own faults should be exposed. In such a case, he should have consideration for similar feelings in others and should avoid searching for their faults and hurting their feelings. He should act after the proverb: "Do not do unto others what you do not want others to do unto you."

Backbiting is defined as the exposure of the fault of a brother-in-faith with the intent to vilify him in such a way as to irritate him, whether it be by speaking, acting, implication or suggestion. Some people take backbiting to cover only that which is false or contrary to fact. According to them to relate what was seen or heard, exactly as it was, is not backbiting, and they say that they are not backbiting but only relating exactly what they saw or heard. But in fact backbiting is the name of this very relating of the facts, because if it is not factually correct it would be false accusation and wrong blame. It is related about the Prophet that he said:

"Do you know what backbiting is?" People said, "Allah and His Prophet know better." Then he said, "Backbiting means that you say about your brother a thing which pains him." Someone said, "But what if I say what is actually true about him?" The Prophet replied, "It is backbiting only when it is factually true, otherwise you would be accusing him falsely."

There are many causes for indulging in backbiting, and because of this a man commits it sometimes knowingly and sometimes unknowingly. Abu Hamid al-Ghazali has recounted these causes in detail in his book *Ihya' `ulumu'd-din*. A few of the important ones are:

- 1) To make fun of anyone or to make him appear abased.
- 2) To make people laugh and to display one's own jolliness and high spiritedness.
- 3) Expressing one's feelings under the influence of rage and anger.
- 4) To establish one's feelings under the influence of rage and anger.
- 5) To disprove one's connection or involvement in a matter; namely that a particular evil was not committed by oneself but by someone else.
- 6) To associate oneself with some group when in their company in order to avoid strangeness with them.
- 7) To belittle a person from whom it is feared that he will expose some fault of one's.
- 8) To defeat a competitor in the same calling.
- 9) To seek position in the audience of someone in power.
- 10) To express sorrow by saying it is sad that so-and-so has fallen in such and such a sin.
- 11) To express astonishment, for example, to say it is wonderful that so and so has done this.
- 12) To name the committer of an act when expressing anger over it.

However, in some cases fault finding or criticising does not fall under backbiting.

1) If the oppressed complains of the oppressor in order to seek redress, it is not backbiting. Allah says about it:

Loveth not Allah open utterance of evil in speech except by one who hath been wronged.. (Qur'an, 4:148)

2) To relate anyone's fault while giving advice is no backbiting because dishonesty and duplicity is not permissible in counselling.

3) If in connection with seeking the requirements of a religious commandment the naming of a particular individual cannot be avoided, then to state the fault of such person to the extent necessary would not be backbiting.

4) To relate the misappropriation or dishonesty committed by someone with a view to saving a Muslim brother from harm would not be backbiting.

5) To relate the fault of someone before one who can prevent him from committing it is not backbiting.

6) Criticism and expression of opinion about a relater of traditions is not backbiting.

7) If a person is well acquainted with someone's shortcoming, then to relate such a fault in order to define his personality, for example, describing a deaf, dumb, lame or handless person as thus, is not backbiting.

8) To describe any fault of a patient before a physician for purposes of treatment is not backbiting.

9) If someone claims wrong lineage then to expose his correct lineage is not backbiting.

10) If the life, property or honour of someone can be protected only by informing him of some fault, it would not be backbiting.

11) If two persons discuss a fault of another which is already known to both it would not be backbiting, although to avoid discussing it is better, since it is possible one of the two might have forgotten it.

12) To expose the evils of one who openly commits evils is not back-biting as the tradition runs:

"There is no backbiting in the case of he who has torn away the veil of shamefulness."

Sermon 141: O people! If a person knows his broche...

Against reliance on hearsay

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في النهي عن سماع الغيبة وفي الفرق بين الحق والباطل

O people! If a person knows his brother to be steadfast in faith and of correct ways he should not lend ear to what people may say about him. Sometimes the bowman shoots arrows but the arrow goes astray; similarly talk can be off the point. Its wrong perishes, while Allah is the Hearer and the Witness. There is nothing between truth and falsehood except four fingers.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، مَنْ عَرَفَ مِنْ أَخِيهِ وَثِيْقَةً دِينَ وَسَدَادَ طَرِيقٍ، فَلَا يَسْمَعَنَّ فِيهِ أَقَاوِيلَ الرِّجَالِ،
أَمَا إِنَّهُ قَدْ يَرْمِي الرَّمِي، وَتُحْطِيءُ السِّتْهُامُ، وَيَجِيءُ الكَلَامُ، وَبَاطِلٌ ذَلِكَ يَبُورُ، وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ
وَشَهِيدٌ. أَمَا إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ بَيْنَ الحَقِّ وَالبَاطِلِ إِلَّا أَرْبَعُ أَصَابِعَ.

Amir al-mu'minin was asked the meaning of this whereupon he joined his fingers together and put them between his ear and eye and said: It is falsehood when you say, "I have heard so," while it is truth when you say, "I have seen."

فسئل (عليه السلام) عن معنى قوله هذا، فجمع أصابعه ووضعها بين أذنه وعينه ثم قال:

الباطل أن تقول سمعت، والحق أن تقول رأيت!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 141

- (1) *Al-Quda`i, Dustur, 139;*
- (2) *Ibn Hudhayl, `Ayn, 215;*
- (3) *al-Saduq, al-Khisal, 110;*
- (4) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, VI, 268.*

Sermon 142: He who shows generosity...

Against misplaced generosity

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

المعروف في غير أهله

He who shows generosity to those who have no claim to it or who are not fit for it would not earn anything except the praise of the ignoble and appreciation of bad persons, although as long as he continues giving, the ignorant will say how generous his hand is, even though in the affairs of Allah he is a miser.

وَلَيْسَ لِوَاضِعِ الْمَعْرُوفِ فِي غَيْرِ حَقِّهِ، وَعِنْدَ غَيْرِ أَهْلِهِ، مِنَ الْحِطِّ فِيمَا أَتَى إِلَّا مُحَمَّدٌ
اللِّقَامِ، وَتَنَاءُ الْأَشْرَارِ، وَمَقَالَةُ الْجُهَّالِ، مَا دَامَ مُنْعِمًا عَلَيْهِمْ، مَا أَجْوَدَ يَدَهُ! وَهُوَ عَنِ ذَاتِ اللَّهِ
بِحَيْلٍ!

Deserving recipients of generosity

مواضع المعروف

Therefore, to whosoever Allah gives wealth he should use it in extending good behaviour to his kinsmen, in entertaining, in releasing prisoners and the afflicted; in giving to the poor and to debtors, and he should endure (the troubles arising out of) the fulfilment of rights (of others) and hardships in expectation of reward. Certainly, the achievement of these qualities is the height of greatness in this world and achievement of the distinctions of the next world; if Allah so wills.

فَمَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا فَلْيَصِلْ بِهِ الْقَرَابَةَ، وَلْيُحْسِنْ مِنْهُ الضِّيَافَةَ، وَلْيُعِثْ بِهِ الْأَسِيرَ وَالْعَائِي،
وَلْيُعْطِ مِنْهُ الْفَقِيرَ وَالْعَارِمَ، وَلْيَصْبِرْ نَفْسَهُ عَلَى الْحُقُوقِ وَالنَّوَائِبِ، ابْتِغَاءَ الثَّوَابِ; فَإِنَّ فَوْزاً بِهَذِهِ
الْحِصَالِ شَرَفٌ مَكَارِمِ الدُّنْيَا، وَدَرْكُ فَضَائِلِ الْآخِرَةِ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 142

- (1) *Nasr, Siffin*, 235;
- (2) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh*, VI, 9;
- (3) *al-Kulayni, al-Kafi*, V,39;
- (4) *Ibn A`tham, al-Futuh*, III, 73.

Sermon 143: Beware; the earth which bears you ...

Praying for rain

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في الاستسقاء

[وفيه تنبيه العباد إلى وجوب استغاثة رحمة الله إذا حبس عنهم رحمة المطر]

Beware; the earth which bears you and the sky which overshadows you are obedient to their Sustainer (Allah). They have not been bestowing their blessings on you for any feeling of pity on you or inclination towards you, nor for any good which they expect from you, but they were commanded to bestow benefits on you and they are obeying, and were asked to maintain your good and so they are maintaining it.

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الْأَرْضَ الَّتِي تَحْمِلُكُمْ، وَالسَّمَاءَ الَّتِي تُظِلُّكُمْ، مُطِيعَتَانِ لِرَبِّكُمْ، وَمَا أَصْبَحْنَا بِجُودَانِ لَكُمْ بِبِرْكَيْهِمَا تَوَجُّعاً لَكُمْ، وَلَا زُلْفَةً إِلَيْكُمْ، وَلَا خَيْرَ تَرْجُوَانِهِ مِنْكُمْ، وَلَكِنْ أُمِرْنَا بِمَنَافِعِكُمْ فَأَطَاعْنَا، وَأَقِيمْنَا عَلَى حُدُودِ مَصَالِحِكُمْ فَقَامْنَا.

Certainly, Allah tries his creatures in respect of their evil deeds by decreasing fruits, holding back blessings and closing the treasures of good, so that he who wishes to repent may repent, he who wishes to turn away (from evils) may turn away, he who wishes to recall (forgotten good) may recall, and he who wishes to abstain (from evil) may abstain. Allah, the Glorified, has made the seeking of (His) forgiveness a means for the pouring down of livelihood and mercy on the people as Allah has said:

... Seek ye the forgiveness of your Lord! Verily, He is the Most-forgiving, He will send (down) upon you the cloud raining in torrents, and help you with wealth and sons (children) . . . (Qur'an, 17:10-12)

Allah may shower mercy on him who took up repentance, gave up sins and hastened (in performing good acts before) his death.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَبْتَلِي عِبَادَهُ عِنْدَ الْأَعْمَالِ السَّيِّئَةِ بِنَقْصِ الثَّمَرَاتِ، وَحَبْسِ الْبَرَكَاتِ، وَإِعْلَاقِ حَزَائِنِ الْخَيْرَاتِ، لِيَتُوبَ تَائِبٌ، وَيُقْلَعَ مُقْلَعٌ، وَيَتَذَكَّرَ مُتَذَكِّرٌ، وَيَزْدَجِرَ مُزْدَجِرٌ. وَقَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ الْاسْتِعْفَارَ سَبَباً لِدُرُورِ الرِّزْقِ وَرَحْمَةً الْخَلْقِ، فَقَالَ: (اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّاراً * يُرْسِلِ السَّمَاءَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِدْرَاراً* وَ يُمَدِّدْكُمْ بِأَمْوَالٍ وَ بَيْنَ وَ يَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ جَنَّاتٍ وَ يَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ أَهْرَاراً)، فَرَحِمَ اللَّهُ أَمْرًا اسْتَقْبَلَ تَوْبَتَهُ، وَاسْتَقَالَ حَطِيئَتَهُ، وَبَادَرَ مَنِيئَتَهُ!

O My God! We have come out to Thee from under the curtains and coverings (of houses) when the beasts and children are crying, seeking Thy Mercy, hoping for the generosity of Thy bounty and fearing Thy chastisement and retribution. O My God! Give us to drink from Thy rain and do not disappoint us, nor kill us by years (of drought) nor punish us

“..for what the foolish among us have committed” (7:155), O the Most Merciful of all!

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا خَرَجْنَا إِلَيْكَ مِنْ تَحْتِ الْأَسْتَارِ وَالْأَكْنَانِ، وَبَعْدَ عَجِيجِ الْبَهَائِمِ وَالْوِلْدَانِ، رَاغِبِينَ فِي رَحْمَتِكَ، وَرَاجِينَ فَضْلَ نِعْمَتِكَ، وَخَائِفِينَ مِنْ عَذَابِكَ وَنِقْمَتِكَ. اللَّهُمَّ فَاسْقِنَا عَيْتَكَ، وَلَا تَجْعَلْنَا مِنَ الْقَانِطِينَ، وَلَا تُهْلِكْنَا بِالسِّنِينَ، وَلَا تُؤَاخِذْنَا (بِمَا فَعَلَ السُّفَهَاءُ مِنَّا يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ).

O My God! We have come out to Thee to complain to Thee who is (already) not hidden from Thee, when the severe troubles have forced us, drought-stricken famines have driven us, distressing wants have made us helpless and troublesome mischiefs have incessantly befallen us. O My God! We beseech Thee not to send us back disappointed nor to return us with down-cast eyes, nor to address us (harshly) for our sins, nor deal with us according to our deeds.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا خَرَجْنَا إِلَيْكَ نَشْكُو إِلَيْكَ مَا لَا يَخْفَى عَلَيْكَ، حِينَ أَجَأْنَا الْمَضَائِقَ الْوَعْرَةَ، وَأَجَاءْنَا الْمَقَاحِطُ الْمُجْدِبَةَ، وَأَعَيْتْنَا الْمَطَالِبُ الْمُتَعَسِّرَةَ، وَتَلَاخَمْتَ عَلَيْنَا الْفَيْئُ الْمُسْتَضْعِبَةَ. اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَسْأَلُكَ أَلَّا تَرُدَّنَا خَائِبِينَ، وَلَا تَقْلِبْنَا وَاجِمِينَ، وَلَا تُخَاطِبَنَا بِذُنُوبِنَا، وَلَا تُقَاسِنَا بِأَعْمَالِنَا.

O My God! Do pour on us Thy mercy, Thy blessing, Thy sustenance and Thy pity, and make us enjoy a drink which benefits us, quenches our thirst, produces green herbage by which all that has died down grows again and all that had withered is revived. It should bring about the benefit of freshness and plentifulness of ripe fruits. With it plains may be watered, rivers may begin flowing, plants may pick up foliage and prices may come down. Surely, Thou art powerful over whatever Thou willest.

اللَّهُمَّ انشُرْ عَلَيْنَا عَيْتَكَ وَبَرَكَتَكَ، وَرَزُقْكَ وَرَحْمَتَكَ، وَاسْقِنَا سُقْيَا نَافِعَةً مُرَوِّبَةً مُعَشِبَةً، تُنْبِتُ بِهَا مَا قَدْ فَاتَ، وَتُحْيِي بِهَا مَا قَدْ مَاتَ، نَافِعَةً الْحَيَا، كَثِيرَةَ الْمُجْتَنَى، تُرْوِي بِهَا الْفَيْعَانَ، وَتُسَيِّلُ الْبُطْنَانَ، وَتَسَنِّوْرُقُ الْأَشْجَارَ، وَتُرْخِصُ الْأَسْعَارَ، إِنَّكَ عَلَى مَا نَسْأَلُ قَدِيرٌ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 143

(1) Al-Daylami, A`lam, see al-Nuri, Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, I, 439;

(2) Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 137 (b.t.n).

Sermon 144: Allah deputed prophets ...

About Deputation of Prophets

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

مبعث الرسل

Allah deputed prophets and distinguished them with His revelation. He made them as pleas for Him among His creation, so that there should not remain any excuse for people. He invited people to the right path through a truthful tongue. You should know that Allah fully knows creation. Not that He was not aware of what they concealed from among their hidden secrets and inner feelings, but in order to try them as to “..which of them performs the best deeds” (18:7), so that there is reward in respect of good acts and chastisement in respect of evil acts.

بَعَثَ اللَّهُ رُسُلَهُ بِمَا حَصَّنَهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ وَحْيِهِ، وَجَعَلَهُمْ حُجَّةً لَهُ عَلَى خَلْقِهِ، لِقَلَّ تَجِبَ الْحُجَّةُ هُمْ بِتَرْكِ الْأَعْذَارِ إِلَيْهِمْ، فَدَعَاهُمْ بِلِسَانِ الصِّدْقِ إِلَى سَبِيلِ الْحَقِّ. أَلَا إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ كَشَفَ الْخَلْقَ كَشْفَةً، لَا أَنَّهُ جَهْلٌ مَا أَحْفَوْهُ مِنْ مَصُونٍ أَسْرَارِهِمْ وَمَكْنُونٍ ضَمَائِرِهِمْ، وَلَكِنْ لِيَبْلُؤَهُمْ (أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا)، فَيَكُونَ الثَّوَابُ جَزَاءً، وَالْعِقَابُ بَوَاءً

The excellence of Ahlul Bayt (the Household of the Holy Prophet)

فضل أهل البيت (عليهم السلام)

Where are those who falsely and unjustly claimed that they are deeply versed in knowledge, as against us, although Allah raised us in position and kept them down, bestowed upon us knowledge but deprived them, and entered us (in the fortress of knowledge) but kept them out. With us guidance is to be sought and blindness (of misguidance) is to be changed into brightness. Surely the Imams (divine leaders) will be from the Quraysh. They have been planted in this line through Hashim. It would not suit others nor would others be suitable as heads of affairs.

أَيُّنَ الَّذِينَ رَعَمُوا أَنَّهُمُ الرَّاسِخُونَ فِي الْعِلْمِ دُونَنَا، كَذِبًا وَبَغْيًا عَلَيْنَا، أَنْ رَفَعَنَا اللَّهُ وَوَضَعَهُمْ، وَأَعْطَانَا وَحَرَمَهُمْ، وَأَدْخَلَنَا وَأَخْرَجَهُمْ. بِنَا يُسْتَعطَى الْهُدَى، وَبِنَا يُسْتَجَلَى الْعَمَى. إِنَّ الْأَيْمَةَ مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ غُرِسُوا فِي هَذَا الْبَطْنِ مِنْ هَاشِمٍ، لَا تَصْلُحُ عَلَى سِوَاهُمْ، وَلَا تَصْلُحُ الْوَلَاةُ مِنْ غَيْرِهِمْ.

A part of the same sermon concerning the misguided ones

منها: في أهل الضلال

They have adopted this world and abandoned the next world; left clean water and drunk stinking water. I can almost see their wicked one ¹ who committed unlawful acts, associated himself with them, befriended them and accorded with them till his hair grew grey and his nature acquired their

tinge. He proceeded onward emitting foam like a torrential stream not caring whom he drowned, or, like fire in straw, without realising what he burnt.

آثَرُوا عَاجِلًا، وَأَخْرُوا آجِلًا، وَتَرَكُوا صَافِيًا، وَشَرِبُوا آجِنًا، كَأَنِّي أَنْظُرُ إِلَى فَاسِقِهِمْ وَقَدْ
صَحِبَ الْمُنْكَرَ فَأَلْفَهُ، وَبَسِيَءَ بِهِ وَوَأَفَقَهُ، حَتَّى شَابَتْ عَلَيْهِ مَفَارِقُهُ، وَصَبِعَتْ بِهِ خَلَاتِقُهُ، ثُمَّ
أَقْبَلَ مُزِيدًا كَالْتِّيَارِ لَا يُبَالِي مَا غَرَقَ، أَوْ كَوَقَعَ النَّارِ فِي الْهَشِيمِ لَا يَخْفَلُ مَا حَرَقَ!

Where are the minds which seek light from the lamps of guidance, and the eyes which look at minarets of piety? Where are the hearts dedicated to Allah, and devoted to the obedience of Allah? They are all crowding towards worldly vanities and quarrelling over unlawful issues. The ensigns of Paradise and Hell have been raised for them but they have turned their faces away from Paradise and proceeded to Hell by dint of their performances. Allah called them but they showed dislike and ran away. When Satan called them they responded and proceeded (towards him).

أَيْنَ الْعُقُولِ الْمُسْتَضِيحَةُ بِمَصَابِيحِ الْهُدَى، وَالْأَبْصَارُ اللَّامِحَةُ إِلَى مَنَارِ التَّقْوَى؟! أَيْنَ الْقُلُوبِ
الَّتِي وَهَبَتْ لِلَّهِ، وَعُوقِدَتْ عَلَى طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ؟! ازْدَحَمُوا عَلَى الْخُطَامِ، وَتَشَاخَوْا عَلَى الْحَرَامِ، وَرُفِعَ
لَهُمْ عِلْمُ الْجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ، فَصَرَفُوا عَنِ الْجَنَّةِ وَجُوهَهُمْ، وَأَقْبَلُوا إِلَى النَّارِ بِأَعْمَالِهِمْ، دَعَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ
فَنَفَرُوا وَوَلَّوْا، وَدَعَاهُمُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَاسْتَجَابُوا وَأَقْبَلُوا!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 144

(1) *Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, see 'Abd al-Zahra', II, 322.*

Notes

1. Here the reference is to `Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan who committed extreme atrocities through his officer al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf ath-Thaqafi.

Sermon 145: O people, you are, in this world...

About this world

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

فناء الدنيا

O people, you are, in this world, the target for the arrows of death. With every drinking there is choking and with every eating there is suffocation. You do not get any benefit in it except by foregoing another (benefit) and no one among you advances in age by a day except by the taking away of a day from his life. Nothing more is added to his eating unless it reduces what was there before. No mark appears for him unless a mark disappears. Nothing new comes into being unless the new becomes old. No new crop comes up unless a crop has been reaped. Those roots are gone whose off-shoots we are. How can an off-shoot live after the departure of its root?

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّمَا أَنْتُمْ فِي هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا عَرَضٌ تَنْتَضِلُ فِيهِ الْمَنَائِمَا، مَعَ كُلِّ جِرْعَةٍ شَرَقٌ، وَبِ
كُلِّ أَكْلَةٍ عَصَصٌ! لَا تَنَالُونَ مِنْهَا نِعْمَةً إِلَّا يَفْرَاقِ أُخْرَى، وَلَا يُعَمَّرُ مُعَمَّرٌ مِنْكُمْ يَوْمًا مِنْ
عُمُرِهِ إِلَّا يَهْدِمُ آخَرَ مِنْ أَجَلِهِ، وَلَا يُجَدِّدُ لَهُ زِيَادَةٌ فِي أَكْلِهِ إِلَّا بِنَفَادِ مَا قَبْلَهَا مِنْ رِزْقِهِ، وَلَا
يَخْبِئُ لَهُ أَثَرٌ إِلَّا مَاتَ لَهُ أَثَرٌ، وَلَا يَتَجَدَّدُ لَهُ جَدِيدٌ إِلَّا بَعْدَ أَنْ يَخْلُقَ لَهُ جَدِيدٌ، وَلَا تَقُومُ لَهُ
نَابِتَةٌ إِلَّا وَتَسْقُطُ مِنْهُ مَخْضُودَةٌ، وَقَدْ مَضَتْ أُصُولُ نَحْنُ فُرُوعُهَا، فَمَا بَقَاءُ فَرْعٍ بَعْدَ ذَهَابِ
أَصْلِهِ!

A part of the same sermon censuring innovation (bid'ah)

منها: في ذم البدعة

No innovation is introduced unless one sunnah is forsaken. Keep away from innovations and stick to the broad road. Surely the old tested ways are the best and the innovated ones are bad.

وَمَا أُحْدِثَتْ بَدْعَةٌ إِلَّا تُرِكَ بِهَا سُنَّةٌ، فَاتَّقُوا الْبِدْعَ، وَالزُّمُوا الْمَهْيِجَ، إِنَّ عَوَازِمَ الْأُمُورِ
أَفْضَلُهَا، وَإِنَّ مُحْدِثَاتِهَا شَرَّهَا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 145

- (1) *Al-Harrani, Tuhaf*, 73;
- (2) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad*, 139 as well as *al-'Amali*;
- (3) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali*, I, 220;
- (4) *al-Qali, al-'Amali*, II, 67.

Sermon 146: In this matter, victory or defeat...

Spoken when `Umar ibn al-Khattab consulted Amir al-mu'minin about taking part in the battle of Persia. ¹

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

وقد استشاره عمر بن الخطاب في الشخوص لقتال الفرس بنفسه

In this matter, victory or defeat is not dependent on the smallness or greatness of forces. It is Allah's religion which He has raised above all faiths, and His army which He has mobilised and extended, till it has reached the point where it stands now, and has arrived its present positions. We hold a promise from Allah, and He will fulfil His promise and support His army.

إِنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ لَمْ يَكُنْ نَصْرُهُ وَلَا خِذْلَانُهُ بِكَثْرَةِ وَلَا بِقَلَّةِ، وَهُوَ دِينُ اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَظْهَرَهُ، وَجُنْدُهُ الَّذِي أَعَدَّهُ وَأَمَدَّهُ، حَتَّى بَلَغَ مَا بَلَغَ، وَطَلَعَ حَيْثُ طَلَعَ، وَنَحْنُ عَلَى مَوْعُودٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ، وَاللَّهُ مُنْجِزٌ وَعَدَّهُ، وَنَاصِرٌ جُنْدَهُ.

The position of the head of government is that of the thread for beads, as it connects them and keeps them together. If the thread is broken, they will disperse and be lost, and will never come together again. The Arabs today, even though small in number are big because of Islam and strong because of unity. You should remain like the axis for them, and rotate the mill (of government) with (the help of) the Arabs, and be their root. Avoid battle, because if you leave this place the Arabs will attack you from all sides and directions till the unguarded places left behind by you will become more important than those before you.

وَمَكَانُ الْقَيْمِ بِالْأَمْرِ مَكَانُ النَّظَامِ مِنَ الْحَزْرِ يَجْمَعُهُ وَيَضُمُّهُ: فَإِنْ انْقَطَعَ النَّظَامُ تَفَرَّقَ وَذَهَبَ، ثُمَّ لَمْ يَجْتَمِعْ بِخِذَافِيرِهِ أَبَدًا. وَالْعَرَبُ الْيَوْمَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا قَلِيلًا، فَهُمْ كَثِيرُونَ بِالْإِسْلَامِ، عَرَبِيُونَ بِالْاجْتِمَاعِ! فَكُنْ قُطْبًا، وَاسْتَدِرِ الرَّحَا بِالْعَرَبِ، وَأَصْلِبْهُمْ دُونَكَ نَارَ الْحَرْبِ، فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ شَخَصْتَ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْأَرْضِ انْتَفَضَتْ عَلَيْكَ الْعَرَبُ مِنْ أَطْرَافِهَا وَأَقْطَارِهَا، حَتَّى يَكُونَ مَا تَدْعُ وَرَاءَكَ مِنَ الْعَوَزَاتِ أَهَمَّ إِلَيْكَ مِمَّا بَيْنَ يَدَيْكَ.

If the Persians see you tomorrow they will say, "He is the root (chief) of Arabia. If we do away with him we will be in peace." In this way this will heighten their eagerness against you and their keenness to aim at you. You say that they have set out to fight against the Muslims. Well, Allah detests their setting out more than you do, and He is more capable of preventing what He detests. As regards your idea about their (large) number, in the past we did not fight on the strength of large numbers but we fought on the basis of Allah's support and assistance.

إِنَّ الْأَعَاجِمَ إِنْ يَنْظُرُوا إِلَيْكَ غَدًا يَقُولُوا: هَذَا أَصْلُ الْعَرَبِ، فَإِذَا افْتَطَعْتُمُوهُ اسْتَرْحَتُمْ، فَيَكُونُ ذَلِكَ أَشَدَّ لِكَلْبِهِمْ عَلَيْكَ، وَطَمَعِهِمْ فِيكَ. فَأَمَّا مَا ذَكَرْتَ مِنْ مَسِيرِ الْقَوْمِ إِلَى قِتَالِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ هُوَ أَكْرَهُ لِمَسِيرِهِمْ مِنْكَ، وَهُوَ أَقْدَرُ عَلَى تَغْيِيرِ مَا يَكْرَهُ. وَأَمَّا مَا ذَكَرْتَ مِنْ عَدَدِهِمْ، فَإِنَّا لَمْ نَكُنْ نُفَاتِلُ فِيمَا مَضَى بِالْكَثْرَةِ، وَإِنَّمَا كُنَّا نُفَاتِلُ بِالنَّصْرِ وَالْمَعُونَةِ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 146

- (1) *Al-Dinawari, al-'Akhbar, 134;*
- (2) *Ibn A`tham, al-Futuh, II, 37;*
- (3) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, IV, 237 events of 27 H.;*
- (4) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 120;*
- (5) *Ibn Miskawayh, Tajarib, I, 419.*

Notes

1. When some people advised Caliph `Umar to partake in the battle of al-Qadisiyyah or Nahawand, he finding it against his personal inclination, thought it necessary to consult Amir al-mu'minin, so that if he advised against it he would plead before others that he had stayed back on Amir al-mu'minin's advice, but also if he advised partaking in the battle some other excuse would be found. However, unlike others, Amir al-mu'minin advised him to stay back. The other people had advised him to join in fighting, because the Holy Prophet did not send only others to fight but took part in it himself as well, keeping his close relations also with him. What Amir al-mu'minin had in view was that `Umar's presence in the battle could not be beneficial to Islam, but rather his staying back would save the Muslims from dispersion.

Amir al-mu'minin's view that "the position of the head of government is that of the axis around which the system of the government rotates" is a point of principle and does not concern any particular personality. Whether the ruler is a Muslim or an unbeliever, just or despot, virtuous or vicious, for the administration of the state his presence is a necessity, as Amir al-mu'minin has explained elsewhere at greater length:

The fact is that there is no escape for men from a ruler good or bad. Faithful persons perform (good) acts in his rule while the unfaithful enjoys (worldly) benefits in it. During the rule, Allah will carry everything to its end. Through the ruler tax is collected, the enemy is fought, roads are protected and the right of the weak is taken from the strong till the virtuous enjoy peace and are allowed protection from (the oppression of) the wicked. (Sermon 40)

The words which Amir al-mu'minin uttered in his advice are not indicative of any quality of Caliph `Umar except his being the ruler. There is no doubt that he held worldly authority, irrespective of the question of whether it was secured in the right way or wrong way. And where there is authority there is centring of people's affairs. That is why Amir al-mu'minin said that if `Umar would go out the Arabs would follow him in large numbers towards the battlefield, because when the ruler is on the march the people will not like to stay behind. The result of their going would be that city after city would become vacant, while the enemy will infer from their reaching the battlefield that the Islamic cities are lying vacant, and that if these people were repulsed no assistance would reach the Muslims from the centre. Again, if the ruler were killed the army would disperse automatically, because the ruler is as its foundation. When the foundation is shaken the walls cannot remain standing. The word "aslu'l-'Arab" (the root chief) of Arabia has not been used by Amir al-mu'minin as his own but he has taken it from the Persians. Obviously in his capacity as the head of the State, Caliph `Umar was, in their view, the chief of Arabia. Besides, the reference is to the country, not to Islam or Muslims, so that there is no suggestion of any importance for him from the Islamic point of view.

When Amir al-mu'minin pointed out to Caliph `Umar that on his reaching there the Persians would aim at him, and that if he fell into their hands they would not spare him without killing, although such words would have touched the brave to the quick and would

have heightened their spirits, `Umar liked the advice to stay back and thought it better to keep himself away from the flames of battle. If this advice had not been in accord with his personal inclination he would not have received it so heartily and would have tried to argue that the administration of the country could be maintained by leaving a deputy. Again when other people had already advised him to go out, what was the need for consulting Amir al-mu'minin except to get an excuse to stay back.

Sermon 147: Allah sent Muhammad (S) with the Truth...

The purpose of the deputation of the Holy Prophet and the condition of the time when people would go against the Qur'an

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

الغاية من البعثة

Allah sent Muhammad (S) with the Truth so that he may take out His people from the worship of idols towards His worship and from obeying Satan towards obeying Him and sent him with the Qur'an which He explained and made strong, in order that the people may know their sustainer (Allah) since they were ignorant of Him, may acknowledge Him since they were denying Him, and accept Him since they were refusing (to believe in) Him.

Because He, the Glorified, revealed Himself to them through His Book without their having seen Him, by means of what He showed them out of His might and made them fear His sway. How He destroyed those whom He wished to destroy through His chastisement and ruined those whom He wished to ruin through His retribution!

فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدًا بِالْحَقِّ لِيُخْرِجَ عِبَادَهُ مِنْ عِبَادَةِ الْأَوْثَانِ إِلَى عِبَادَتِهِ، وَمِنْ طَاعَةِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِلَى طَاعَتِهِ، بِقُرْآنٍ قَدْ بَيَّنَّهُ وَأَحْكَمَهُ، لِيَعْلَمَ الْعِبَادُ رَبَّهُمْ إِذْ جَهِلُوهُ، وَيَلْتَمِسُوهُ بِه بَعْدَ إِذْ جَحَدُوهُ، وَيَلْتَمِسُوهُ بَعْدَ إِذْ أَنْكَرُوهُ. فَتَجَلَّى سُبْحَانَهُ لَهُمْ فِي كِتَابِهِ مِنْ غَيْرِ أَنْ يَكُونُوا رَأَوْهُ، بِمَا أَرَاهُمْ مِنْ قُدْرَتِهِ، وَخَوْفَهُمْ مِنْ سَطْوَتِهِ، وَكَيْفَ مَحَقَّ مَنْ مَحَقَّ بِالْمَثَلَاتِ، وَاحْتَصَدَ مَنْ احْتَصَدَ بِالنَّقِمَاتِ!

On the future

الزمان المقبل

Certainly, a time will come upon you after me when nothing will be more concealed than rightfulness, nothing more apparent than wrongfulness and nothing more current than untruth against Allah and His Prophet. For the people of this period nothing will be more valueless than the Qur'an being recited as it ought to be recited, nor anything more valuable than the Qur'an being misplaced from its position. And in the towns nothing will be more hated than virtue, nor anything more acceptable than vice.

وَإِنَّهُ سَيَأْتِي عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِي زَمَانٌ لَيْسَ فِيهِ شَيْءٌ أَحَقُّ مِنَ الْحَقِّ، وَلَا أَظْهَرَ مِنَ الْبَاطِلِ، وَلَا أَكْثَرَ مِنَ الْكَذِبِ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَلَيْسَ عِنْدَ أَهْلِ ذَلِكَ الزَّمَانِ سِلْعَةٌ أَبْوَرُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ إِذَا نُتِلِيَ حَقُّ تِلَاوَتِهِ، وَلَا أَنْفَقَ مِنْهُ إِذَا حُرِفَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ، وَلَا فِي الْبِلَادِ شَيْءٌ أَنْكَرَ مِنَ الْمَعْرُوفِ، وَلَا أَعْرَفَ مِنَ الْمُنْكَرِ!

The holders of the book will throw it away and its memorisers would forget it. In these days the Qur'an and its people will be exiled and expelled. They will be companions keeping together on one path, but no one will offer them asylum. Consequently at this time the Qur'an and its people will

be among the people but not among them, will be with them but not with them, because misguidance cannot accord with guidance even though they may be together.

The people will have united on division and will therefore have cut away from the community, as though they were the leaders of the Qur'an and not the Qur'an their leader. Nothing of it will be left with them except its name, and they will know nothing save its writing and its words. Before that, they will inflict hardships on the virtuous, naming the latter's truthful views about Allah false allegations, and enforcing for virtues the punishment of the vice.

فَقَدْ نَبَذَ الْكِتَابَ حَمَلْتُهُ، وَتَنَاسَاهُ حَفِظْتُهُ؛ فَالْكِتَابُ يَوْمِيذٍ وَأَهْلُهُ مَنْفِيَانِ طَرِيدَانِ،
وَصَاحِبَانِ مُصْطَحِبَانِ فِي طَرِيقٍ وَاحِدٍ لَا يُؤْوِيهِمَا مُؤْوٍ؛ فَالْكِتَابُ وَأَهْلُهُ فِي ذَلِكَ الرَّمَانِ فِي
النَّاسِ وَلَيْسَا فِيهِمْ، وَمَعَهُمْ وَلَيْسَا مَعَهُمْ! لِأَنَّ الضَّلَالَكَ لَا تُوَافِقُ الْهُدَى، وَإِنْ اجْتَمَعَا، فَاجْتَمَعَ
الْقَوْمُ عَلَى الْفُرْقَةِ، وَافْتَرَفُوا عَنِ الْجَمَاعَةِ، كَأَنَّهُمْ أَيْمَةُ الْكِتَابِ وَلَيْسَ الْكِتَابُ إِمَامَهُمْ، فَلَمْ يَبْقَ
عِنْدَهُمْ مِنْهُ إِلَّا اسْمُهُ، وَلَا يَعْرِفُونَ إِلَّا حَطَّهُ وَزَبَرَهُ، وَمَنْ قَبْلَ مَا مَثَلُوا بِالصَّالِحِينَ كُلِّ مَثَلَةٍ،
وَسَمَّوْا صِدْقَهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فِرْيَةً، وَجَعَلُوا فِي الْحَسَنَةِ الْعُثُوبَةَ السَّيِّئَةَ.

Those before you passed away because of the lengthening of their desires and the forgetting of their death, till that promised event befell them about which excuses are turned down, repentance is denied and punishment and retribution is inflicted.

وَإِنَّمَا هَلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ بِطُولِ آمَالِهِمْ وَتَعَبِ آجَالِهِمْ، حَتَّى نَزَلَ بِهِمُ الْمَوْعُودُ الَّذِي تُرِدُّ
عَنْهُ الْمَعْدِرَةُ، وَتُرْفَعُ عَنْهُ التَّوْبَةُ، وَتَحُلُّ مَعَهُ الْقَارِعَةُ وَالنِّقْمَةُ.

Exhortation (and describing the Ahlul Bayt)

عظة الناس

O people, he who seeks counsel from Allah secures guidance and he who adopts His word as guide is led

“..towards what is most upright..” (17:9),

because Allah's lover feels secure and His opponent feels afraid. It does not behoove one who knows His greatness to assume greatness, but the greatness of those who know His greatness is that they should abase themselves before Him, and the safety for those who know what His power is, lies in submitting to Him. Do not be scared away from the truth like the scaring of the healthy from the scabbed person, or the sound person from the sick.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّهُ مَنْ اسْتَنْصَحَ اللَّهَ وَفَقَّ، وَمَنْ اتَّخَذَ قَوْلَهُ دَلِيلًا هُدًى (لِلَّتِي هِيَ أَقْوَمُ)؛ فَإِنَّ
جَارَ اللَّهِ آمِنٌ، وَعَدُوَّهُ خَائِفٌ، وَإِنَّهُ لَا يَنْبَغِي لِمَنْ عَرَفَ عَظَمَةَ اللَّهِ أَنْ يَتَعَظَّمَ، فَإِنَّ رِفْعَةَ
الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا عَظَمَتُهُ أَنْ يَتَوَاضَعُوا لَهُ، وَسَلَامَةَ الَّذِينَ يَعْلَمُونَ مَا قُدْرَتُهُ أَنْ يَسْتَسْلِمُوا لَهُ،
فَلَا تَنْفَرُوا مِنَ الْحَقِّ نِفَارَ الصَّحِيحِ مِنَ الْأَجْرِبِ، وَالْبَارِي مِنَ ذِي السَّقَمِ.

You should know that you will never know guidance unless you know who has abandoned it, you will never abide by the pledges of the Qur'an

unless you know who has broken them, and will never cling to it unless you know who has forsaken it. Seek these things from those who own them because they are the life-spring of knowledge and death of ignorance. They are the people whose commands will disclose to you their (extent of) knowledge, their silence will disclose their (capacity of) speaking and their outer appearance will disclose their inner self. They do not go against religion, and do not differ from one other about it, while it is among them a truthful witness and a silent speaker.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ لَنْ تَعْرِفُوا الرُّشْدَ حَتَّى تَعْرِفُوا الَّذِي تَرَكْتُمْ، وَلَنْ تَأْخُذُوا بِمِيثَاقِ الْكِتَابِ حَتَّى تَعْرِفُوا الَّذِي نَقَضْتُمْ، وَلَنْ تَمَسَّكُمْ بِهِ حَتَّى تَعْرِفُوا الَّذِي نَبَذْتُمْ؛ فَالْتَمِسُوا ذَلِكَ مِنْ عِنْدِ أَهْلِهِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ عَيْشُ الْعِلْمِ، وَمَوْتُ الْجَهْلِ، هُمْ الَّذِينَ يُخْرِجُكُمْ حُكْمُهُمْ عَنْ عِلْمِهِمْ، وَصَمْتُهُمْ عَنْ مَنْطِقِهِمْ، وَظَاهِرُهُمْ عَنْ بَاطِنِهِمْ، لَا يُخَالِفُونَ الدِّينَ وَلَا يَخْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ، فَهُوَ بَيْنَهُمْ شَاهِدٌ صَادِقٌ، وَصَامِتٌ نَاطِقٌ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 147

- (1) *Al-Kulayni, Rawdah*, 386;
- (2) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf*, 163.

Sermon 148: Both of these two...

About Talhah and az-Zubayr and the people of Basrah

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في ذكر أهل البصرة

Both of these two (Talhah and az-Zubayr) wishes the Caliphate for himself, and is drawing towards himself as against the other fellow. They do not employ any connection for getting access to Allah nor proceed towards Him through any means. Both of them bear malice against the other. Shortly his veil over it will be uncovered. By Allah, if they achieve what they aim at, one of them will kill the other, and one will finish the other. The rebellious party has stood up. Where are the seekers of virtue, for the paths have already been determined and they have been given the news? For every misguidance there is a cause and for every break of pledge there is a misrepresentation. By Allah, I shall not be like him who listens to the voice of mourning, hears the man who brings news of death and also visits the mourner, yet does not take lesson.

كُلُّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا يَرْجُو الْأَمْرَ لَهُ، وَيَعْطِفُهُ عَلَيْهِ دُونَ صَاحِبِهِ، لَا يَمْتَنَانِ إِلَى اللَّهِ بِحَبْلٍ، وَلَا يَمُدَّانِ إِلَيْهِ بِسَبَبٍ. كُلُّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا حَامِلٌ ضَمِّ لِصَاحِبِهِ، وَعَمَّا قَلِيلٍ يُكْشَفُ فِتْنَاهُ بِهِ! وَاللَّهِ لَعْنُ أَصَابُوا الَّذِي يُرِيدُونَ كَيْتَرَعْنَ هَذَا نَفْسَ هَذَا، وَلِيَأْتِيَنَّ هَذَا عَلَى هَذَا، فَدَقَامَتِ الْفِتْنَةُ الْبَاغِيَّةُ، فَأَيُّنَ الْمُحْتَسِبُونَ؟! قَدْ سَنَّتْ هُمْ السُّنَنُ، وَقَدِّمَ هُمْ الْحَبْرُ، وَلِكُلِّ ضَلَّةٍ عِلَّةٌ، وَلِكُلِّ نَاكِثٍ شُبْهَةٌ. وَاللَّهِ لَا أَكُونُ كَمُسْتَمِعِ الدَّمِ، يَسْمَعُ النَّاعِي، وَيَحْضُرُ الْبَاكِي، ثُمَّ لَا يَعْتَبِرُ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 148

(1) Abu Mikhnaf, *al-Jamal*, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, *Sharh*, I, 78;

(2) *al-Mufid*, *al-'Irshad*, 142.

Sermon 149: O people! Every one shall meet...

Before his martyrdom (last will)

ومن كلامه (عليه السلام)

قبل موته

O people! Every one shall meet what he wishes to avoid by running away.¹ Death is the place to which life is driving. To run away from it means to catch it. How many days did I spend in searching for the secret of this matter, but Allah did not allow save its concealment. Alas! It is a treasured knowledge. As for my last will, it is that concerning Allah, do not believe in a partner for Him, and concerning Muhammad (S), do not disregard his Sunnah. Keep these two pillars and burn these two lamps. Till you are not divided, no evil will come to you.²

Every one of you has to bear his own burden. It has been kept light for the ignorant. Allah is Merciful. Faith is straight. The leader (Prophet) is the holder of knowledge. Yesterday I was with you; today I have become the object of a lesson for you, and tomorrow I shall leave you. May Allah forgive me and you!

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، كُلُّ امْرِئٍ لَأَقِ بِمَا يَفِرُّ مِنْهُ فِي فِرَارِهِ، وَالْأَجَلَ مَسَاقُ النَّفْسِ، وَالْهَرْبُ مِنْهُ مُوَافَاتُهُ. كَمْ أَطْرَدْتُ الْآيَاتِمَ أَجْتَهَتْهَا عَنْ مَكْنُونِ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ، فَأَبَى اللَّهُ إِلَّا إِخْفَاءَهُ، هَيْهَاتَ! عَلِمَ مَخْرُوجًا! أَمَّا وَصِيَّتِي: فَاللَّهُ لَا تُشْرِكُوا بِهِ شَيْئًا، وَمُحَمَّدًا فَلَا تُضَيِّعُوا سُنَّتَهُ، أَقِيمُوا هَدْيَ الْعُمُودَيْنِ، وَأَوْقِدُوا هَدْيَ الْمِصْبَاحَيْنِ، وَخَلِّصُوا دَمَّ مَالِمٍ تَشْرُدُوا، حَمِلْ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ نَجْهُودَهُ، وَخُفِّفْ عَنِ الْجَهْلَةِ، رَبِّ رَحِيمٍ، وَدِينٍ قَوِيمٍ، وَإِمَامٍ عَلِيمٍ. أَنَا بِالْأَمْسِ صَاحِبُكُمْ، وَأَنَا الْيَوْمَ عِبْرَةٌ لَكُمْ، وَعَدَا مُفَارِقُكُمْ! غَفَرَ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ!

If the foot remains firm in this slippery place, well and good! But if the foot slips, this is because we are under the shade of branches, the passing of the winds and the canopy of the clouds whose layers are dispersed in the sky, and whose traces disappeared³ in the earth. I was your neighbour.

My body kept you company for some days and shortly you will find just an empty body of mine which would be stationary after (all its) movement and silent after speech so that my calmness, the closing of my eyes, and the stillness of my limbs may provide you counsel, because it is more of a counsel for those who take a lesson (from it) than eloquent speech and a ready word. I am departing from you like one who is eager to meet (someone). Tomorrow you will look at my days, then my inner side will be disclosed to you and you will understand me after the vacation of my place and its occupation by someone else.

إِنْ تَثَبَّتِ الْوُطْأَةُ فِي هَذِهِ الْمَرْزَلَةِ فَذَاكَ، وَإِنْ تَدَخَضَ الْقَدَمُ فَإِنَّا كُنَّا فِي أَفْيَاءِ أَعْصَانِ، وَمَهَابِّ رِيَّاحٍ، وَتَحْتِ ظِلِّ غَمَامٍ، أَضْمَحَلَّ فِي الْجَوْ مُتَلَقِّفُهَا، وَعَمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَحَطُّهَا. وَإِنَّمَا

كُنْتُ جَاراً جَاوَرُكُمْ بَدِينِي أَيَّاماً، وَسْتَعْقَبُونَ مِنِّي جُنَّةً خَلَاءً سَاكِنَةً بَعْدَ حَرَكَ، وَصَامِتَةً بَعْدَ
نُطْقٍ لِيَعِظُكُمْ هُدًوِي، وَخُفُوْتُ إِطْرَاقِي، وَسُكُونُ أَطْرَاقِي، فَإِنَّهُ أَوْعِظُ لِلْمُعْتَبِرِينَ مِنَ الْمَنْطِقِ
الْبَلِيغِ وَالْقَوْلِ الْمَسْمُوعِ. وَدَاعِبِكُمْ وَدَاعِ أَمْرِيءِ مُرْصِدٍ لِلتَّلَاقِي! عَدَا تَرُونَ أَيَّامِي، وَيُكْشَفُ
لَكُمْ عَنْ سَرَائِرِي، وَتَعْرِفُونَنِي بَعْدَ خُلُوقِ مَكَانِي وَوَقَائِمِ غَيْرِي مَقَامِي .

Alternative Sources for Sermon 149

- (1) *Al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, I, 229;*
- (2) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, II, 436;*
- (3) *al-Mas`udi, Ithbat, 103;*
- (4) *Ibn `Asakir, Ta'rikh, XII, 211.*

Notes

1. This means that during all the time spent in the attempts that a man makes to avoid death and in the means he adopts for it, it is only the span of life that is shortened. As the time passes the objective of death approaches near, so much so that in one's attempt to seek life one meets death.
2. "wa khalakum dhammun" (No evil will come to you). This sentence is used as a proverb. It was first employed by Qasir, slave of Jadhimah ibn Malik al-Abrash.
3. The intention is that when all these things die, how can those who inhabit them remain safe? Certainly they too, like every thing else, have to pass away some day or other. Then why should there be any wonder at my life coming to an end?

Sermon 150: They took to the right and the left...

About future events and some activities of the hypocrites

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يومي فيها إلى الملاحم و يصف فئة من أهل الضلال

They took to the right and the left piercing through to the ways of evil and leaving the paths of guidance. Do not make haste for a matter which is to happen and is awaited, and do not wish for delay in what the morrow is to bring for you. For, how many people make haste for a matter, but when they get it they begin to wish they had not got it. How near is today to the dawning of tomorrow. O my people, this is the time for the occurrence of every promised event and the approach of things which you do not know.

Whoever from among us will be during these days will move through them with a burning lamp and will tread on the footsteps of the virtuous, in order to unfasten knots, to free slaves, to divide the united and to unite the divided. He will be in concealment from people. The stalker will not find his footprints even though he pursues with his eye. Then a group of people will be sharpened like the sharpening of swords by the blacksmith. Their sight will be brightened by revelation, the (delicacies of) commentary will be put in their ears and they will be given drinks of wisdom, morning and evening.

وَأَخَذُوا يَمِينًا وَشِمَالًا طَعْنًا فِي مَسَالِكِ الْغَيِّ، وَتَرَكَأَ لِمَدَاهِبِ الرُّشْدِ، فَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلُوا مَا هُوَ كَائِنٌ مُرْصَدٌ، وَلَا تَسْتَبْطِئُوا مَا يَجِيءُ بِهِ الْعُدُو، فَكَمْ مِنْ مُسْتَعْجِلٍ بِمَا إِنْ أَدْرَكَهُ وَدَّ أَنْهَ لَمْ يُدْرِكْهُ، وَمَا أَقْرَبَ الْيَوْمَ مِنْ تَبَاشِيرِ غَدٍ! يَا قَوْمِ، هَذَا إِبَانٌ وَرُودٌ كُلِّ مَوْعُودٍ، وَدُنُوقٌ مِنْ طَلْعَةِ مَا لَا تَعْرِفُونَ، أَلَا وَإِنَّ مَنْ أَدْرَكَهَا مِنَّا يَسْرِي فِيهَا بِسِرَاجِ مُنِيرٍ، وَيُحْدِثُ فِيهَا عَلَى مِثَالِ الصَّالِحِينَ، لِيُخْلَفَ فِيهَا رِيقًا، وَيُغْتَقَ رِقًا، وَيَصْدَعُ شَعْبًا، وَيَشْعَبُ صَدْعًا، فِي سُرْتَةٍ عَنِ النَّاسِ لَا يُبْصِرُ الْقَائِفُ أَثَرَهُ وَلَوْ تَابَعَ نَظْرَهُ. ثُمَّ لَيْشْحَذَنَّ فِيهَا قَوْمٌ شَحَذَ الْقَيْنِ النَّصْلَ مُجْلَى بِالتَّنْزِيلِ أَبْصَارُهُمْ، وَيُرْمَى بِالتَّفْسِيرِ فِي مَسَامِعِهِمْ، وَيُغْبَقُونَ كَأْسَ الْحِكْمَةِ بَعْدَ الصَّبُوحِ.

A part of the same sermon: concerning misguidance

منها: في الضلال

Their period became long in order that they might complete (their position of) disgrace and deserve vicissitudes, till the end of the period was reached, and a group of people turned towards mischief and picked up their arms for fighting. The virtuous did not show any obligation to Allah but calmly endured, and did not feel elated for having engaged themselves in truthfulness. Eventually the period of trial came to an end according to what was ordained. Then they propagated their good views among others and sought nearness to Allah according to the command of their leader.

وَطَالَ الْأَمْدُ بِهِمْ لَيْسَتْكُمْ لُؤْلُؤُ الْحَزِيِّ، وَيَسْتَوْجِبُوا الْغَيْرَ؛ حَتَّى إِذَا اخْلَوْقَ الْأَجْلُ، وَاسْتَرَاحَ قَوْمٌ إِلَى الْفِتَنِ، وَأَشَالُوا عَنْ لَفَاحِ حَرْبِهِمْ، لَمْ يَمْتُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ بِالصَّبْرِ، وَلَمْ يَسْتَعْظُمُوا بِنَدْلِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ فِي الْحَقِّ؛ حَتَّى إِذَا وَافَقَ وَارِدُ الْقَضَاءِ انْقِطَاعَ مُدَّةِ الْبَلَاءِ، حَمَلُوا بَصَائِرَهُمْ عَلَى أَسْبَابِهِمْ، وَدَانُوا لِرَبِّهِمْ بِأَمْرِ وَأَعِظِهِمْ؛

When Allah took the Prophet (to himself) a group of men went back on their tracks. The ways (of misguidance) ruined them and they placed trust in deceitful intriguers, showed consideration to other than kinsmen, abandoned the kin whom they had been ordered to love, and shifted the building from its strong foundation and built it in other than its (proper) place. They are the source of every shortcoming and the door of gropers in the dark. They were moving to and fro in amazement and lay intoxicated in the manner of the people of the Pharaohs. They were either bent on this world and taking support on it, or away from the faith and removed from it.

حَتَّى إِذَا قَبَضَ اللَّهُ رَسُولَهُ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، رَجَعَ قَوْمٌ عَلَى الْأَعْقَابِ، وَغَالَتْهُمْ السُّبُلُ، وَاتَّكَلُوا عَلَى الْوَلَائِحِ، وَوَصَلُوا غَيْرَ الرَّحِمِ، وَهَجَرُوا السَّبَبَ الَّذِي أُمِرُوا بِمَوَدَّتِهِ، وَنَقَلُوا الْبِنَاءَ عَنْ رَصِّ أَسَاسِهِ، فَبَنَوْهُ فِي غَيْرِ مَوْضِعِهِ. مَعَادِنُ كُلِّ خَطِيئَةٍ، وَأَبْوَابُ كُلِّ ضَارِبٍ فِي عَمْرَةٍ، قَدْ مَارُوا فِي الْحَيْرَةِ، وَذَهَلُوا فِي السَّكْرَةِ، عَلَى سُنَّةٍ مِنْ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ: مِنْ مُنْقَطِعِ إِلَى الدُّنْيَا رَاكِنٍ، أَوْ مُفَارِقِ لِلدِّينِ مُبَايِنٍ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 150

(1) *Al-Tabari, al-Mustarshid, 74.*

Sermon 151: I praise Allah and seek His help

The condition of the people during disorder, and advice against oppression and unlawful earning

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)
يحذر من الفتن

The Two Testimonies

الشهادتان

I praise Allah and seek His help from (what led to the) punishment of Satan and his deceitful acts, and (I seek His) protection from Satan's traps and waylayings. I stand witness that there is no god but Allah and I stand witness that Muhammad is His slave and His Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) and his chosen and his selected one. Muhammad's (S) distinction cannot be paralleled nor can his loss be made good.

Populated places were brightened through him when previously there was dark misguidance, overpowering ignorance and rude habits, and people regarded unlawful as lawful, humiliated the man of wisdom, passed lives when there were no prophets and died as unbelievers.

وَأَحْمَدُ اللَّهَ وَأَسْتَعِينُهُ عَلَى مَدَاحِرِ الشَّيْطَانِ وَمَزَاجِرِهِ، وَالْأَعْتِصَامِ مِنْ حَبَائِلِهِ وَمَخَاتِلِهِ. وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، وَنَجِيْبُهُ وَصَفْوَتُهُ، لَا يُؤَارَى فَضْلُهُ، وَلَا يُجْبَرُ فَقْدُهُ، أَضَاءَتْ بِهِ الْبِلَادُ بَعْدَ الضَّلَالَةِ الْمُظْلِمَةِ، وَالْجَهَالَةِ الْعَالِيَةِ، وَالْجُفْوَةِ الْجَافِيَةِ، وَالنَّاسُ يَسْتَحْلُونَ الْحَرِيمَ، وَيَسْتَدِلُّونَ الْحَكِيمَ، يَحْيُونَ عَلَى فِتْرَةٍ، وَيَمُوتُونَ عَلَى كُفْرَةٍ!

Warning against Religious Strife

التحذير من الفتن

You, O people of Arabia, will be victims of calamities which have come near. You should avoid the intoxication of wealth, fear the disasters of chastisement, keep steadfast in the darkness and crookedness of mischief when its hidden nature discloses itself, its secrets become manifest and its axis and the pivot of its rotation gain strength. It begins in imperceptible stages but develops into great hideousness. Its youth is like the youth of an adolescent and its marks are like the marks of beating by stone.

ثُمَّ إِنَّكُمْ مَعَشَرَ الْعَرَبِ أَعْرَاضُ بَلَايَا قَدْ افْتَرَبْتُمْ، فَانْقَفُوا سَكَرَاتِ النِّعْمَةِ، وَاحْدَرُوا بِوَائِقِ النِّقْمَةِ، وَتَنَبَّتُوا فِي قَتَامِ الْعِشْوَةِ، وَاعْوَجَّاجِ الْفِتْنَةِ عِنْدَ طُلُوعِ جَنِينِهَا، وَظُهُورِ كَمِينِهَا، وَانْتِصَابِ قُطْبِهَا، وَمَدَارِ رَحَاهَا. تَبَدُّأُ فِي مَدَارِجِ خَفِيَّةٍ، وَتَوُّوُلُ إِلَى فُطَاعَةِ جَلِيَّةٍ، شِبَابُهَا كَشِبَابِ الْغُلَامِ، وَأَثَارُهَا كَأَثَارِ السِّيلِ

Opressors inherit it by (mutual) agreement. The first of them serves as a leader for the latter one and the latter one follows the first one. They vie with each other in (the matter of) this lowly world, and leap over this stinking carcass. Shortly the follower will denounce his connection with the leader, and the leader with the follower. They will disunite on account of mutual hatred and curse one another when they meet. Then after this there will appear another arouser of mischief who will destroy ruined things. The heart will become wavering after being normal, men will be misled after safety, desires will multiply and become diversified and views will become confused.

يَتَوَارَثُهَا الظَّالِمَةُ بِالْعُهُودِ! أَوْهَمُ قَائِدٌ لِإِحْرِهِمْ، وَأَخْرُهُمْ مُقْتَدٌ بِأَوْلِهِمْ، يَتَنَافَسُونَ فِي دُنْيَا
دَنِيَّةٍ، وَيَتَكَالَبُونَ عَلَى حِيْفَةِ مُرِيْحَةٍ، وَعَنْ قَلِيلٍ يَتَبَرَّأُ التَّابِعُ مِنَ الْمَتَّبِعِ، وَالْقَائِدُ مِنَ الْمَقُودِ،
فَيَتَزَايَلُونَ بِالْبَعْضَاءِ، وَيَتَلَاعَنُونَ عِنْدَ اللَّقَاءِ.

ثُمَّ يَأْتِي بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ طَالِعُ الْفِتْنَةِ الرَّجُوفِ، وَالْقَاصِمَةِ الرَّخُوفِ، فَتَرْبِعُ قُلُوبٌ بَعْدَ اسْتِقَامَةٍ،
وَتَضِلُّ رِجَالٌ بَعْدَ سَلَامَةٍ، وَتَخْتَلِفُ الْأَهْوَاءُ عِنْدَ هُجُومِهَا، وَتَلْتَبِسُ الْأَرْاءُ عِنْدَ نُجُومِهَا.

Whoever proceeds towards this mischief will be ruined and whoever strives for it will be annihilated. They will be biting each other during it as the wild asses bite each other in the herd. The coils of the rope will be disturbed and the face of affairs will be blinded. During it sagacity will be on the ebb, and the oppressors will (get the opportunity to) speak. This mischief will smash the Bedouins with its hammers and crush them with its chest.

In its dust the single marchers will be lost, and in its way the horsemen will be destroyed. It will approach with the bitterness of destiny and will give pure blood (instead of milk). It will breach the minarets of faith and shatter the ties of firm belief. The wise will run away from it while the wicked will foster it. It will thunder and flash (like lightning). It will create a severe disaster. In it kinship will be forsaken and Islam will be abandoned. He who declaims it will also be affected by it, and he who flees from it will (be forced to) stay in it.

مَنْ أَشْرَفَ لَهَا فَصَمْتُهُ، وَمَنْ سَعَى فِيهَا حَطَمْتُهُ، يَتَكَادِمُونَ فِيهَا تَكَادِمَ الْحُمْرِ فِي الْعَانَةِ!
قَدْ اضْطَرَبَ مَعْقُودُ الْحَبْلِ، وَعَمِيَ وَجْهُ الْأَمْرِ، تَغِيضُ فِيهَا الْحِكْمَةَ، وَتَنْطِقُ فِيهَا الظَّالِمَةَ،
وَتَذُقُ أَهْلَ الْبَدْوِ بِمَسْحَلِهَا، وَتَرُضُّهُمْ بِكَلْكَلِهَا! يَضِيْعُ فِي غُبَارِهَا الْوُحْدَانُ، وَيَهْلِكُ فِي طَرِيقِهَا
الرُّكْبَانُ، تَرُدُّ بِمِرِّ الْقِصَاءِ، وَتَحْلُبُ عَيْبَطَ الدِّمَاءِ، وَتَثْلُمُ مَنَارَ الدِّينِ، وَتَنْفُضُ عَقْدَ الْيَقِينِ، يَهْرُبُ
مِنْهَا الْأَكْيَاسُ، وَيُدْبِرُهَا الْأَرْجَاسُ، مِرْعَادًا مِبْرَاقًا، كَاشِفَةً عَنْ سَاقٍ! تُقَطِّعُ فِيهَا الْأَرْحَامَ،
وَيُعَارِقُ عَلَيْهَا الْإِسْلَامُ! بَرِيْهًا سَقِيْمًا، وَظَاعِنَهَا مُقِيْمًا!

A part of the same sermon

Among them some will be unavenged martyrs and some will be stricken with fear and seek protection. They will be deceived by pledges and fraudulent belief. You should not become landmarks of mischiefs and signs

of innovations but should adhere to that on which the rope of the community has been wound and on which the pillars of obedience have been founded. Proceed towards Allah as oppressed and do not proceed to Him as oppressors. Avoid the paths of Satan and the places of revolt. Do not put in your bellies unlawful morsels because you are facing Him Who has made disobedience unlawful for you, and made the path of obedience easy for you.

بَيْنَ قَتِيلٍ مَطْلُولٍ، وَخَائِفٍ مُسْتَجِيرٍ، يَخْتَلُونَ بِعَقْدِ الْإِيمَانِ وَبِعُزُورِ الْإِيمَانِ؛ فَلَا تَكُونُوا
أَنْصَابَ الْفِتَنِ، وَأَعْلَامَ الْبِدَعِ، وَالزُّمُومَا مَا عُقِدَ عَلَيْهِ حَبْلُ الْجَمَاعَةِ، وَبَيِّنَتْ عَلَيْهِ أَرْكَانُ الطَّاعَةِ،
وَاقْدُمُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ مَظْلُومِينَ، وَلَا تَقْدُمُوا عَلَيْهِ ظَالِمِينَ، وَاتَّقُوا مَدَارِجَ الشَّيْطَانِ وَمَهَابِطَ
الْعُدْوَانِ، وَلَا تُدْخِلُوا بُطُونَكُمْ لِعَقِّ الْحَرَامِ، فَإِنَّكُمْ بَعِينٌ مَنْ حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَعْصِيَةَ، وَسَهَّلَ لَكُمْ
سُبُلَ الطَّاعَةِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 151

(1) *Al-Sayyid al-Yamani, al-Taraz, I, 334.*

Sermon 152: Praise be to Allah who is...

About the greatness and the attributes of Allah ¹ and the qualities of the Imams

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في صفات الله ﷻ، وصفات أئمة الدين

Praise be to Allah who is proof of His existence through His creation, of His being eternal through the newness of His creation, and through their mutual similarities of the fact that nothing is similar to Him. Senses cannot touch Him and curtains cannot veil Him, because of the difference between the Maker and the made, the Limiter and the limited and the Sustainer and the sustained.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الدَّالِّ عَلَى وُجُودِهِ بِخَلْقِهِ، وَمُحَدِّثِ خَلْقِهِ عَلَى أَرْزَلِيَّتِهِ، وَبِاشْتِبَاهِهِمْ عَلَى أَنْ لَا شَبَهَ لَهُ. لَا تَسْتَلِمُهُ الْمَشَاعِرُ، وَلَا تَحْجُبُهُ السَّوَاتِرُ، لِإِفْتِرَاقِ الصَّانِعِ وَالْمَصْنُوعِ، وَالْحَادِّ وَالْمَحْدُودِ، وَالرَّبِّ وَالْمَرْبُوبِ.

He is One but not by the first in counting, is Creator but not through activity or labour, is Hearer but not by means of any physical organ, is Looker but not by a stretching of eyelids, is Witness but not by nearness, is Distinct but not by measurement of distance, is Manifest but not by seeing and is Hidden but not by subtlety (of body). He is Distinct from things because He overpowers them and exercises might over them, while things are distinct from Him because of their subjugation to Him and their turning towards Him.

الْأَحَدُ لَا يَتَأْوِيلُ عَدَدًا، وَالْخَالِقُ لَا يَمَعَى حَرَكَةً وَنَصَبًا، وَالسَّمِيعُ لَا بِأَدَاةٍ، وَالْبَصِيرُ لَا بِتَفْرِيقِ آلَةٍ، وَالشَّاهِدُ لَا بِمَمَّاسَةٍ، وَالْبَائِنُ لَا بِتَرَخِي مَسَافَةٍ، وَالظَّاهِرُ لَا بِرُؤْيَاةٍ، وَالْبَاطِنُ لَا بِلَطَافَةٍ. بَانَ مِنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ بِالْقَهْرِ هُنَا، وَالْقُدْرَةَ عَلَيْهَا، وَبَانَتِ الْأَشْيَاءُ مِنْهُ بِالْخُضُوعِ لَهُ، وَالرُّجُوعِ إِلَيْهِ.

He who describes Him limits Him. He who limits Him numbers Him. He who numbers Him rejects His eternity. He who said "how" sought a description for Him. He who said "where" bounded him. He is the Knower even though there be nothing to be known. He is the Sustainer even though there be nothing to be sustained. He is the Powerful even though there be nothing to be overpowered.

مَنْ وَصَفَهُ فَقَدْ حَدَّهُ، وَمَنْ حَدَّهُ فَقَدْ عَدَّهُ، وَمَنْ عَدَّهُ فَقَدْ أَبْطَلَ أَرْزَلَهُ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: كَيْفَ، فَقَدْ اسْتَوْصَفَهُ، وَمَنْ قَالَ: أَيْنَ، فَقَدْ حَيَّرَهُ. عَالِمٌ إِذْ لَا مَعْلُومٌ، وَرَبٌّ إِذْ لَا مَرْبُوبٌ، وَقَادِرٌ إِذْ لَا مَقْدُورٌ.

A part of the same sermon about the Divine leaders (Imams)

منها: في أئمة الدين

The riser has risen, the sparkler has sparkled, the appearer has appeared and the curved has been straightened. Allah has replaced one people with another and one day 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 the creatures know Allah. No one will enter Paradise except he who knows them and knows Him, and no one will enter Hell except he who denies them and denies Him.

فَقَدْ طَلَعَ طَالِعٌ، وَلَمَعَ لَامِعٌ، وَلَاخَ لَائِحٌ، وَاعْتَدَلَ مَائِلٌ، وَاسْتَبَدَلَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ قَوْمًا، وَبِیَوْمٍ یَوْمًا، وَانْتظَرْنَا الْغَیْرَ انْتِظَارَ الْمُجْدِبِ الْمَطْرَ. وَإِنَّمَا الْأَئِمَّةُ قَوْمٌ اللَّهُ عَلَى خَلْقِهِ، وَعُرْفَاؤُهُ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ، لَا يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَنْ عَرَفَهُمْ وَعَرَفُوهُ، وَلَا يَدْخُلُ النَّارَ إِلَّا مَنْ أَنْكَرَهُمْ وَأَنْكَرُوهُ.

Allah the Glorified, has distinguished you with Islam and has chosen you for it. This is because it is the name of safety and the collection of honour. Allah the Glorified, chose its way and disclosed its pleas through open knowledge and secret maxims. Its (Qur'an) wonders are not exhausted and its delicacies do not end. It contains blossoming bounties and lamps of darkness. (The doors of) virtues cannot be opened save with its keys, nor can gloom be dispelled save with its lamps. Allah has protected its inaccessible points (from enemies) and allowed grazing (to its followers) in its pastures. It contains cover (from the ailment of misguidance) for the seeker of cure and full support for the seeker of support.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَصَّكُمْ بِالْإِسْلَامِ، وَاسْتَخْلَصَكُمْ لَهُ، وَذَلِكَ لِإِنَّهُ اسْمٌ سَلَامَةٌ، وَجِمَاعُ كَرَامَةٍ، اصْطَفَى اللَّهُ تَعَالَى مِنْهَجَهُ، وَبَيَّنَّ حُجَجَهُ، مِنْ ظَاهِرِ عِلْمٍ، وَبَاطِنِ حِكْمٍ، لَا تَفْتَى غَرَائِبُهُ، وَلَا تَنْقُضِي عَجَائِبُهُ، فِيهِ مَرَابِيعُ النِّعَمِ، وَمَصَابِيخُ الظُّلْمِ، لَا تُفْتَحُ الْخَيْرَاتُ إِلَّا بِمَقَاتِحِهِ، وَلَا تُكْشَفُ الظُّلُمَاتُ إِلَّا بِمَصَابِحِهِ، قَدْ أَحْمَى جِمَاهُ، وَأَرْعَى مَرْعَاهُ، فِيهِ شِفَاءُ الْمُسْتَشْفِي، وَكَفَايَةُ الْمُكْتَفِي.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 152

(1) *Al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, I, 139;*

(2) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 232, 235.*

Notes

1. The first part of this sermon consists of important issues concerning the science of knowledge about Allah, wherein Amir al-mu'minin has thrown light on the matter that Allah is from ever and His attributes are the same as He Himself. When we cast a glance at creation, we see that for every movement there is a mover, from which every man of ordinary wisdom is compelled to conclude that no effect can appear without a cause, so much so, that even an infant a few days old, when his body is touched, feels in the depth of his consciousness that someone has touched him. He indicates it by opening his eyes or turning and looking. How then can the creation of the world and the system of all creation be arranged without a Creator or Organiser?

Once it is necessary to believe in a Creator, then He should exist by Himself, because everything which has a beginning must have a centre of existence from which it should terminate. If that too needed a creator, there would be the question of whether this creator is also the creation of some other creator or exists by itself. Thus unless a Self-created Creator is believed in, who should be the cause of all causes, the mind will remain groping in the unending labyrinth of cause and effect, and never attain the idea of the last extremity of the

series of creation. It would fall into the fallacy of circular arguing and would not reach any end.

If the creator were taken to have created himself, then there would be (one of the two positions, namely) either he should be non-existent or existent. If he were not existent, then it would not be possible for something non-existent to create any existent being. If he were existent before creating himself, there would be no sense in coming into being again. Therefore it is necessary to believe that the Creator should be a Being not dependent on any other creator for His own existence, and everything else should be dependent on Him. This dependence of the entire creation is a proof that the existence of the Source of all creation is from ever and eternal. And since all beings other than He are subject to change, are dependent on position and place and are similar to one another in qualities and properties, and since similarity leads to plurality whereas unity has no like save itself, therefore nothing can be like Him.

Even things called one cannot be reckoned after His Unity because He is One and Singular in every respect. He is free and pure from all those attributes which are found in body or matter because He is neither body, nor colour, nor shape, nor does He lie in any direction, nor is He bounded within some place or locality. Therefore, man cannot see or understand Him through his senses or feelings, because senses can know only those things which accord with the limitations of time, place and matter. To believe that He can be seen is to believe that He has body, but since He is not a body, and He does not exist through a body, and He does not lie in any direction or place, there is no question of His being seen. But His being unseen is not like that of subtle material bodies, due to whose delicacy the eye pierces through them and eyes remain unable to see them; as for example the wind in the vast firmament. But He is unseen by His very existence. Nevertheless, nothing is unseen for Him. He sees as well as hears, but is not dependent on instruments of seeing or hearing, because if He were in need of organs of the body for hearing and seeing He would be in need of external things for His perfection and would not be a perfect Being, whereas He should be perfect in all respects and no attribute of perfection should be apart from His Self.

To believe in attributes separately from His Self would mean that there would be a self and a few attributes and the compound of the self and the attributes would be Allah. But a thing which is compounded is dependent on its parts and these parts must exist before their composition into the whole. When the parts exist from before, how can the whole be from ever and eternal because its existence is later than that of its parts. But Allah had the attributes of knowledge, power and sustaining even when nothing was existent, because none of His attributes were created in Him from outside, but His attributes are His Self and His Self is His attributes. Consequently, His knowledge does not depend on the object of knowledge existing first and then His knowledge, because His Self is prior to things coming into existence. Nor is it necessary for His power that there should first exist the object to be over-powered and then alone He would be called Powerful, because Powerful is that who has power equally for doing or abandoning and as such the existence of the object to be over-powered is not necessary.

Similarly Sustainer means master. Just as He is the Master of the non-existent after its coming into existence, in the same way He has power to bring it into existence from non-existence, namely if He so wills He may bestow existence upon it.

Sermon 153: He has been allowed time by Allah...

About negligent persons and the characteristics of beasts, carnivores and women

ومن خطبه له (عليه السلام)

صفة الضال

He has been allowed time by Allah. He is falling into error along with negligent persons and goes early in the morning with sinners, without any road to lead or any Imam to guide.

وَهُوَ فِي مُهَلَّةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ يَهْوِي مَعَ الْغَافِلِينَ، وَيَعْدُومَعِ الْمُذْنِبِينَ، بِلَا سَبِيلٍ قَاصِدٍ، وَلَا إِمَامٍ قَائِدٍ.

A part of the same sermon (qualities of the heedless)

منها: في صفات الغافلين

At last when Allah will make clear to them the reward for their sins, and take them out from the veils of their neglectfulness they will proceed to what they were running away from, and run away from what they were proceeding to. They will not benefit from the wants they will satisfy or the desires they would fulfil.

حَتَّى إِذَا كَشَفَ لَهُمْ عَنْ جَزَاءِ مَعْصِيَتِهِمْ، وَاسْتَخْرَجَهُمْ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِ غَفْلَتِهِمْ، اسْتَقْبَلُوا مُدْبِرًا، وَاسْتَدْبَرُوا مُقْبِلًا، فَلَمْ يَنْتَفِعُوا بِمَا أَدْرَكُوا مِنْ طَلِبَتِهِمْ، وَلَا بِمَا فَضَّلُوا مِنْ وَطَرِهِمْ.

I warn you and myself from this position. A man should derive benefit from his own self. Certainly, prudent is he who hears and ponders over it, who sees and observes and who benefits from instructive material and then treads on clear paths wherein he avoids falling into hollows and straying into pitfalls, and does not assist those who misguide him by turning away from truthfulness, changing his words, or fearing truth.

إِنِّي أُحَذِّرُكُمْ، وَنَفْسِي، هَذِهِ الْمَنْزِلَةَ، فَلْيَنْتَفِعِ امْرُؤٌ بِنَفْسِهِ، فَإِنَّمَا الْبَصِيرُ مَنْ سَمِعَ فَتَفَكَّرَ، وَنَظَرَ فَأَبْصَرَ، وَأَنْتَفَعَ بِالْغَيْرِ، ثُمَّ سَلَكَ جَدَدًا وَاضِحًا يَتَجَنَّبُ فِيهِ الصَّرْعَةَ فِي الْمَهَاوِي، وَالضَّلَالَ فِي الْمَعَاوِي، وَلَا يُعِينُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الْعَوَاةَ بَتَعَسُفٍ فِي حَقِّ، أَوْ تَحْرِيفٍ فِي نُطْقٍ، أَوْ تَخَوُّفٍ مِنْ صِدْقٍ.

Exhorting the people

عظة الناس

O my listener! Be cured from your intoxication, wake up from your slumber, decrease your hasty activity and ponder over what has come to you through the Holy Prophet, the Ummi I which is inevitable and inescapable. You should turn away from him who opposes him and leave him and leave whatever he has adopted for himself. Put off your vanity, drop your

haughtiness and recall your grave because your way passes over it. You will be dealt with as you deal with others, you will reap what you sow, and what you send today will meet you tomorrow. So provide for your future and send (some good acts) for your day (of reckoning). Fear, fear, O listener! Act, act, O careless one! *“None can inform you like the One who is aware” (35:14).*

فَأَفِقْ أَيُّهَا السَّامِعُ مِنْ سَكَرَتِكَ، وَاسْتَيْقِظْ مِنْ غَفْلَتِكَ، وَاحْتَصِرْ مِنْ عَجَلَتِكَ، وَأَنْعِمِ
الْفِكْرَ فِيمَا جَاءَكَ عَلَى لِسَانِ النَّبِيِّ الْأَمِيِّ (صلى الله عليه وآله) بِمَا لَا بُدَّ مِنْهُ وَلَا حِيصَ عَنْهُ،
وَخَالَفَ مَنْ خَالَفَ ذَلِكَ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ، وَدَعَا وَمَا رَضِيَ لِنَفْسِهِ، وَضَعَفَ فَخَرَكَ، وَاخْطَطَّ كَبْرَكَ،
وَادْكُرْ قَبْرَكَ، فَإِنَّ عَلَيْهِ مَمْرَكَ، وَكَمَا تَدِينُ تُدَانُ، وَكَمَا تَزْرَعُ تَحْصُدُ، وَمَا قَدَّمْتَ الْيَوْمَ تَقْدَمُ
عَلَيْهِ غَدًا، فَاْمَهْدْ لِقَدَمِكَ، وَقَدِّمِ لِيَوْمِكَ. فَالْحَذَرَ الْحَذَرَ أَيُّهَا الْمُسْتَمِعُ! وَالْحِدَّ الْحِدَّ أَيُّهَا
الْعَافِلُ! (وَلَا يُنَبِّئُكَ مِثْلُ خَبِيرٍ).

One of the firm decisions of Allah in the Wise Reminder (Qur'an) upon which He bestows reward or gives punishment, and through which He likes or dislikes is that it will not benefit a man, even though he exerts himself and acts sincerely if he leaves this world to meet Allah with one of these acts without repenting, namely that he believed in a partner with Allah during his obligatory worship, or appeased his own anger by killing an individual, or spoke about acts committed by others, or sought fulfilment of his needs from people by introducing an innovation in his religion, or met people with a double face, or moved among them with a double tongue. Understand this because an illustration is a guide for its like.

إِنَّ مِنْ عَزَائِمِ اللَّهِ فِي الدِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، الَّتِي عَلَيْهَا يُنْبِئُ وَيُعَاقِبُ، وَهِيَ يَرْضَى وَيَسْخَطُ، أَنَّهُ لَا
يَنْفَعُ عَبْدًا. وَإِنْ أَجْهَدَ نَفْسَهُ، وَأَخْلَصَ فِعْلَهُ. أَنْ يَخْرُجَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا، لِأَقْبَابِ رَبِّهِ بِخِصْلَةٍ مِنْ هَذِهِ
الْخِصَالِ لَمْ يَثْبُتْ مِنْهَا: أَنْ يُشْرِكَ بِاللَّهِ فِيمَا افْتَرَضَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ عِبَادَتِهِ، أَوْ يَشْفِي غَيْظَهُ بِمَلَائِكَةِ
نَفْسِهِ، أَوْ يَقْرَأَ بِأَمْرِ فَعَلَهُ غَيْرُهُ، أَوْ يَسْتَنْجِحَ حَاجَةً إِلَى النَّاسِ بِإِظْهَارِ بَدْعَةٍ فِي دِينِهِ، أَوْ يَلْقَى
النَّاسَ بِوَجْهَيْنِ، أَوْ يَمْشِي فِيهِمْ بِلِسَانَيْنِ. اعْقِلْ ذَلِكَ فَإِنَّ الْمِثْلَ دَلِيلٌ عَلَى شِبْهِهِ.

Beasts are concerned with their bellies. Carnivores are concerned with assaulting others. Women are concerned with the adornments of this ignoble life and the creation of mischief herein ² (On the other hand) believers are humble, believers are admonishers and believers are afraid (of Allah).

إِنَّ الْبَهَائِمَ هُمَّاهُ بَطُونُهَا، وَإِنَّ السَّبَاعَ هُمَّاهُ الْعُدَاوَانُ عَلَى غَيْرِهَا، وَإِنَّ النِّسَاءَ هُمَّاهُ زِينَةُ
الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَالْفَسَادُ فِيهَا; إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مُسْتَكِينُونَ، إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ مُشْفِقُونَ، إِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ
خَائِفُونَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 153

(1) Al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 108;

(2) al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, V, 82;

(3) *Warram, al-Majmu`ah, 77.*

Notes

1. The word "ummi" has been used in the Holy Qur'an with reference to the Holy Prophet in chapter 7:157-158. For better understanding of the word refer to the books of commentary on the Holy Qur'an.

2. The intention is to say that the cause of all mischief and evil is the passion to satisfy bodily needs and the passion to subdue. If a human being is subjugated by the passion to satisfy bodily needs and considers filling the stomach as his aim there will be no difference between him and a beast, because a beast too has no aim except to fill its belly. But if he is over-powered by the passion to subdue others and takes to killing and devastation there will be no difference between him and a carnivorous beast, because the latter's aim is also tearing and devouring. If both the passions are at work in him then he is like a woman, because in a woman both these passions act side by side and because of this she is extremely eager of adornment and is active in fanning mischief and disturbance. However, a true believer will never agree to adopt these habits as his mode of behaviour, rather he keeps his passions suppressed so that he neither allows pride and vanity to approach near him nor does he fan mischief or disturbance for fear of Allah.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written that Amir al-mu'minin delivered this sermon at the time of marching towards Basrah, and since the trouble of Basrah was the result of a woman's instigation, Amir al-mu'minin has, after mentioning beasts and carnivore, held a woman also to possess such qualities. Thus the battle of Basrah was the result of these qualities, whereby thousands of persons were involved in death and destruction.

Sermon 154: He who has an intelligent mind looks to his goal..

About the Ahlul Bayt (of the Holy Prophet) and their opponents

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يذكر فيها فضائل أهل البيت (عليهم السلام)

He who has an intelligent mind looks to his goal. He knows his low road as well as his high road. The caller has called. The shepherd has tended (his flocks). So respond to the caller and follow the shepherd.

وَنَاطِرٌ قَلْبِ اللَّيْبِ بِهِ يُبْصِرُ أَمَدَهُ، وَيَعْرِفُ غَوْرَهُ وَنَجْدَهُ. دَاعٍ دَعَا، وَرَاعٍ رَعَى، فَاسْتَجَابُوا لِلدَّاعِي، وَاتَّبَعُوا الرَّاعِي.

They (the opponents) have entered the oceans of disturbance and have taken to innovations instead of the Sunnah (the Prophet's holy deeds, utterances and his unspoken approvals), while the believers have sunk down, and the misguided and the liars are speaking. We are the near ones, companions, treasure holders and doors (to the Sunnah). Houses are not entered save through their doors. Whoever enters them from other than the door is called a thief.

قَدْ حَاضُوا بِحَارِ الْفِتَنِ، وَأَخَذُوا بِالْبِدَعِ دُونَ السُّنَنِ، وَأَرَزَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ، وَنَطَقَ الصَّالُونَ الْمُكَدَّبُونَ. نَحْنُ الشَّعَارُ وَالْأَصْحَابُ، وَالْحَزَنَةُ وَالْأَبْوَابُ، وَلَا تُؤْتَى الْبُيُوتُ إِلَّا مِنْ أَبْوَابِهَا، فَمَنْ أَتَاهَا مِنْ غَيْرِ أَبْوَابِهَا سَمِيَ سَارِقًا.

A part of the same sermon

The delicacies of the Qur'an are about them (Ahlul Bayt, the descendants of the Prophet) and they are the treasurers of Allah. When they speak they speak the truth, but when they keep quiet no one can speak unless they speak. The forerunner should report correctly to his people, should retain his wits and should be one of the children (a man) of the next world, because he has come from there and would return to it.

فِيهِمْ كَرَائِمُ الْقُرْآنِ، وَهُمْ كُنُوزُ الرَّحْمَنِ، إِنْ نَطَقُوا صَدَقُوا، وَإِنْ صَمَتُوا لَمْ يُسَبِّحُوا. فَلْيَصْنُدُقْ رَائِدُ أَهْلِهِ، وَلْيَحْضِرْ عَقْلُهُ، وَلْيَكُنْ مِنْ أَبْنَاءِ الْآخِرَةِ، فَإِنَّهُ مِنْهَا قَدِمَ، وَإِلَيْهَا يَنْقَلِبُ.

The beginning of the action of one who sees with heart and acts with eyes it is to assess whether the action will go against him or for him. If it is for him he indulges in it, but if it is against him he keeps away from it. For, he who acts without knowledge is like one who treads without a path. Then his deviation from the path keeps him at a distance from his aim. And he who acts according to knowledge is like he who treads the clear path. Therefore, he who can see should see whether he should proceed or return.

وَالنَّاطِرُ بِالْقَلْبِ، الْعَامِلُ بِالْبَصْرِ، يَكُونُ مُبْتَدَأً عَمَلِهِ أَنْ يَعْلَمَ: أَعْمَلُهُ عَلَيْهِ أَمْ لَهُ؟! فَإِنْ كَانَ لَهُ مَضَى فِيهِ، وَإِنْ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ وَقَفَ عِنْدَهُ. فَإِنَّ الْعَامِلَ بَعِيرٍ عِلْمِ كَالسَّائِرِ عَلَى غَيْرِ طَرِيقٍ، فَلَا يَرِيدُهُ بُعْدُهُ عَنِ الطَّرِيقِ الْوَاضِحِ إِلَّا بُعْدًا مِنْ حَاجَتِهِ، وَالْعَامِلُ بِالْعِلْمِ كَالسَّائِرِ عَلَى الطَّرِيقِ الْوَاضِحِ، فَلْيَنْظُرْ نَاطِرٌ: أَسَاءَ هُوَ أَمْ رَاجِعٌ؟!

You should also know that the outside (of every thing) has a similar inside. Of whatever the outside is good, its inside too is good, and whatever the outside is bad, its inside too is bad. The truthful Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his progeny) has said that: "Allah may love a man but hate his action, and may love the action but hate the man." You should also know that every action is like vegetation, and vegetation cannot do without water while waters are different. So where the water is good the plant is good and its fruits are sweet, whereas where the water is bad the plant will also be bad and its fruits will be bitter.

وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ لِكُلِّ ظَاهِرٍ بَاطِنًا عَلَى مِثَالِهِ، فَمَا طَابَ ظَاهِرُهُ طَابَ بَاطِنُهُ، وَمَا خَبَثَ ظَاهِرُهُ خَبَثَ بَاطِنُهُ، وَقَدْ قَالَ الرَّسُولُ الصَّادِقُ (صلى الله عليه وآله): «إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْعَبْدَ وَيُبْغِضُ عَمَلَهُ، وَيُحِبُّ الْعَمَلَ وَيُبْغِضُ بَدَنَهُ». فَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ كُلَّ عَمَلٍ نَبَاتٌ، وَكُلَّ نَبَاتٍ لَا غِنَى بِهِ عَنِ الْمَاءِ، وَالْمِيَاهُ مُخْتَلِفَةٌ، فَمَا طَابَ سَقِيهِ طَابَ عَرْسُهُ وَحَلَّتْ ثَمَرَتُهُ، وَمَا خَبَثَ سَقِيهِ خَبَثَ عَرْسُهُ وَأَمَرَّتْ ثَمَرَتُهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 154

(1) Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 252, 324, 331;

(2) al-Yamani, al-Taraz, I, 217.

Sermon 155: Praise be to Allah who is such that it is not possible to describe...

About the wonderful creation of the bat

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)
يذكر فيها بديع خلقه الخفاش

In Praise of Allah

حمد الله وتنزيهه

Praise be to Allah who is such that it is not possible to describe the reality of knowledge about Him, since His greatness has restrained the intellects, and therefore they cannot find the way to approach the extremity of His realm. He is Allah, the True, the Manifest of Truth. He is more True and more Manifest than eyes can see. Intellects cannot comprehend Him by fixing limits for Him since in that case to Him would be attributed shape. Imagination cannot catch Him by fixing quantities for Him for in that case to Him would be attributed body. He created creatures without any example, and without the advice of a counsel, or the assistance of a helper. His creation was completed by His command, and bowed to His obedience. It responded (to Him) and did not defy (Him). It obeyed and did not resist.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي الْمَحْسَرَتِ الْأَوْصَافُ عَنْ كُنْهِ مَعْرِفَتِهِ، وَرَدَعَتْ عَظَمَتُهُ الْعُقُولَ، فَلَمْ يَجِدْ مَسَاغًا إِلَى بُلُوغِ غَايَةِ مَلَكُوتِهِ!
هُوَ اللَّهُ الْحَقُّ الْمُبِينُ، أَحَقُّ وَأَبِينُ مِمَّا تَرَى الْعَيْنُونَ، لَمْ تَبْلُغْهُ الْعُقُولُ بِتَحْدِيدِ فَيْكُونَ مُشَبَّهًا، وَلَمْ تَقْعِ عَلَيْهِ الْأَوْهَامُ بِتَقْدِيرِ فَيْكُونَ مُمَثَّلًا . خَلَقَ الْخَلْقَ عَلَى غَيْرِ تَمَثِيلٍ، وَلَا مَشُورَةَ مُشِيرٍ، وَلَا مَعُونَةَ مُعِينٍ، فَتَمَّ خَلْقُهُ بِأَمْرِهِ، وَأَذَعَنَ لِمَطَاعَتِهِ، فَأَجَابَ وَلَمْ يُدَافِعْ، وَأَنْقَادَ وَلَمْ يُنَازِعْ.

The Creation of the Bat

خلقة الخفاش

An example of His delicate production, wonderful creation and deep sagacity which He has shown us is found in these bats which keep hidden in the daylight although daylight reveals everything else, and are mobile in the night although the night shuts up every other living being; and how their eyes get dazzled and cannot make use of the light of the sun so as to be guided in their movements and so as to reach their known places through the direction provided by the sun.

وَمِنْ لَطَائِفِ صَنَعَتِهِ، وَعَجَائِبِ خَلْقَتِهِ، مَا أَرَانَا مِنْ غَوَامِضِ الْحِكْمَةِ فِي هَذِهِ الْخَفَافِيشِ
الَّتِي يَفْبِضُهَا الضِّيَاءُ الْبَاسِطُ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ، وَيَبْسُطُهَا الظَّلَامُ الْقَابِضُ لِكُلِّ حَيٍّ، وَكَيْفَ عَشِيَتْ

أَعْيُنُهَا عَنِ أَنْ تَسْتَمِدَّ مِنَ الشَّمْسِ الْمُضِيئَةِ نَفُورًا تَهْتَدِي بِهِ فِي مَدَاهِبِهَا، وَتَتَّصِلُ بِعَلَانِيَةٍ
بُرْهَانَ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى مَعَارِفِهَا.

Allah has prevented them from moving in the brightness of the sun and confined them to their places of hiding instead of going out at the time of its shining. Consequently they keep their eyelids down in the day and treat night as a lamp and go with its help in search of their livelihood. The darkness of night does not obstruct their sight nor does the gloom of darkness prevent them from movement. As soon as the sun removes its veil and the light of morning appears, and the rays of its light enter upon the lizards in their holes, the bats pull down their eyelids on their eyes and live on what they had collected in the darkness of the night.

وَرَدَعَهَا بِتَالُؤِ ضِيَائِهَا عَنِ الْمُضِيِّ فِي سُبُحَاتِ إِشْرَاقِهَا، وَأَكْنَهَا فِي مَكَامِنِهَا عَنِ الدَّهَابِ
فِي بُلُوحِ اثْتِلَاقِهَا، فَهِيَ مُسَدَّلَةٌ الْجُفُونَ بِالنَّهَارِ عَلَى حِدَاقِهَا، وَجَاعِلَةٌ اللَّيْلَ سِرَاجًا تَسْتَدِلُّ بِهِ
فِي التَّمَاسِ أَرْزَاقِهَا؛ فَلَا يَرُدُّ أَبْصَارَهَا إِسْدَافُ ظَلْمَتِهِ، وَلَا تَمْتَنِعُ مِنَ الْمُضِيِّ فِيهِ لِعَسَقِ دُخْنَتِهِ
فَإِذَا أَلْفَتِ الشَّمْسُ قِنَاعَهَا، وَبَدَتْ أَوْضَاحُ نَهَارِهَا، وَدَخَلَ مِنْ إِشْرَاقِ نُورِهَا عَلَى الضَّبَابِ فِي
وَجَارِهَا، أَطْبَقَتِ الْأَجْفَانَ عَلَى مَا قِيَهَا وَتَبَلَّغَتْ بِمَا اكْتَسَبَتْهُ مِنَ الْمَعَاشِ فِي ظَلْمِ لَيَالِيهَا.

Glorified is He who has made the night as day for them to seek livelihood and made the day for rest and stay. He has given them wings of flesh with which, at the time of need they rise upwards for flying. They look like the ends of ears without feathers or bones. Of course, you can see the veins quite distinctly. They have two wings which are neither too thin so that they get turned in flying, nor too thick so that they prove heavy. When they fly, their young ones hold on to them and seek refuge with them, getting down when they get down and rising up when they rise. The young does not leave them till its limbs become strong, its wings can support it for rising up, and it begins to recognise its places of living and its interest. Glorified is He who creates everything without any previous sample by someone else.

فَسُبْحَانَ مَنْ جَعَلَ اللَّيْلَ لَهَا نَهَارًا وَمَعَاشًا، وَجَعَلَ النَّهَارَ لَهَا سَكْنًا وَقَرَارًا! وَجَعَلَ لَهَا
أَجْنِحَةً مِنْ لَحْمِهَا تَعْرُجُ بِهَا عِنْدَ الْحَاجَةِ إِلَى الطَّيْرَانِ، كَأَنَّهَا شَطَايَا الْأَذَانِ، غَيْرَ دَوَاتِ رِيشٍ
وَلَا قَصَبِ، إِلَّا أَنَّكَ تَرَى مَوَاضِعَ الْعُرُوقِ بَيِّنَةً أَعْلَامًا، لَهَا جَنَاحَانِ لَمَّا يَرِقًا فَيَنْشَقُّا، وَمَنْ يَعْلُظَا
فَيَنْثَلَا. تَطِيرُ وَوَلَدُهَا لَاصِقٌ بِهَا لِأَجْيِ إِلَيْهَا، يَقَعُ إِذَا وَقَعَتْ، وَيَرْتَفِعُ إِذَا ارْتَفَعَتْ، لِأَيْقَارِ قِيَامِهَا
حَتَّى تَشْتَدَّ أَرْكَانُهُ، وَيَحْمِلُهُ لِلنُّهُوضِ جَنَاحُهُ، وَيَعْرِفُ مَدَاهِبَ عَيْشِهِ، وَمَصَالِحَ نَفْسِهِ.
فَسُبْحَانَ الْبَارِيءِ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ، عَلَى غَيْرِ مِثَالِ خَلَا مِنْ غَيْرِهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 155

(1) Al-Yamani, al-Taraz, I, 334.

Sermon 156: Whoever can at this time keep himself...

About the malice borne by `A'ishah; and warning the people of Basrah about what was to occur

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

خاطب به أهل البصرة على جهة اقتصاص الملاحم

Whoever can at this time keep himself clinging to Allah should do so. If you follow me I shall certainly carry you, if Allah so wills, on the path of Paradise, even though it may be full of severe hardship and of bitter taste.

فَمَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ أَنْ يَعْتَمِلَ نَفْسَهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ، فَلْيَفْعَلْ، فَإِنْ أَطَعْتُمُونِي فَإِنِّي حَامِلِكُمْ

إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَى سَبِيلِ الْجَنَّةِ، وَإِنْ كَانَ ذَا مَشَقَّةٍ شَدِيدَةٍ وَمَذَاقَةٍ مَرِيرَةٍ.

As regards a certain woman,¹ she is in the grip of womanly views, and malice is boiling in her bosom like the furnace of the blacksmith. If she were called upon to deal with others as she is dealing with me she would not have done it. (As for me), even hereafter she will be allowed her original respect, while the reckoning (of her misdeeds) is an obligation on Allah.

وَأَمَّا فُلَانَةٌ، فَأَذْرَكَهَا رَأْيُ النِّسَاءِ، وَضِعْتُ غَلًّا فِي صَدْرِهَا كَمَا يَجْعَلُ الْفَيْنِ، وَلَوْ دُعِيَتْ لَتَنَالَ

مِنْ غَيْرِي مَا أَتَتْ إِلَيَّ، لَمْ تَفْعَلْ، وَهَذَا بَعْدَ حُرْمَتِهَا الْأُولَى، وَالْحِسَابُ عَلَى اللَّهِ.

A part of the same sermon: describing faith

منه: في وصف الايمان

This path is the lightest course and the brightest lamp. Guidance towards virtuous actions is sought through faith while guidance towards faith is achieved through virtuous actions. Knowledge is made to prosper through faith, and death is feared because of knowledge. This world comes to an end with death, while the next world is secured (by virtuous actions) in this world. With the Day of Resurrection, Paradise is brought near and “hell will be brought into view for the perverse” (26:91) For people there is no escape from resurrection. They are heading for this last end in its appointed course.

سَبِيلٌ أْبْلَجُ الْمِنْهَاجِ، أَنْوَرُ السِّرَاجِ، فَبِالْإِيمَانِ يُسْتَدَلُّ عَلَى الصَّالِحَاتِ، وَبِالصَّالِحَاتِ

يُسْتَدَلُّ عَلَى الْإِيمَانِ، وَبِالْإِيمَانِ يُعْمَرُ الْعِلْمُ، وَبِالْعِلْمِ يُرْهَبُ الْمَوْتُ، وَبِالْمَوْتِ تُخْتَمُ الدُّنْيَا،

وَبِالدُّنْيَا تُحْرَزُ الْأُخْرَةُ، وَبِالْقِيَامَةِ تُزَلَّفُ الْجَنَّةُ وَ (تُبْرَزُ الْجَحِيمُ لِلْغَاوِينَ) وَإِنَّ الْخَلْقَ لَا مَقْصَرَ

لَهُمْ عَنِ الْقِيَامَةِ، مُرْقَلِينَ فِي مِضْمَارِهَا إِلَى الْعَايَةِ الْقُصْوَى.

A part of the same sermon

منه: في حال أهل القبور في القيامة

They have got up from the resting places in their graves and have set off for the final objectives. Every house has its own people. They are not changed nor shifted from there.

Commanding for good and refraining from evil are two characteristics of Allah, the Glorified. They can neither bring death near nor lessen sustenance.

قَدْ شَخَّصُوا مِنْ مُسْتَقَرِّ الْأَجْدَاثِ، وَصَارُوا إِلَى مَصَائِرِ الْعَايَاتِ، لِكُلِّ دَارٍ أَهْلُهَا، لَا يَسْتَبْدِلُونَ بِهَا وَلَا يُنْقَلُونَ عَنْهَا.

وَإِنَّ الْأَمْرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ، وَالنَّهْيَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، لِحُلُقَانٍ مِنْ حُلُقِ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ، وَإِنَّهُمَا لَا يُفْرِقَانِ مِنْ أَجْلِ، وَلَا يَنْقُصَانِ مِنْ رِزْقٍ.

You should adhere to the Book of Allah because it is the strong rope, a clear light, a benefiting cure, a quenching for thirst, protection for the adherent and deliverance for the attached. It does not curve so as to need straightening and does not deflect so as to be corrected. Frequency of its repetition and its falling on ears does not make it old. Whoever speaks according to it, speaks truth and whoever acts by it is forward (in action).

وَعَلَيْكُمْ بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّهُ الْحَبْلُ الْمَتِينُ، وَالنُّورُ الْمُبِينُ، وَالشِّفَاءُ النَّافِعُ، وَالرِّسْيُ النَّافِعُ، وَالْعِصْمَةُ لِلْمُتَمَسِّكِ، وَالنَّجَاةُ لِلْمُتَعَلِّقِ، لَا يَعْوَجُ فَيَقَامُ، وَلَا يَزِيغُ فَيَسْتَعْتَبُ، وَلَا تُخْلِفُهُ كَثْرَةُ الرِّدِّ، وَوُلُوجُ السَّمْعِ، مَنْ قَالَ بِهِ صَدَقَ، وَمَنْ عَمِلَ بِهِ سَبَقَ.

A man stood up and said: O Amir al-mu'minin, tell us about this disturbance and whether you enquired about it from the Holy Prophet.

وقام إليه (عليه السلام) رجل فقال: أخبرنا عن الفتنة، وهل سألت عنها رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وآله)؟

Thereupon Amir al-mu'minin said:

When Allah, the Glorified sent down the verse:

Alif lam mim. What! Do people imagine that they will be let off on (their) saying: "We believe!" and they will not be tried? (Qur'an, 29:1-2)

I came to know that the disturbance would not befall us so long as the Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his progeny) is among us.

فقال (عليه السلام): لَمَّا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ، قَوْلَهُ: (الم * أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يُتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ) عَلِمْتُ أَنَّ الْفِتْنَةَ لَا تَنْزِلُ بِنَا وَرَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) بَيْنَ أَظْهُرِنَا.

So I said, "O Prophet of Allah, what is this disturbance of which Allah, the Sublime, has informed you?" He replied, "O `Ali, my people will create trouble after me." I said, "O Prophet of Allah, on the day of Uhud, when people had fallen martyrs and I was not among them, and that was distressing for me, did you not say to me, 'cheer up, as martyrdom is for you hereafter?'" The Prophet replied, "Yes it is so, but what about your enduring

at present?" I said, "O Prophet of Allah, this is not an occasion for endurance, but rather an occasion for cheering up and gratefulness."

فَقُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، مَا هَذِهِ الْفِتْنَةُ الَّتِي أَخْبَرَكَ اللَّهُ بِهَا؟ فَقَالَ: يَا عَلِيُّ، إِنَّ أَهْلِي سَيُفْتَنُونَ مِنْ بَعْدِي. فَقُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أَوْلَيْسَ قَدْ قُلْتَ لِي يَوْمَ أُحُدٍ حَيْثُ اسْتُشْهِدَ مَنْ اسْتُشْهِدَ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَحَيْرَتٌ عَنِّي الشَّهَادَةُ، فَشَقَّ ذَلِكَ عَلَيَّ، فَقُلْتَ لِي: «أَبَشِّرْ، فَإِنَّ الشَّهَادَةَ مِنْ وَرَائِكَ»؟. فَقَالَ لِي: «إِنَّ ذَلِكَ لَكَذَلِكَ، فَكَيْفَ صَبْرَكَ إِذَنْ؟». فَقُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، لَيْسَ هَذَا مِنْ مَوَاطِنِ الصَّبْرِ، وَلَكِنْ مِنْ مَوَاطِنِ الْبِشْرِ وَالشُّكْرِ.

Then he said: "O `Ali, people will fall into mischief through their wealth, will show obligation to Allah on account of their faith, will expect His mercy, will feel safe from His anger and regard His unlawful matters as lawful by raising false doubts and by their misguiding desires. They will then hold lawful (the use of) wine by calling it barley water, a bribe by calling it a gift, and taking of usurious interest by calling it sale." I said, "O Prophet of Allah, how should I deal with them at the time, whether to hold them to have gone back in heresy or just in revolt." He said, "In revolt."

وَقَالَ: «يَا عَلِيُّ، إِنَّ الْقَوْمَ سَيُفْتَنُونَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ، وَيَمْتَنُونَ بِدِينِهِمْ عَلَى رَبِّهِمْ، وَيَتَمَنَّوْنَ رَحْمَتَهُ، وَيَأْمَنُونَ سَطْوَتَهُ، وَيَسْتَحِلُّونَ حَرَامَهُ بِالشُّبُهَاتِ الْكَاذِبَةِ، وَالْأَهْوَاءِ السَّاهِيَةِ، فَيَسْتَحِلُّونَ الْحَمْرَ بِالنَّبِيدِ، وَالسُّحْتَ بِالْهَدْيَةِ، وَالرِّبَا بِالْبَيْعِ». قُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، فَبِأَيِّ الْمَنَازِلِ أَنْزَلَهُمْ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ؟ أَمِنْزِلَةِ رِدَّةٍ، أَمْ مِنْزِلَةِ فِتْنَةٍ؟ فَقَالَ: «مِنْزِلَةِ فِتْنَةٍ.»

Alternative Sources for Sermon 156

- (1) *Al-Tusi, Talkhis al-Shafi, I, 326;*
- (2) *al-Hilli, Mukhtasar Basa'ir al-darajat, 195;*
- (3) *al-Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj, I, 326;*
- (4) *al-Muttaqi, Kanz, VIII, 215;*
- (5) *al-Majlisi, Bihar, bab al-fitan wa al-mihan, 448.*

Notes

1. There is no denying the fact that `A'ishah's behaviour towards Amir al-mu'minin was throughout inimical, and very often her heart's turbidity expressed itself on her face, and her hatred and dislike became quite apparent, so much so that if in connection with some affair Amir al-mu'minin's name came up a frown appeared on her forehead and she did not relish pronouncing it with her tongue. For example, when `Ubaydullah ibn `Abdillah ibn `Utba mentioned to `Abdullah ibn `Abbas the narration by `A'ishah namely that "in his death-illness the Prophet, taking support on al-Fadl ibn `Abbas and another person, came to her (`A'ishah's) house," `Abdullah ibn `Abbas said: "Do you know who this 'other man' was?" He said, "No." Then he said, "'Ali ibn Abi Talib, but she is averse to name him in a good context." (Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Musnad, vol. 6, pp. 34, 228; Ibn Sa'd, at-Tabaqat al-Kabir, vol. 2, part 2, p. 29; at-Tabari, at-Tarikh, vol. 1, pp. 1800-1801; al-Baladhuri, Ansab al-ashraf, vol. 1, pp. 544-545; al-Bayhaqi, as-Sunan al-kubra, vol. 3, p. 396).

One cause for this hatred and malice was the presence of Hadrat Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) whose wholesome dignity and esteem pricked her heart like a thorn. Her jealousy towards the other wives (of the Prophet) did not allow her to let the Prophet love the daughter of his other wife to such a degree that he should stand on her approach, seat her in his own place, declare her most honourable of all the women of the world and bear such love towards her children as to call them his own sons. All these things pained her much and naturally her

feelings on such an occasion were that if she had borne children they would have been the Prophet's sons and they would have been the pivot of the Prophet's affection instead of Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn. But she was not gifted with any issue and she gratified her own desire to be a mother by adopting the surname Umm `Abdillah (mother of the slave of Allah) after her sister's son. In short all these things created the passion of hatred in her heart, as a result of which she off and on complained to the Prophet against Hadrat Fatimah but could not succeed in diverting the Prophet's attention from her.

News about this mortification and estrangement also reached the ears of Abu Bakr. That would only perturb him as he too could do nothing, except that his verbal sympathies were with his daughter. At last the Prophet left this world and the reins of Government fell into his hands. Now was the opportunity for him to avenge as best as he could and to perpetrate whatever violence he had in mind. Consequently the first step he took was that, in order to deprive Hadrat Fatimah of inheritance, he denied the principle of inheritance in the case of the prophets and held that neither do the prophets inherit nor are they inherited from, but the property left by them escheats to the state. Fatimah was so much affected that she gave up speaking to him and passed away from this world with these very feelings. `A'ishah did not even take the trouble to express any sorrow at her tragic death. Thus Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written:

When Fatimah expired, all the wives of the Prophet came to Bani Hashim in condolence except `A'ishah. She did not come and showed herself sick and words from her reached `Ali which displayed her joy. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 9, p. 198).

As long as she bore so much malice against Hadrat Fatimah, how could Fatimah's spouse be spared similar enmity and malice. Particularly when such events also occurred which worked like a fan and roused her feeling of hatred, such as the incident of "Ifk" when Amir al-mu'minin said to the Prophet: "She is no better than the buckles of your shoe, leave her and divorce her away." On hearing this `A'ishah must have felt miserable in her bed, and must have developed the severest feeling of hatred against him. There were also moments when distinction was conferred on Amir al-mu'minin in preference to Abu Bakr. For instance, in connection with the dispatch of the Qur'anic verses on Bara'ah (innocence), the Prophet removed Abu Bakr from the job, recalled him and assigned it to Amir al-mu'minin saying that he had been commanded by Allah to take it himself or send it through a member of his family. Similarly the Prophet closed all the doors opening into the mosque including that of Abu Bakr but allowed the door of Amir al-mu'minin's house to continue to open thereinto.

`A'ishah could not relish Amir al-mu'minin's distinction over her father, and whenever there was any occasion for such distinction she did her best to undo it. When in his last days the Prophet ordered the contingent under Usamah ibn Zayd to march, and ordered Abu Bakr and `Umar also to go under his command, they received a message from the wives of the Prophet that his condition was serious and therefore the contingent should come back instead of proceeding further. This was because their far-reaching sight had realised that the only purpose in getting Medina vacated by the muhajirun and the ansar could be that after the death of the Prophet no one should stand in Amir al-mu'minin's way and that he should get the caliphate without any trouble. On receipt of this message the contingent under Usamah came back. When the Prophet learnt this he again ordered Usamah to march with the contingent and even said, "Allah may curse him who keeps away from the contingent," whereupon they again set off, but they were again called back till the Prophet's illness assumed serious proportions, but Usamah's contingent did not go out as it did not want to. After this Abu Bakr was sent word through Bilal that he should deputise the Prophet in leading the prayers in order to pave the way for his Caliphateship. Accordingly, keeping this in view he was first shown as the Prophet's caliph (deputy) in prayers and eventually was accepted as his caliph for all purposes. Thereafter matters were so contrived that Amir al-mu'minin could not get the Caliphate. However, after the reign of the third caliph circumstances took such a turn that people were obliged to swear allegiance at Amir al-mu'minin's hand. On this occasion `A'ishah was present in Mecca. When she learnt about Amir al-mu'minin's caliphate her eyes began emitting flames, and rage and anger perturbed her mind, and her hatred for Amir al-mu'minin assumed such seriousness that she rose against him on the excuse of avenging blood of the same man (`Uthman) whom she had herself proclaimed fit to be killed, and openly declared war as a result of which so much

bloodshed occurred that the whole land of Basrah was smeared with the blood of those killed, and the door of disunity was opened for good. (Sharh, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 9, pp. 190-200).

Sermon 157: Praise be to Allah who made praise the Key...

Urging people towards Piety (taqwa)

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يحثّ الناس على التقوى

Praise be to Allah who made praise the Key for His remembrance, a means for increase of His bounty and a guide for His Attributes and Dignity.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الْحَمْدَ مِفْتَاحاً لِذِكْرِهِ، وَسَبَباً لِلْمَزِيدِ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ، وَدَلِيلاً عَلَى آيَاتِهِ

وَعَظْمَتِهِ.

O creatures of Allah! Time will deal with the survivors just as it dealt with those gone by. The time that has passed will not return and whatever there is in it will not stay for ever. Its later deeds are the same as the former ones. Its troubles try to excel one another. Its banners follow each other. It is as though you are attached to the last day which is driving you as rapidly as are driven the she camels which are dry for seven months. He who busies himself with things other than improvement of his own self becomes perplexed in darkness and entangled in ruination. His evil spirits immerse him deep in vices and make his bad actions appear handsome. Paradise is the end of those who are forward (in good acts) and Hell is the end of those who commit excesses.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّ الدَّهْرَ يَجْرِي بِالْبَاقِيْنَ كَجَزِيهِ بِالْمَاضِيْنَ، لَا يَعُودُ مَا قَدْ وَلَّى مِنْهُ، وَلَا يَبْقَى سَرْمَداً مَا فِيهِ. آخِرُ فَعَالِهِ كَأَوَّلِهِ، مُتَسَابِقَةٌ أُمُورُهُ، مُتَظَاهِرَةٌ أَعْلَامُهُ. فَكَأَنَّكُمْ بِالسَّاعَةِ تَحْدُوكُمْ حَدَوَالرَّاجِرِ بِشَوْلِهِ، فَمَنْ شَعَلَ نَفْسَهُ بِعَبْرِ نَفْسِهِ تَحَيَّرَ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ، وَارْتَبَكَ فِي الْهَلَكَاتِ، وَمَدَّتْ بِهِ شَيْطَانِيَهُ فِي طُعْيَانِهِ، وَزَيَّنَتْ لَهُ سَيِّئَ أَعْمَالِهِ، فَالْجَنَّةُ غَايَةُ السَّابِقِينَ، وَالنَّارُ غَايَةُ الْمُمْرِطِينَ.

Know, O creatures of Allah, that piety is a strong house of protection while impiety is a weak house which does not protect its people, and does not give security to him who takes refuge therein. Know that the sting of sins is cut by piety and the final aim is achieved by conviction of belief.

اعْلَمُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، أَنَّ التَّقْوَى دَارٌ حِصْنٌ عَزِيزٌ، وَالْفُجُورُ دَارٌ حِصْنٌ ذَلِيلٌ، لَا يَمْتَنِعُ أَهْلُهُ،

وَلَا يُحْرِزُ مَنْ لَجَأَ إِلَيْهِ. أَلَا وَبِالتَّقْوَى تُفْطَعُ حُمَةُ الخَطَايَا، وَبِالْيَقِينِ تُدْرِكُ الغَايَةَ الْمَقْصُومَى.

O creatures of Allah! (Fear) Allah, (fear) Allah, in the matter of your own selves, which are the most beloved and dear to you, because Allah has clarified to you the way of truthfulness and lighted its paths. So (you may choose) either ever-present misfortune or eternal happiness. You should therefore provide in these mortal days for the eternal days. You have been informed of the provision, ordered to march and told to make haste in setting off. You are like staying riders who do not know when they would

be ordered to march on. Beware, what will he, who has been created for the next world, do with this world? What will a person do with wealth which he would shortly be deprived of while only its ill effects and reckoning would be left behind for him?

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اللَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي أَعْرَ الْأَنْفُسِ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَأَحَبِّهَا إِلَيْكُمْ؛ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَوْضَحَ سَبِيلَ الْحَقِّ
وَأَنَارَ طُرُقَهُ، فَشَقِوْهُ لِأَزْمَةٍ، أَوْ سَعَادَةٍ دَائِمَةٍ! فَتَزَوَّدُوا فِي أَيَّامِ الْفَنَاءِ لِأَيَّامِ الْبَقَاءِ. قَدْ ذُلْتُمْ عَلَى
الرَّادِ، وَأَمْرُكُمْ بِالظُّعْنِ، وَخُيِّتُمْ عَلَى الْمَسِيرِ، فَإِنَّمَا أَنْتُمْ كَرَكِبٌ وَفُوفٌ، لَا يَدْرُونَ مَتَى يُؤْمَرُونَ
بِالسَّيْرِ، أَلَا فَمَا يَصْنَعُ بِالْدُنْيَا مَنْ خُلِقَ لِلْآخِرَةِ! وَمَا يَصْنَعُ بِالْمَالِ مَنْ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ يُسَلَّبُهُ،
وَتَبَقَى عَلَيْهِ تَبَعْتُهُ وَحِسَابُهُ!

O creatures of Allah! The good which Allah has promised should not be abandoned and the evil from which He has refrained should not be coveted. O creatures of Allah! Fear the day when actions will be reckoned; there will be much quaking and even children will get old.

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لِمَا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ مَتْرُكٌ، وَلَا فِيمَا نَهَى عَنْهُ مِنَ الشَّرِّ مَرْعَبٌ. عِبَادَ
اللَّهِ، اخْذَرُوا يَوْمًا تُفْحَصُ فِيهِ الْأَعْمَالُ، وَيَكْتُرُ فِيهِ الزَّلْزَالُ، وَتَشِيبُ فِيهِ الْأَطْفَالُ.

Know, O creatures of Allah, that your own self is a guard over you; limbs are watchmen and truthful vigil-keepers who preserve (the record of) your actions and the numbers of your breaths. The gloom of the dark night cannot conceal you from them, nor can closed doors hide you from them. Surely tomorrow is close to today.

اعْلَمُوا، عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، أَنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ رَصَدًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَعُيُونًا مِنْ جَوَارِحِكُمْ، وَحَفَاطَ صِدْقٍ
يَحْفَظُونَ أَعْمَالَكُمْ، وَعَدَدَ أَنْفَاسِكُمْ، لَا تَسْتُرُكُمْ مِنْهُمْ ظُلْمَةُ لَيْلٍ دَاجٍ، وَلَا يُكِنُّكُمْ مِنْهُمْ بَابُ
دُورَتَاجٍ، وَإِنَّ غَدًا مِنَ الْيَوْمِ قَرِيبٌ.

Today will depart with all that it has and tomorrow will come in its wake. It is as though every one of you has reached that place on earth where he would be alone, namely the location of his grave. So, what to say of the lonely house, the solitary place of staying and the solitary exile. It is as though the cry (of the Horn) has reached you, the Hour has overtaken you and you have come out (of your graves) for the passing of judgement. (The curtains of) falsehood have been removed from you and your excuses have become weak. The truth about you has been proved. All your matters have proceeded to their consequences. Therefore. you should (now) take counsel from examples, learn lessons from vicissitudes and take advantage of the warners.

يَذْهَبُ الْيَوْمُ بِمَا فِيهِ، وَيَجِيءُ الْعَدُوُّ لَأَحَقَّ بِهِ، فَكَأَنَّ كُلَّ امْرِئٍ مِنْكُمْ قَدْ بَلَغَ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ
مَنْزِلَ وَحْدَتِهِ، وَحَطَّ حُفْرَتَهُ، فَيَأْتِيهِ مِنْ بَيْتِ وَحْدَةٍ، وَمَنْزِلَ وَحْشَتِهِ، وَمُفْرَدِ غُرْبَتِهِ! وَكَأَنَّ الصَّيْحَةَ
قَدْ أَتَتْكُمْ، وَالسَّاعَةَ قَدْ عَشَيْتُمْ، وَبَرَزْتُمْ لِفَصْلِ الْقَضَاءِ، قَدْ رَاحَتْ عَنْكُمْ الْأَبَاطِيلُ،

وَاضْمَحَلَّتْ عَنْكُمْ الْعِلْلُ، وَاسْتَحَقَّتْ بِكُمْ الْحَقَائِقُ، وَصَدَرَتْ بِكُمْ الْأُمُورُ مَصَادِرَهَا، فَاتَّعِظُوا
بِالْعِبَرِ، وَاعْتَبِرُوا بِالْغَيْرِ، وَأَنْتَفِعُوا بِالنُّدْرِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 157

- (1) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, II, 510 (sh.w.l);*
- (2) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 97;*
- (3) *al-Wasiti, `Uyun al-hikam, see Bihar, vol. XVII, 113.*

Sermon 158: Allah deputed the Prophet (S) at a time...

About the Holy Prophet and the Holy Qur'an

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

ينبّه فيها على فضل الرسول الاعظم، وفضل القرآن، ثم حال دولة بني أمية

Allah deputed the Prophet (S) at a time when there had been no prophets for some time. People had been in slumber for a long time and the twist of the rope had loosened. The Prophet came with (a Book containing) testification to what (books) were already there and also with a light to be followed. It is the Qur'an. If you ask it to speak it won't do so; but I will tell you about it. Know that it contains knowledge of what is to come about, stories of the past, cure for your ills and regulation for whatever faces you.

أَرْسَلَهُ عَلَى حِينِ فِتْرَةٍ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ، وَطُولِ هَجْعَةٍ مِنَ الْأُمَمِ، وَأَنْتِقَاضِ مِنَ الْمُبْرَمِ، فَجَاءَهُمْ بِتَصْدِيقِ الَّذِي بَيَّنَّ يَدَيْهِ، وَالنُّورِ الْمُفْتَدَى بِهِ. ذَلِكَ الْقُرْآنُ فَاسْتَنْطِقُوهُ، وَلَكِنْ يَنْطِقْ، وَلَكِنْ أُخْبِرْكُمْ عَنْهُ: أَلَا إِنَّ فِيهِ عِلْمَ مَا يَأْتِي، وَالْحَدِيثَ عَنِ الْمَاضِي، وَدَوَاءَ دَائِكُمْ، وَنَظْمَ مَا بَيْنَكُمْ.

A part of the same sermon about the autocracy of the Umayyads

منها: في دولة بني أمية

At that time there will remain no house or tent but oppressors would inflict it with grief and inject sickness in it. On that day no one in the sky will listen to their excuse and no one on the earth will come to their help. You selected for the governance (caliphate) one who is not fit for it, and you raised him to a position which was not meant for him. Shortly Allah will take revenge from every one who has oppressed, food for food and drink for drink, namely (they will be given) colocynth for eating, myrrh and aloes for drinking, and fear for an inner and the sword for an outer covering.

فَعِنْدَ ذَلِكَ لَا يَبْقَى بَيْتٌ مَدْرٍ وَلَا وَبَرٍ إِلَّا وَأَدْخَلَهُ الظُّلْمَةُ تَرْحَةً، وَأَوْجُوا فِيهِ نِقْمَةً، فَيَوْمَئِذٍ لَا يَبْقَى لَهُمْ فِي السَّمَاءِ عَازِرٌ، وَلَا فِي الْأَرْضِ نَاصِرٌ. أَصْفَيْتُمْ بِالْأَمْرِ غَيْرَ أَهْلِهِ، وَأَوْرَدْتُمُوهُ غَيْرَ مَوْرِدِهِ، وَسَيَبْتَلِقُمُ اللَّهُ مَنُّ ظَلَمٍ، مَا كَلَّا بِمَا كَلَّ، وَمَشْرَبًا بِمَا شَرَبَ، مِنْ مَطَاعِمِ الْعَلَقَمِ، وَمَشَارِبِ الصَّبْرِ وَالْمَقْرِ، وَلِبَاسِ شِعَارِ الْخَوْفِ، وَدِنَارِ السَّيْفِ

They are nothing but carrier-beasts laden with sins and camels laden with evil deeds. I swear and again swear that the Umayyads will have to spit out the caliphate as phlegm is spat and thereafter they will never taste it nor relish its flavour so long as day and night rotate.

وَإِنَّمَا هُمْ مَطَايَا الْخَطِيئَاتِ وَرَوَامِلُ الْأَثَامِ. فَأُقْسِمُ، ثُمَّ أُقْسِمُ، لَنْتَحَمَّهَا أُمِّيَّةٌ مِنْ بَعْدِي كَمَا

تُلْفِظُ النَّحَامَةُ، ثُمَّ لَا تَذُوقُهَا وَلَا تَطْعَمُ بِطَعْمِهَا أَبَدًا مَا كَرَّ الْجَدِيدَانِ

Alternative Sources for Sermon 158

- (1) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, (^a.dh.r, m.q.r and n.kh.m) I, 46, III, 198, IV, 347, V, 34;*
(2) *al-Kulayni, Rawdah, 62;*
(3) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 173.*

Sermon 159: I lived as a good neighbour to you...

Good behaviour with his subjects and ignoring their faults

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يبين فيها حسن معاملته لرعيته

I lived as a good neighbour to you and tried my best to look after you, and I freed you from the snare of humbleness and the fetters of oppression through my gratefulness for the little good (from your side) and closed my eyes to your many misdeeds which my eyes had observed and my body had witnessed.

وَلَقَدْ أَحْسَنْتُ جَوَارِكُمْ، وَأَحْطْتُ بِجُهِدِي مِنْ وِرَائِكُمْ، وَأَعْتَفْتُكُمْ مِنْ رَبِّ الدُّلِّ، وَحَلَقِي الضَّيِّمِ، شُكْرًا مِثِّي لِلْبَرِّ الْقَلِيلِ، وَإِطْرَاقًا عَمَّا أَدْرَكَهُ الْبَصَرُ، وَشَهْدَةً الْبَدَنُ، مِنَ الْمُنْكَرِ الْكَثِيرِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 159

No sources mentioned.

Sermon 160: Allah's verdict is judicious...

Praise of Allah

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

Allah's verdict is judicious and full of wisdom. His pleasure implies protection and mercy. He decides with knowledge and forgives with forbearance.

أَمْرُهُ قَضَاءٌ وَحِكْمَةٌ، وَرِضَاهُ أَمَانٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ، يَفْضِي بِعِلْمٍ، وَيَعْفُو بِجَلْمٍ.

O My God! Praise be to Thee for what Thou takest and givest and for that from which Thou curest or with which Thou afflictest; praise which is the most acceptable to Thee, the most liked by Thee and the most dignified before Thee; praise which fills all Thy creation and reaches where Thou desirest; praise which is not veiled from Thee and does not end, and whose continuity does not cease.

اللَّهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ عَلَى مَا تَأْخُذُ وَتُعْطِي، وَعَلَى مَا تُعَافِي وَتَبْتَلِي. حَمْدًا يَكُونُ أَرْضَى الْحَمْدِ لَكَ، وَأَحَبَّ الْحَمْدِ إِلَيْكَ، وَأَفْضَلَ الْحَمْدِ عِنْدَكَ. حَمْدًا يَمَلَأُ مَا خَلَقْتَ، وَيَبْلُغُ مَا أَرَدْتَ. حَمْدًا لَا يُجْجَبُ عَنْكَ، وَلَا يُقْصَرُ دُونَكَ. حَمْدًا لَا يَنْقَطِعُ عَدَدُهُ، وَلَا يَفْنَى مَدَدُهُ.

Greatness of Allah

We do not know the reality of Thy greatness except that we know that Thou art 'Ever-living and Self-subsisting by Whom all things subsist. Drowsiness or sleep does not overtake Thee' (ref. 2:255), vision does not reach Thee and sight does not grasp Thee. Thou seest the eyes and countest the ages. Thou holdest (people as slaves) "...by foreheads and feet" (55:41).

We see Thy creation and wonder over it because of Thy might, and describe it as (a result of) Thy great authority; whereas what is hidden from us, of which our sight has fallen short, which our intelligence has not attained, and between which and ourselves curtains of the unknown have been cast, is far greater.

فَلَسْنَا نَعْلَمُ كُنْهَ عَظَمَتِكَ إِلَّا أَنَّا نَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ: حَيٌّ قَيُّومٌ، لَا تَأْخُذُكَ سِنَّةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ، لَمْ يَنْتَهَ إِلَيْكَ نَظْرٌ، وَلَمْ يُدْرِكْكَ بَصَرٌ، أَدْرَكَتْ الْأَبْصَارُ، وَأَحْصَيْتِ الْأَعْمَالَ، وَأَخَذْتَ (بِالتَّوَاصِي وَالْأَقْدَامِ)، وَمَا الَّذِي نَرَى مِنْ خَلْقِكَ، وَنَعَجِبُ لَهُ مِنْ قُدْرَتِكَ، وَنَصِفُهُ مِنْ عَظِيمِ سُلْطَانِكَ، وَمَا تَعَيَّبَ عَنَّا مِنْهُ، وَقَصُرَتْ أَبْصَارُنَا عَنْهُ، وَانْتَهَتْ عُقُولُنَا دُونَهُ، وَحَالَتِ سَوَائِرُ الْعُيُوبِ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُ أَعْظَمُ.

He who frees his heart (from all other engagements) and exerts his thinking in order to know how Thou established Thy throne, how Thou created Thy creatures, how Thou suspended the air in Thy skies and how Thou spread Thy earth on the waves of water, his eyes would return tired, his intelligence defeated, his ears eager and his thinking awander.

فَمَنْ فَرَعَ قَلْبَهُ، وَأَعْمَلَ فِكْرَهُ، لِيَعْلَمَ كَيْفَ أَقَمْتَ عَرْشَكَ، وَكَيْفَ ذَرَأْتَ خَلْقَكَ، وَكَيْفَ عَلَّمْتَ فِي الْهَوَاءِ سَمَاوَاتِكَ، وَكَيْفَ مَدَدْتَ عَلَى مَوْرِ الْمَاءِ أَرْضَكَ، رَجَعَ طَرْفُهُ حَسِيراً، وَعَقْلُهُ مَبْهُوراً، وَسَمِعَهُ وَالْهَاءَ، وَفِكْرَهُ حَائِراً .

A part of the same sermon about hope and fear in Allah

منها: كيف يكون الرجاء

He claims according to his own thinking that he hopes from Allah. By Allah, the Great, he speaks a lie. The position is that his hope (in Allah) does not appear through his action although the hope of every one who hopes is known through his action. Every hope is so, except the hope in Allah, the Sublime, if it is impure; and every fear is established except the fear for Allah if it is unreal.

يَدْعِي بِرُغْمِهِ أَنَّهُ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ، كَذَبَ وَالْعَظِيمِ! مَا بَالُهُ لَا يَتَّبِعُنِي رَجَاؤُهُ فِي عَمَلِهِ؟ فَكُلُّ مَنْ رَجَا عُرْفَ رَجَاؤُهُ فِي عَمَلِهِ، وَكُلُّ رَجَاءٍ . إِلَّا رَجَاءَ اللَّهِ . فَإِنَّهُ مَدْحُولٌ، وَكُلُّ خَوْفٍ مُحَقَّقٌ، إِلَّا خَوْفَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهُ مَعْلُولٌ.

He hopes big things from Allah and small things from men but he gives to man (such consideration as) he does not give to Allah. What is the matter with Allah, glorified be His praise? He is accorded less (consideration) than what is given to His creatures. Do you ever fear to be false in your hope in Allah? Or do you not regard Him the centre of your hope?

Similarly, if a man fears man he gives him (such consideration) out of his fear which he does not give to Allah. Thus, he has made his fear for men ready currency while his fear from the Creator is mere deferment or promise. This is the case of every one in whose eye this world appears big (and important) and in whose heart its position is great. He prefers it over Allah, so he inclines towards it, and becomes its devotee.

يَرْجُو اللَّهَ فِي الْكَبِيرِ، وَيَرْجُو الْعِبَادَ فِي الصَّغِيرِ، فَيُعْطِي الْعَبْدَ مَا لَا يُعْطِي الرَّبَّ! فَمَا بَالُ اللَّهِ جَلَّ تَنَاؤُهُ يُقَصِّرُ بِهِ عَمَّا يُصْنَعُ بِهِ بَعَادِهِ؟ أَتَخَافُ أَنْ تَكُونَ فِي رَجَائِكَ لَهُ كَاذِباً؟ أَوْ تَكُونَ لَا تَرَاهُ لِلرَّجَاءِ مَوْضِعاً؟ وَكَذَلِكَ إِنْ هُوَ خَافَ عَبْدًا مِنْ عِبِيدِهِ، أَعْطَاهُ مِنْ خَوْفِهِ مَا لَا يُعْطِي رَبَّهُ، فَجَعَلَ خَوْفَهُ مِنَ الْعِبَادِ نَقْدًا، وَخَوْفَهُ مِنْ خَالِقِهِ ضِمَارًا وَوَعْدًا، وَكَذَلِكَ مَنْ عَظُمَتْ الدُّنْيَا فِي عَيْنِهِ، وَكَبُرَ مَوْضِعُهَا مِنْ قَلْبِهِ، آثَرَهَا عَلَى اللَّهِ، فَانْقَطَعَ إِلَيْهَا، وَصَارَ عَبْدًا لَهَا.

The example of the Holy Prophet

رسول الله (ﷺ)

Certainly, in the Prophet of Allah (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his progeny) was sufficient example for you and a proof concerning the vices of the world, its defects, the multitude of its disgraces and its evils, because its sides had been constrained for him, while its flanks had been spread for others; he was deprived of its milk and turned away from its adornments.

وَلَقَدْ كَانَ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) كَاف لَكَ فِي الْأُسْوَةِ، وَدَلِيلٌ لَكَ عَلَى دَمِّ الدُّنْيَا وَعَيْبِهَا، وَكَثْرَةَ مَخَازِبِهَا وَمَسَاوِيهَا، إِذْ قُبِضَتْ عَنْهُ أَطْرَافُهَا، وَوُطِّقَتْ لِغَيْرِهِ أَكْنَافُهَا، وَفُطِمَ مِنْ رِضَاعِهَا، وَزُويَ عَنْ رِخَائِهَا.

The example of Musa (Moses)

موسى (عليه السلام)

If you want, I will, as a second example, relate to you concerning Musa, the Interlocutor of Allah (p.b.u.h.) when he said:

O' Allah! I need whatever good Thou mayest grant me (Qur'an, 28:24).

By Allah, he asked Him only for bread to eat because he was used to eating the herbs of the earth, and the greenness of the herbs could be seen from the delicate skin of his belly due to his thinness and paucity of his flesh.

وَإِنْ شِئْتَ تَنَبَّأْتُ بِمُوسَى كَلِيمِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) إِذْ يَقُولُ: (رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ)، وَاللَّهُ، مَا سَأَلَهُ إِلَّا حُبْرًا يَأْكُلُهُ، لِإِنَّهُ كَانَ يَأْكُلُ بِقَلَّةِ الْأَرْضِ، وَلَقَدْ كَانَتْ حُضْرَةُ الْبَقْلِ تُرَى مِنْ شَفِيفِ صِقَاقِ بَطْنِهِ، لَهُزَالِهِ وَتَشَدُّبِ لَحْمِهِ

The example of Dawud (David)

داوود (عليه السلام)

If you desire I can give you a third example of Dawud (p.b.u.h.). He is the holder of the Psalms and the reciter among the people of Paradise. He used to prepare baskets of date palm leaves with his own hands and would say to his companions: "Which of you will help me by purchasing it?" He used to eat barley bread (bought) out of its price.

وَإِنْ شِئْتَ تَلْتَثُّ بِدَاوُودَ صَاحِبِ الْمَزَامِيرِ، وَقَارِيءِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ، فَلَقَدْ كَانَ يَعْمَلُ سَفَائِفَ الْحُوصِ بِيَدِهِ، وَيَقُولُ لِجُلَسَائِهِ: أَيُّكُمْ يَكْفِينِي بَيْعَهَا! وَيَأْكُلُ قُرْصَ الشَّعِيرِ مِنْ تَمَرِهَا.

The example of `Isa (Jesus)

عيسى (عليه السلام)

If you desire I will tell you about `Isa (p.b.u.h.) son of Maryam (Mary). He used a stone for his pillow, put on coarse clothes and ate rough food. His condiment was hunger. His lamp at night was the moon. His shade during the winter was just the expanse of earth eastward and westward. His fruits and flowers were only what grows from the earth for the cattle. He had no wife to allure him, nor any son to give grief, nor wealth to deviate (his attention), nor greed to disgrace him. His two feet were his conveyance and his two hands his servant.

وَإِنْ شِئْتَ قُلْتُ فِي عِيسَى بْنِ مَرْيَمَ (عليه السلام)، فَلَقَدْ كَانَ يَتَوَسَّدُ الْحَجَرَ، وَيَلْبَسُ الْحَشِينَ، وَيَأْكُلُ الْجَشِيبَ، وَكَانَ إِدَامُهُ الْجُوعَ، وَسِرَّاجُهُ بِاللَّيْلِ الْقَمَرَ، وَظِلَالُهُ فِي الشِّتَاءِ

مَشَارِقِ الْأَرْضِ وَمَعَارِبِهَا، وَفَاكِهَتُهُ وَرَبِحَاتُهُ مَا تُنْبِتُ الْأَرْضُ لِلْبَهَائِمِ، وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ زَوْجَةٌ تَفْتِنُهُ،
وَلَا وَدَّ يَحْزُنُهُ، وَلَا مَالٌ يَلْفِتُهُ، وَلَا طَمَعٌ يُذِلُّهُ، ذَابَتْهُ رِجَالُهُ، وَخَادِمُهُ يَدَاهُ!

Following the example of the Holy Prophet

الرسول الاعظم (صلى الله عليه وآله)

You should follow your Prophet, the pure, the chaste, may Allah bless him and his descendants. In him is the example for the follower, and the consolation for the seeker of consolation. The most beloved person before Allah is he who follows His Prophet and who treads in his footsteps. He took the least (share) from this world and did not take a full glance at it. Of all the people of the world he was the least satiated and the most empty of stomach.

The world was offered to him but he refused to accept it. When he knew that Allah, the Glorified, hated a thing, he too hated it; that Allah held a thing low, he too held it low; that Allah held a thing small, he too held it small. If we love what Allah and His Prophet hate and hold great what Allah and His Prophet hold small, that would be enough isolation from Allah and transgression of His commands.

فَتَأَسَّ بِنَبِيِّكَ الْأَطْيَبِ الْأَطْهَرِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَإِنَّ فِيهِ أُسْوَةٌ لِمَنْ تَأَسَّى، وَعَزَاءٌ لِمَنْ
تَعَزَّى . وَأَحَبُّ الْعِبَادِ إِلَى اللَّهِ الْمُتَأَسِّي بِنَبِيِّهِ، وَالْمُقْتَصِ لِأَثَرِهِ . فَضَمَّ الدُّنْيَا قَضَمًا، وَلَمْ يُعْرِزْهَا
طَرْفًا، أَهْضَمَ أَهْلَ الدُّنْيَا كَشْحًا، وَأَحْمَصَهُمْ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا بَطْنًا، عُرِضَتْ عَلَيْهِ الدُّنْيَا فَأَبَى أَنْ
يُقْبَلَهَا، وَعَلِمَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ أَبْغَضَ شَيْئًا فَأَبْغَضَهُ، وَحَقَّرَ شَيْئًا فَحَقَّرَهُ، وَصَغَّرَ شَيْئًا فَصَغَّرَهُ.
وَلَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِينَا إِلَّا حُبُّنَا مَا أَبْغَضَ اللَّهُ، وَتَعْظِيمُنَا مَا صَغَّرَ اللَّهُ، لَكَفَى بِهِ شِقَاقًا لِلَّهِ، وَتُحَادَّةً
عَنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ.

The Prophet used to (sit and) eat on the ground, and sit like a slave. He repaired his shoe with his own hands, and patched his clothes with his own hands. He would ride an unsaddled ass and would seat someone behind him. If there was a curtain on his door with pictures on it he would say to one of his wives. "O such-and-such, take it away out of my sight because if I look at it I recall the world and its allurements."

Thus, he removed his heart from this world and destroyed its remembrance from his mind. He loved that its allurements should remain hidden from his eye so that he should not secure good dress from it, should not regard it a place of stay and should not hope to live in it. Consequently, he removed it from his mind, let it go away from his heart and kept it hidden from his eyes, just as a person who hates a thing hates to look at it or to hear about it.

وَلَقَدْ كَانَ (صلى الله عليه وآله) يَأْكُلُ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ، وَيَجْلِسُ جَلْسَةَ الْعَبْدِ، وَيَخْصِفُ بِيَدِهِ
نَعْلَهُ، وَيَرْفَعُ بِيَدِهِ ثَوْبَهُ، وَيَرْكَبُ الْحِمَارَ الْعَارِي، وَيُؤَدِّفُ حَلْفَهُ، وَيَكُونُ السِّتْرُ عَلَى بَابِ بَيْتِهِ
فَتَكُونُ فِيهِ التَّصَاوِيرُ فَيَقُولُ: " يَا فَلَانَةُ . لِأَحَدَى أَرْوَاجِهِ . عَيْبِيهِ عَيْتِي، فَإِنِّي إِذَا نَظَرْتُ إِلَيْهِ

ذَكَرْتُ الدُّنْيَا وَرَحَارِفَهَا". فَأَعْرَضَ عَنِ الدُّنْيَا بِقَلْبِهِ، وَأَمَاتَ ذِكْرَهَا مِنْ نَفْسِهِ، وَأَحَبَّ أَنْ تَغِيبَ زِينَتُهَا عَنْ عَيْنِهِ، لِكَيْلَا يَتَّخِذَ مِنْهَا رِيَاشاً، وَلَا يَعْتَقِدَهَا قَرَاراً، وَلَا يَرْجُو فِيهَا مَقَاماً، فَأَخْرَجَهَا مِنَ النَّفْسِ، وَأَشْحَصَهَا عَنِ الْقَلْبِ، وَعَغَبَهَا عَنِ الْبَصَرِ. وَكَذَلِكَ مَنْ أَبْغَضَ شَيْئاً أَبْغَضَ أَنْ يَنْظُرَ إِلَيْهِ، وَأَنْ يُذَكَّرَ عِنْدَهُ.

Certainly there was in the Prophet of Allah all that would apprise you of the evils of this world and its defects, namely that he remained hungry along with his chief companions, and despite his tremendous station and nearness (to Allah), the allurements of the world remained remote from him. Now, one should see with one's intelligence whether Allah honoured Muhammad (the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his descendants) as a result of this or disgraced him. If he says that Allah disgraced him, he certainly lies and perpetrates a great untruth. If he says Allah honoured him, he should know that Allah dishonoured the others when He extended the (benefits of the) world for him but held them away from him who was the nearest to Him of all men.

وَلَقَدْ كَانَ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) مَا يُدُلُّكَ عَلَى مَسَاوِيءِ الدُّنْيَا وَعُيُوبِهَا: إِذْ جَاعَ فِيهَا مَعَ حَاصَتِهِ، وَزُوِيَتْ عَنْهُ رَحَارِفُهَا مَعَ عَظِيمِ زُلْفَتِهِ. فَلْيَنْظُرْ نَاطِرٌ بِعَقْلِهِ: أَكْرَمَ اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدًا (عليه السلام) بِذَلِكَ أَمْ أَهَانَهُ! فَإِنْ قَالَ: أَهَانَهُ، فَقَدْ كَذَبَ. وَاللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ. وَإِنْ قَالَ: أَكْرَمَهُ، فَلْيَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَهَانَ غَيْرَهُ حَيْثُ بَسَطَ الدُّنْيَا لَهُ، وَزَوَّاهَا عَنْ أَقْرَبِ النَّاسِ مِنْهُ.

Therefore, one should follow His Prophet, tread in his footsteps and enter through his entrance. Otherwise he will not be safe from ruin. Certainly, Allah made Muhammad (the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants) a sign for the Day of Judgement. a conveyor of tidings for Paradise and a warner of retribution.

He left this world hungry but entered upon the next world safe. He did not lay one stone upon another (to make a house) till he departed and responded to the call of Allah. How great is Allah's blessing in that He blessed us with the Prophet as a predecessor whom we follow and a leader behind whom we tread.

فَتَأْسَى مُتَأَسِّ بِنَبِيِّهِ، وَافْتَصَّ أَثَرَهُ، وَوَجَّ مَوْجِيَهُ، وَإِلَّا فَلَا يَأْمَنُ الْهَلَكَةَ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ جَعَلَ مُحَمَّدًا (صلى الله عليه وآله) عَلَمًا لِلْسَّاعَةِ، وَمُبَشِّرًا بِالْجَنَّةِ، وَمُنذِرًا بِالْعُقُوبَةِ. خَرَجَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا حَمِيصاً، وَوَرَدَ الْأَخِرَةَ سَلِيماً، لَمْ يَضَعْ حَجْرًا عَلَى حَجْرٍ، حَتَّى مَضَى لِسَبِيلِهِ، وَأَجَابَ دَاعِيَ رَبِّهِ، فَمَا أَعْظَمَ مِنَّةَ اللَّهِ عِنْدَنَا حِينَ أَنْعَمَ عَلَيْنَا بِهِ سَلَفًا نَتَّبِعُهُ، وَقَائِدًا نَطَأُ عَقْبَهُ.

The example of himself

By Allah, I have been putting patches in my shirts so much that now I feel shy of the patcher. Someone asked me whether I would not put it off, but I said, "Get away from me." Only in the morning do people (realise the advantage of and) speak highly of the night journey.

وَاللّٰهُ لَقَدْ رَفَعْتُ مِدْرَعَتِيْ هَذِهِ حَتّٰى اسْتَحْيَيْتُ مِنْ رَاقِعِيْهَا، وَلَقَدْ قَالَ لِىْ قَائِلٌ: اَلَا تَنْبِذُهَا؟
فَقُلْتُ: اَعْرُبْ عَنِّيْ، فَعِنْدَ الصَّبّٰحِ يَحْمَدُ الْقَوْمُ السُّرَى .

Alternative Sources for Sermon 160

(1) *Al-Zamakhshari, Rabi', bab al-ya's wa al-qana`ah*

Sermon 161: Allah deputed the Prophet with a sparkling light...

Deputation of the Holy Prophet

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)
في صفة النبي وأهل بيته وأتباع دينه
وفيها يعظ بالتقوى

Allah deputed the Prophet with a sparkling light, a clear argument, an open path and a guiding book. His tribe is the best tribe and his lineal tree the best lineal tree whose branches are in good proportion and fruits hanging (in plenty). His birth-place was Mecca, and the place of his immigration Taybah (Medina), from where his name rose high and his voice spread far and wide.

ابْتَعَثَهُ بِالنُّورِ الْمُضِيِّ، وَالْبُرْهَانَ الْجَلِيِّ، وَالْمِنْهَاجَ الْبَادِي، وَالْكِتَابَ الْهَادِي. أُسْرَتْهُ خَيْرُ
أُسْرَةٍ، وَشَجَرَتْهُ خَيْرُ شَجَرَةٍ، أَغْصَانُهَا مُعَدِّلَةٌ، وَثَمَارُهَا مُتَهَدِلَةٌ. مَوْلِدُهُ بِمَكَّةَ، وَهَجْرَتْهُ بِطَيْبَةَ،
عَلَا بِهَا ذِكْرُهُ، وَامْتَدَّ مِنْهَا صَوْتُهُ.

Allah sent him with a sufficing plea, a convincing discourse and a rectifying announcement. Through him Allah disclosed the ways that had been forsaken, and destroyed the innovations that had been introduced. Through him He explained the detailed commands. Now,

“..whoever adopts a religion other than Islam” (3:85),

his misery is definite, his stick (of support) will be cracked, his fate will be serious, his end will be long grief and distressing punishment. I trust in Allah, the trust of bending towards Him, and I seek His guidance for the way that leads to His Paradise and takes to the place of His pleasure.

أَرْسَلَهُ بِحُجَّةٍ كَافِيَةٍ، وَمَوْعِظَةٍ شَافِيَةٍ، وَدَعْوَةٍ مُتَلَافِيَةٍ. أَظْهَرَ بِهِ الشَّرَائِعَ الْمَجْهُولَةَ، وَقَمَعَ
بِهِ الْبِدْعَ الْمَدْخُولَةَ، وَبَيَّنَّ بِهِ الْأَحْكَامَ الْمَفْصُولَةَ. (مَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا) تَتَحَقَّقُ
شِقْوَتُهُ، وَتَنْقَضِمُ عُزْوَتُهُ، وَتَعْظُمُ كِبْوَتُهُ، وَيَكُنُّ مَأْبَهُ إِلَى الْحُزْنِ الطَّوِيلِ وَالْعَذَابِ الْوَبِيلِ. وَأَتَوَكَّلُ
عَلَى اللَّهِ تَوَكُّلَ الْإِنَابَةِ إِلَيْهِ، وَأَسْتَرْشِدُهُ السَّبِيلَ الْمُوَدِّيَّةَ إِلَى جَنَّتِهِ، الْقَاصِدَةَ إِلَى مَحَلِّ رَغْبَتِهِ.

Drawing lessons from this world (and counseling piety)

النصح بالتقوى

I advise you, O creatures of Allah, to exercise fear of Allah and to obey Him because it is salvation tomorrow and deliverance for ever. He warned (you of chastisement) and did so thoroughly. He persuaded (you towards virtues) and did so fully. He described this world, its cutting away from you, its decay and its shifting. Therefore, keep aloof from its attractions, because very little of it will accompany you. This house is the closest to the displeasure of Allah and the remotest from the pleasure of Allah.

أَوْصِيكُمْ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَطَاعَتِهِ، فَإِنَّهَا النَّجَاةُ عَدَاءً، وَالْمَنْجَاةُ أَبَدًا. رَهَبَ فَأَبْلَغَ،
وَرَعَبَ فَأَسْبَغَ، وَوَصَفَ لَكُمْ الدُّنْيَا وَأَنْقَطَاعَهَا، وَزَوَاهَا وَأَثْبَتَهَا. فَأَعْرِضُوا عَمَّا يُعْجِبُكُمْ فِيهَا
لِقَلَّةِ مَا يَصْحَبُكُمْ مِنْهَا، أَقْرَبُ دَارٍ مِنْ سَحَطِ اللَّهِ، وَأَبْعَدَهَا مِنْ رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ!

So close your eyes, O creatures of Allah, from its worries and engagements, because you are sure about its separation and its changing conditions. Fear it like a sincere fearer and one who struggles hard, and take a lesson from what you have seen about the falling places of those before you, namely that their joints were made to vanish, their eyes and ears were destroyed, their honour and prestige disappeared and their pleasure and wealth came to an end. The nearness of their children changed into remoteness.

The company of their spouses changed into separation with them. They do not boast over each other, nor do they beget children nor meet each other nor live as neighbours. Therefore, fear O creatures of Allah, like the fear of one who has control over himself, who can check his passions and perceive with his wisdom. Surely, the matter is quite clear, the sign is manifest, the course is level and the way is straight.

فَعُضُّوا عَنْكُمْ . عِبَادَ اللَّهِ . غُمُومَهَا وَأَشْعَا لَهَا، لِمَا قَدْ أُيِّنْتُمْ بِهِ مِنْ فِرَاقِهَا وَتَصَرُّفِ حَالَاتِهَا.
فَاخْذَرُوهَا حَدَرَ الشَّفِيقِ النَّاصِحِ، وَالْمُجِدِّ الْكَادِحِ، وَاعْتَبِرُوا بِمَا قَدْ رَأَيْتُمْ مِنْ مَصَارِعِ الْفُرُونَ
قَبْلَكُمْ: قَدْ تَزَايَلَتْ أَوْصَاهُمْ، وَزَالَتْ أَسْمَاعُهُمْ وَأَبْصَارُهُمْ، وَذَهَبَ شَرَفُهُمْ وَعِزُّهُمْ، وَأَنْقَطَعَ
سُرُورُهُمْ وَنَعِيمُهُمْ; فَبَدَّلُوا بِقُرْبِ الْأَوْلَادِ فَقَدَهَا، وَبِصُحْبَةِ الْأَزْوَاجِ مُفَارَقَتَهَا. لَا يَتَفَاخِرُونَ، وَلَا
يَتَنَاصِرُونَ، وَلَا يَتَنَاسَلُونَ، وَلَا يَتَزَاوَرُونَ، وَلَا يَتَجَاوَرُونَ. فَاخْذَرُوا، عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، حَدَرَ الْعَالِبِ
لِنَفْسِهِ، الْمَانِعِ لِشَهْوَتِهِ، النَّاطِرِ بِعَقْلِهِ; فَإِنَّ الْأَمْرَ وَاضِحٌ، وَالْعِلْمَ قَائِمٌ، وَالطَّرِيقَ جَدِّدٌ، وَالسَّبِيلَ
قَصْدٌ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 161

(1) *Al-Majlisi, Bihar, XVIII, 222.*

Sermon 162: O brother of Banu Asad...

One of Amir al-mu'minin's companions (from Banu Asad) asked him: "How was it that your tribe (Quraysh) deprived you of this position (Caliphate) although you deserved it most." Then in reply he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لبعض أصحابه وقد سأله: كيف دفعكم قومكم عن هذا المقام وأنتم أحق به؟ فقال

O brother of Banu Asad! Your girth is loose and you have put it on the wrong way. Nevertheless you enjoy in-law kinship and also the right to ask, and since you have asked, listen. As regards the dominance over us in this station (of caliphate) although we were the loftiest in lineage and the strongest in relationship with the Messenger of Allah, it was an act of appropriation by some who became greedy for it, while others relinquished it through their generosity. The Arbiter is Allah and to Him is the return on the Day of Judgement.

"Now leave this story of devastation about which there is hue and cry all round. –

And let me know the story of what happened to the riding camels" ¹

يَا أَخَا بَنِي أَسَدٍ، إِنَّكَ لَقَلْبُ الْوَضِيحِ، تُرْسِلُ فِي غَيْرِ سَدَدٍ، وَلَكَ بَعْدُ ذِمَامَةُ الصِّهْرِ، وَحَقُّ الْمَسْأَلَةِ، وَقَدْ اسْتَعْلَمْتَ فَأَعْلَمْ: أَمَا الْاسْتِبْدَادُ عَلَيْنَا بِهَذَا الْمَقَامِ وَنَحْنُ الْأَعْلَوْنَ نَسَبًا، وَالْأَشْدُونَ بِالرَّسُولِ نَوْطًا، فَإِنَّهَا كَانَتْ أَثَرَةً شَحَّتْ عَلَيْهَا نُفُوسُ قَوْمٍ، وَسَحَّتْ عَنْهَا نُفُوسُ آخَرِينَ، وَالْحُكْمُ لِلَّهِ، وَالْمَعْوَدُ إِلَيْهِ الْقِيَامَةُ.

وَدَعَّ عَنْكَ نَهْبًا صَبِيحًا فِي حَجْرَاتِهِ * وَلَكِنْ حَدِيثًا مَا حَدِيثُ الرَّوَاجِلِ

Come and look at the son of Abu Sufyan (Mu`awiyah). Time has made me laugh after making me weep. No wonder, by Allah; what is this affair which surpasses all wonder and which has increased wrongfulness. These people have tried to put out the flame of Allah's light from His lamp and to close His fountain from its source. They mixed epidemic-producing water between me and themselves. If the trying hardships were removed from among us, I would take them on the course of truthfulness, otherwise:

"... So let not thy self go (in vain) in grief for them; verily Allah knoweth all that they do." (Qur'an, 35:8)

وَهَلُمَّ الْخُطْبَ فِي ابْنِ أَبِي سُفْيَانَ، فَلَقَدْ أَضْحَكَنِي الدَّهْرُ بَعْدَ إِبْكَائِهِ، وَلَا عَرُورَ وَاللَّهِ، فَيَا لَهُ خَطْبًا يَسْتَفْرِغُ الْعَجَبَ، وَيُكْثِرُ الْأَوْدَ، حَاوَلَ الْقَوْمُ إِطْفَاءَ نَوْرِ اللَّهِ مِنْ مِصْبَاحِهِ، وَسَدَّ قَوَارِهِ مِنْ يَنْبُوعِهِ، وَجَدَحُوا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُمْ شَرْبًا وَبَيْئًا، فَإِنْ تَرْتَفَعْنَا وَعَنْهُمْ مِحْنُ الْبَلْوَى، أَحْمَلُهُمْ مِنْ الْحَقِّ عَلَى مَحْضِهِ، وَإِنْ تَكُنِ الْأُخْرَى، (فَلَا تَذْهَبُ نَفْسُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ حَسْرَاتٍ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَصْنَعُونَ).

Alternative Sources for Sermon 162

- (1) *Al-Saduq, al-'Amali, 368;*
- (2) *al-Saduq, 'Ilal, bab 119;*
- (3) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 172;*
- (4) *al-Tabari, al-Mustarshid, 64.*

Notes

1. This is a couplet of the famous Arab poet Imri'u'l-Qays al-Kindi. The incident behind this couplet is that when the father of Imri'u'l-Qays namely Hujr ibn al-Harith was killed, he roamed about the various Arab tribes to avenge his father's life with their help. In this connection he stayed with a man of Jadilah (tribe) but finding himself unsafe left that place, and stayed with Khalid ibn Sadus an-Nabhani. In the meantime a man of Jadilah named Ba'ith ibn Huways drove away some of his camels. Imri'u'l-Qays complained of this matter to his host and he asked him to send with him his she-camels then he would get back his camels.

Consequently, Khalid went to those people and asked them to return the camels of his guest which they had robbed. They said that he was neither a guest nor under his protection. Thereupon Khalid swore that he was really his guest and showed them his she-camels that he had with him. They then agreed to return the camels. But actually instead of returning the camels they drove away the she-camels as well. One version is that they did return the camels to Khalid but instead of handing them over to Imri'u'l-Qays he kept them for himself. When Imri'u'l-Qays came to know this he composed a few couplets out of which this is one. It means 'now you leave the story of these camels which were robbed but now let me know about the she-camels snatched from my hands.'

Amir al-mu'minin's intention in quoting this verse as an illustration is that "Now that Mu'awiyah is at war, we should talk about it and should leave the discussion about the devastation engendered by those who had usurped my rights. That time has gone away. Now is the time for grappling with the mischiefs of the hour. So discuss the event of the moment and do not start untimely strain." Amir al-mu'minin said this because the man had put the question to him at the time of the battle of Siffin, when the battle was raging and bloodshed was in full swing.

Sermon 163: Praise be to Allah, Creator of people...

Attributes of Allah

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

الخالق جلّ وعلا

Praise be to Allah, Creator of people; He has spread the earth. He makes streams to flow and vegetation to grow on high lands. His primality has no beginning, nor has His eternity any end. He is the First and from ever. He is the everlasting without limit. Foreheads bow before Him and lips declare His Oneness. He determined the limits of things at the time of His creating them, keeping Himself away from any likeness.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ خَالِقِ الْعِبَادِ، وَسَاطِحِ الْمِهَادِ، وَمُسِيلِ الْوَهَادِ، وَمُخْصِبِ الْجِبَادِ، لَيْسَ لِأَوْلِيَّتِهِ
أَبْدَاءٌ، وَلَا لِأَرْبَابِيَّتِهِ انْقِضَاءٌ، هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ لَمْ يَزَلْ، وَالْبَاقِي بِلَا أَجَلٍ، حَزَّتْ لَهُ الْجِبَاهُ، وَوَحَّدَتْهُ
الشِّعَاءُ، حَدَّ الْأَشْيَاءِ عِنْدَ خَلْقِهِ هَذَا إِبَانَةٌ لَهُ مِنْ شَبَهَيْهَا،

Imagination cannot surmise Him within the limits of movements limbs or senses. It cannot be said about Him: "whence"; and no time limit can be attributed to Him by saying "till". He is apparent, but it cannot be said "from what". He is hidden, but it cannot be said "in what". He is not a body which can die, nor is He veiled so as to be enclosed therein. He is not near to things by way of touch, nor is He remote from them by way of separation.

لَا تُفَدِّرُهُ الْأَوْهَامُ بِالْحُدُودِ وَالْحَرَكَاتِ، وَلَا بِالْجَوَارِحِ وَالْأَدْوَاتِ، لَا يُقَالُ لَهُ: «مَتَى؟» وَلَا
يُضْرَبُ لَهُ أَمَدٌ «بِحَتَّى»، الظَّاهِرُ لَا يُقَالُ: «مِمَّ؟» وَالْبَاطِنُ لَا يُقَالُ: «فِيهِمْ؟»، لَا شَبْحٌ
فَيَتَقَصَّى، وَلَا مَحْجُوبٌ فَيُحَوِّى، لَمْ يَفْرُبْ مِنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ بِالْبَصَاقِ، وَلَمْ يَبْعُدْ عَنْهَا بِإِفْرَاقِ،

The gazing of people's eyes is not hidden from Him, nor the repetition of words, nor the glimpse of hillocks, nor the tread of a footstep in the dark night or in the deep gloom, where the shining moon casts its light and the effulgent sun comes in its wake, through its setting and appearing again and again with the rotation of time and periods, by the approach of the advancing night or the passing away of the running day.

وَلَا يَخْفَى عَلَيْهِ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ شُحُوصٌ لِحِظَّةٍ، وَلَا كُرُورٌ لِقِظَّةٍ، وَلَا أَرْدِلَافٌ رِيوَةٍ، وَلَا انْبِسَاطُ
حُطْوَةٍ فِي لَيْلٍ دَاجٍ، وَلَا عَسَقٌ سَاجٍ، يَتَفَيَّأُ عَلَيْهِ الْقَمَرُ الْمُنِيرُ، وَتَعْقُبُهُ الشَّمْسُ دَاثُ النُّورِ فِي
الْكُرُورِ وَالْأَفْوَلِ، وَتَقْلِبُ الْأَزْمَنَةَ وَالْدُّهُورَ، مِنْ إِقْبَالِ لَيْلٍ مُقْبِلٍ، وَإِدْبَارِ نَهَارٍ مُدْبِرٍ،

He precedes every extremity and limit, and every counting and numbering. He is far above what those whose regard is limited attribute to Him, such as the qualities of measure, having extremities, living in house and dwelling in abodes, because limits are meant for creation and are attributable only to other than Allah.

قَبْلَ كُلِّ غَايَةٍ وَمُدَّةٍ، وَكُلِّ إِحْصَاءٍ وَعِدَّةٍ، تَعَالَى عَمَّا يَنْحَلُّهُ الْمُحَدِّثُونَ مِنْ صِفَاتِ
الْأَقْدَارِ وَنَهَايَاتِ الْأَقْطَارِ، وَتَأْتِلُ الْمَسَاكِينِ، وَتَمَكِّنُ الْأَمَاكِينِ؛ فَالْحُدُّ لِحَلْقِهِ مَضْرُوبٌ، وَإِلَى غَيْرِهِ
مَنْسُوبٌ .

Allah, the Originator from naught

ابتداع المخلوقين

He did not create things from eternal matter nor after ever-existing examples, but He created whatever He created and then He fixed limits thereto, and He shaped whatever He shaped and gave the best shape thereto. Nothing can disobey Him, but the obedience of something is of no benefit to Him. His knowledge about those who died in the past is the same as His knowledge about the remaining survivors, and His knowledge about whatever there is in the high skies is like His knowledge of whatever there is in the low earth.

لَمْ يَخْلُقِ الْأَشْيَاءَ مِنْ أَصُولٍ أَزَلِيَّةٍ، وَلَا مِنْ أَوَائِلٍ أَبَدِيَّةٍ، بَلْ خَلَقَ مَا خَلَقَ فَأَقَامَ حَدَّهُ،
وَصَوَّرَ مَا صَوَّرَ فَأَحْسَنَ صُورَتَهُ، لَيْسَ لِشَيْءٍ مِنْهُ امْتِنَاعٌ، وَلَا لَهُ بِطَاعَةِ شَيْءٍ انْتِفَاعٌ، عِلْمُهُ
بِالْأَمْوَاتِ الْمَاضِينَ كَعِلْمِهِ بِالْأَحْيَاءِ الْبَاقِينَ، وَعِلْمُهُ بِمَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ الْعُلَى كَعِلْمِهِ بِمَا فِي
الْأَرْضِينَ السُّفْلَى.

A part of the same sermon about man's creation, and pointing towards the requirements of life.

O creature who has been equitably created and who has been nurtured and looked after in the darkness of wombs with multiple curtains. You were originated from the essence of clay (Qur'an, 23:12) and placed in a still place for a known length (Qur'an, 77:21-22) and an ordained time. You used to move in the womb of your mother as an embryo, neither responding to a call nor hearing any voice.

أَيُّهَا الْمَخْلُوقُ السَّوِيُّ، وَالْمُنْشَأُ الْمَرْعِيُّ، فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْأَرْحَامِ، وَمُضَاعَفَاتِ الْأَسْتَارِ،
بُدِئْتَ (مِنْ سَلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ)، وَوُضِعْتَ (فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ * إِلَى قَدَرٍ مَعْلُومٍ) وَأَجَلَ مَقْسُومٍ، تَمُورُ
فِي بَطْنِ أُمِّكَ جَنِينًا لَا تُحِيرُ دُعَاءً، وَلَا تَسْمَعُ نِدَاءً،

Then you were taken out from your place of stay to a place you had not seen, and you were not acquainted with the means of acquiring its benefits. Who guided you to eke out your sustenance from the udder of your mother? And, when you were in need, who apprised you of the location of what you required or aimed at? Alas! Certainly he who is unable to understand the qualities of a being with shape and limbs is the more unable to understand the qualities of the Creator and the more remote from appreciating Him through the limitations of creatures!

تَمَّ أُخْرِجْتَ مِنْ مَقَرِّكَ إِلَى دَارٍ لَمْ تَشْهَدْهَا، وَلَمْ تُعْرِفْ سُبُلَ مَنَافِعِهَا؛ فَمَنْ هَذَاكَ لِاجْتِرَارِ
الْعِذَاءِ مِنْ تَدْيِ أُمِّكَ؟ وَعَرَّفَكَ عِنْدَ الْحَاجَةِ مَوَاضِعَ طَلْبِكَ وَإِرَادَتِكَ؟! هَيْهَاتَ، إِنَّ مَنْ يَعْجِزُ

عَنْ صِفَاتِ ذِي الْهِئَةِ وَالْأَدْوَاتِ فَهُوَ عَنْ صِفَاتِ خَالِقِهِ أَعْجَزُ، وَمِنْ تَنَاوُلِهِ بِحُدُودِ
الْمَخْلُوقِينَ أَبْعَدُ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 163

- (1) *Abu Nu`aym, Hilyah, I, 72;*
- (2) *al-Wasiti, `Uyun al-hikam, see al-Majlisi, Bihar, vol.77, p.306;*
- (3) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, bab al-mala'ikah.*

Sermon 164: The people are behind me...

When people went to Amir al-mu'minin in a deputation and complained to him through what they had to say against `Uthman, and requested him to speak to him on their behalf and to admonish him for their sake, he went to see him and said: ¹

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لما اجتمع الناس اليه وشكوا ما نقموه على عثمان وسألوه مخاطبته واستعبابه لهم،

فدخل (عليه السلام) على عثمان فقال:

The people are behind me and they have made me an ambassador between you and themselves; but by Allah, I do not know what to say to you. I know nothing (in this matter) which you do not know, nor can I lead you to any matter of which you are not aware. You certainly know what we know, we have not come to know anything before you which we could tell you; nor did we learn anything in secret which we should convey to you. You have seen as we have seen and you have heard as we have heard. You sat in the company of the Prophet of Allah as we did. (Abu Bakr) Ibn Abi Quhafah and (Umar) ibn al-Khattab were no more responsible for acting righteously than you, since you are nearer than both of them to the Prophet of Allah through kinship, and you also hold relationship to him by marriage which they do not hold.

إِنَّ النَّاسَ وَرَائِي، وَقَدْ اسْتَسْفَرُونِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُمْ، وَوَاللَّهِ مَا أَدْرِي مَا أَقُولُ لَكَ! مَا أَعْرِفُ شَيْئًا بَجَهْلِهِ، وَلَا أَدُلُّكَ عَلَى أَمْرٍ لَا تَعْرِفُهُ، إِنَّكَ لَتَعْلَمُ مَا نَعْلَمُ، مَا سَبَقْنَاكَ إِلَى شَيْءٍ فَتُخَيِّرَكَ عَنْهُ، وَلَا خَلَوْنَا بِشَيْءٍ فَنُبَلِّغُكَهُ، وَقَدْ رَأَيْتَ كَمَا رَأَيْتَنَا، وَسَمِعْتَ كَمَا سَمِعْنَا، وَصَحِبْتَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) كَمَا صَحَبْنَا. وَمَا ابْنُ أَبِي قُحَافَةَ وَلَا ابْنُ الْخَطَّابِ بِأَوْلَى بِعَمَلِ الْحَقِّ مِنْكَ، وَأَنْتَ أَقْرَبُ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) وَشَيْجَةَ رَجَمَ مِنْهُمَا، وَقَدْ نِلْتَ مَنْ صَهْرِهِ مَا لَمْ يَنَالَا.

Then (fear) Allah, in your own self; for, by Allah, you are not being shown anything as if you are blind or being apprised of anything as if you are ignorant. The ways are clear while the banners of faith are fixed. You should know that among the creatures of Allah, the most distinguished person before Allah is the just Imam who has been guided (by Allah) and guides others. So, he stands by the recognised ways of the Prophet's behaviour and destroys unrecognised innovations.

The (Prophet's) ways are clear and they have signs, while innovations are also clear and they too have signs. Certainly, the worst man before Allah is the oppressive Imam who has gone astray and through whom others go astray. He destroys the the accepted sunnah and revives abandoned innovations. I heard the Messenger of Allah saying: "On the Day of Judgement the oppressive Imam will be brought without anyone to support him or anyone to advance excuses on his behalf, and then he will be thrown

into Hell where he will rotate as the hand-mill rotates, then (eventually) he will be confined to its hollow."

فَاللّٰهُ فِي نَفْسِكَ! فَإِنَّكَ . وَاللّٰهُ . مَا تُبَصِّرُ مِنْ عَمِي ، وَلَا تُعَلِّمُ مِنْ جَهْلٍ ، وَإِنَّ الطُّرُقَ لَوَاضِحَةٌ ، وَإِنَّ أَعْلَامَ الدِّينِ لَفَائِمَةٌ . فَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ أَفْضَلَ عِبَادِ اللّٰهِ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ إِمَامٌ عَادِلٌ ، هُدِيَّ وَهَدِي ، فَأَقَامَ سُنَّةَ مَعْلُومَةٍ ، وَأَمَاتَ بِدْعَةَ مَجْهُولَةٍ ، وَإِنَّ السُّنَنَ لَنَثِيْرَةٌ ، هَا أَعْلَامٌ ، وَإِنَّ الْبِدْعَ لَظَاهِرَةٌ ، هَا أَعْلَامٌ ، وَإِنَّ شَرَّ النَّاسِ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ إِمَامٌ جَائِرٌ ضَلَّ وَضَلَّ بِهِ ، فَأَمَاتَ سُنَّةَ مَأْخُوْذَةٍ ، وَأَحْيَا بِدْعَةَ مَنْرُوْكَةٍ . وَإِنِّي سَمِعْتُ رَسُوْلَ اللّٰهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) يَقُوْلُ : "يُوْتَى يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ بِالْإِمَامِ الْجَائِرِ وَلَيْسَ مَعَهُ نَصِيْرٌ وَلَا عَاذِرٌ ، فَيُلْقَى فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ ، فَيَدُوْرُ فِيهَا كَمَا تَدُوْرُ الرَّحَى ، ثُمَّ يَرْتَبُطُ فِي فَعْرِهَا" .

I swear to you by Allah that you should not be that Imam of the people who will be killed because it has been said that, "An Imam of this people will be killed after which killing and fighting will be made open for them till the Day of Judgement, and he will confuse their matters and spread troubles over them. As a result, they will not discern truth from wrong. They will oscillate like waves and would be utterly misled." You should not behave as the carrying beast for Marwan so that he may drag you wherever he likes, despite (your) seniority of age and length of life.

وَإِنِّي أَنشُدُكَ اللّٰهُ أَنْ تَكُوْنَ إِمَامَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ الْمَقْتُوْلِ ، فَإِنَّهُ كَانَ يُقَالُ : يُقْتَلُ فِي هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ إِمَامٌ يَفْتَحُ عَلَيْهَا الْقَتْلَ وَالْقِتَالَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ، وَيَلْبَسُ أُمُورَهَا عَلَيْهَا ، وَيَبِئْتُ الْفِتْرَ فِيهَا ، فَلَا يُبْصِرُونَ الْحَقَّ مِنَ الْبَاطِلِ ، يَمْوَجُونَ فِيهَا مَوْجًا ، وَيَمْرُجُونَ فِيهَا مَرْجًا . فَلَا تَكُوْنَنَّ لِمَرْوَانَ سَيِّفَةً يَسُوْفُكَ حَيْثُ شَاءَ بَعْدَ جَلَالِ السُّنَنِ وَتَفْصِي الْعُمُرِ .

Then `Uthman said to Amir al-mu'minin: "Speak to the people to give me time until I redress their grievances." Amir al-mu'minin then said: "So far as Medina is concerned here is no question of time. As for remoter areas you can have the time needed for your order to reach there."

فَقَالَ لَهُ عُثْمَانُ : كَلِمَ النَّاسِ فِي أَنْ يُؤَجِّلُوْنِي ، حَتَّى أُخْرِجَ إِلَيْهِمْ مِنْ مَظَالِمِهِمْ ، فَقَالَ (عليه السلام) : مَا كَانَ بِالْمَدِيْنَةِ فَلَا أَجَلَ فِيهِ ، وَمَا غَابَ فَأَجَلُهُ وَصُوْلُ أَمْرِكَ إِلَيْهِ .

Alternative Sources for Sermon 164

- (1) *Al-Baladhuri, Ansab, V, 60;*
- (2) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, V, 96, events of 34 H.;*
- (3) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, IV, 308, II, 273;*
- (4) *al-Mufid, al-Jamal, 100;*
- (5) *Ibn Miskawayh, Tajarib al-'umam (1909), I, 478.*

Notes

1. During the Caliphate of `Uthman when the Muslims were weary of the oppression of the Government and its officials collected in Medina to complain to the senior companions of the Prophet, they came to Amir al-mu'minin in a peaceful manner and requested him to see `Uthman and advise him not to trample on the Muslims' rights and to put an end to the

troubles which were proving the cause of the people's ruin, whereupon Amir al-mu'minin went to him and uttered these words.

In order to make the bitterness of the admonition palatable Amir al-mu'minin adopted that way of speech in the beginning which would create a sense of responsibility in the addressee and direct him towards his obligations. Thus, by mentioning his companionship of the Prophet, his personal position, and his kinship to the Prophet as against the two previous Caliphs, his intention was to make him realise his duties; in any case, this was obviously not an occasion for eulogising him, so that its later portion can be disregarded and the whole speech be regarded as an eulogy of his attainments, because from its very beginning it is evident that whatever `Uthman did, he did it wilfully, that nothing was done without his knowledge or his being informed, and that he could not be held unaccountable for it because of his being unaware of it. If the adoption of a line of action which made the whole Islamic world raise hue and cry in spite of his having being a companion of the Prophet, having heard his instructions, having seen his behaviour and having been acquainted with the commandments of Islam can be regarded as a distinction, then this taunt may also be regarded as praise. If that is not a distinction then this too cannot be called an eulogy. In fact, the words about which it is argued that they are in praise are enough to prove the seriousness of his crime, because a crime in ignorance and unawareness is not so serious as the weight given to the seriousness of the commission of a crime despite knowledge and awareness. Consequently a person who is unaware of the rise and fall of a road and stumbles in the dark night is excusable but a person who is aware of the rise and fall of the road and stumbled in broad day light is liable to be blamed. If on this occasion he is told that he has eyes and is also aware of the rise and fall of the way, it would not mean that his vastness of knowledge or the brightness of his eye-sight is being praised, but the intention would be that he did not notice the pitfalls despite his eyes, and did not walk properly, and that therefore for him, having or not having eyes is the same, and knowing or not knowing is equal.

In this connection great stress is laid on his being a son-in-law, namely that the Prophet married his two daughters Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthum to him one after the other. Before taking this to be a distinction, the real nature of `Uthman's son-in-lawship should be seen. History shows that in this matter `Uthman did not enjoy the distinction of being the first, but before him Ruqayyah and Umm Kulthum had been married to two sons of Abu Lahab namely `Utbah and `Utaybah, but despite their being sons-in-law, they have not been included among people of position of pre-prophethood period. How then can this be regarded as a source of position without any personal merit, when there is no authority about the importance of this relationship, nor was any importance attached to this matter in such a way that there might have been some competition between `Uthman and some other important personality in this regard and that his selection for it might have given him prominence, or that these two girls might have been shown to possess an important position in history, tradition or biography as a result of which this relationship could be given special importance and regarded as a distinction for him? If the marriage of these two daughters with `Utbah and `Utaybah in the pre-prophethood period is held as lawful on the ground that marriage with unbelievers had not till then been made unlawful, then in `Uthman's case also the condition for lawfulness was his acceptance of Islam, there is no doubt that he had pronounced the kalimah ash-shahadatayn (there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger) and had accepted Islam outwardly. As such this marriage can be held a proof of his outward Islam, but no other honour can be proved through it. Again, it is also not agreed that these two were the real daughters of the Messenger of Allah, because there is one group which denies them to be his real daughters, and regards them as being the daughters of Khadijah's sister Halah, or the daughters of her own previous husband. Thus, Abu'l-Qasim al-Kufi (d. 352 A.H.) writes:

"When the Messenger of Allah married Khadijah, then some time thereafter Halah died leaving two daughters, one named Zaynab and the other named Ruqayyah and both of them were brought up by the Prophet and Khadijah and they maintained them, and it was the custom before Islam that a child was assigned to whoever brought him up." (al-Istighathah, p. 69)

Ibn Hisham has written about the issues of Hadrat Khadijah as follows:

"Before marriage with the Prophet she was married to Abi Halah ibn Malik. She delivered for him Hind ibn Abi Halah and Zaynab bint Abi Halah. Before marriage with Abi Halah she was married to `Utayyiq ibn `Abid ibn `Abdillah ibn `Amr ibn Makhzum and she delivered for him `Abdullah and a daughter." (as-Sirah an-nabawiyyah, vol. 4, p. 293)

This shows that of Hadrat Khadijah had two daughters before being married to the Prophet and according to all appearance they would be called his daughters and those to whom they were married would be called his sons-in-law, but the position of this relationship would be the same as if those girls were his daughters. Therefore, before putting it forth as a matter for pride the real status of the daughters should be noted and a glance should be cast at `Uthman's conduct. In this connection, al-Bukhari and other narrators (of traditions) and historians record this tradition as follows:

Anas ibn Malik relates that: "We were present on the occasion of the burial of the Prophet's daughter Umm Kulthum, while the Prophet was sitting beside her grave. I saw his eyes shedding tears. Then he said, 'Is there any one among you who has not committed a sin last night?' Abu Talhah (Zayd ibn Sahl al-Ansari) said, 'I', then the Prophet said, 'Then you get into the grave,' consequently he got down into the grave."

The commentators said about 'committed sin' that the Holy Prophet meant to say 'one who had not had sexual intercourse.' On this occasion the Holy Prophet unveiled the private life of `Uthman and prevented him from getting down into the grave, although it was a prominent merit of the Prophet's character that he did not disgrace or belittle any one by making public his private life, and despite of knowledge of others' shortcomings, ignored them; but in this case the filth was such that it was deemed necessary to disgrace him before the whole crowd.

Since `Uthman did not show any regard for the demise of his wife (Umm Kulthum) nor was he moved or felt sorry (for this event), and paid no heed to the cutting off his relationship with the Holy Prophet (for being his son-in-law), he (`Uthman) had sexual intercourse on the same night, therefore the Holy Prophet deprived him of this right and honour. (al-Bukhari, as-Sahih, vol. 2, pp. 100-101, 114; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, al-Musnad, vol. 3, pp. 126, 228, 229, 270; al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak, vol. 4, p. 47; al-Bayhaqi, as-Sunan al-kubra, vol. 4, p. 53; Ibn Sa`d, at-Tabaqat al-kabir, vol. 8, p. 26; as-Suhayli, ar-Rawd al-unuf, vol. 2, p. 107; Ibn Hajar, al-Isabah, vol. 4, p. 489; Fath al-bari, vol. 3, p. 122; al-`Ayni, `Umdah al-qari, vol. 4, p. 85; Ibn al-Athir, an-Nihayah, vol. 3, p. 276; Ibn Manzur, Lisan al-`Arab, vol. 9, pp. 280-281; az-Zabidi, Taj al-`arus, vol. 6, p. 220).

Sermon 165: Allah has provided wonderful creations...

Describing the wonderful creation of the peacock

ومن خطبة له

يذكر فيها عجب خلقه الطاووس

About the wonderful creation of birds

خلقة الطيور

Allah has provided wonderful creations including the living, the lifeless, the stationary, and the moving. He has established such clear proofs for His delicate creative power and great might that minds bend down to Him in acknowledgement thereof and in submission to Him, and arguments about His Oneness strike our ears. He has created birds of various shapes which live in the burrows of the earth, in the openings of high passes and on the peaks of mountains.

ابْتَدَعَهُمْ خَلْقًا عَجِيبًا مِنْ حَيَوَانَ وَمَوَاتٍ، وَسَاكِنٍ وَذِي حَرَكَاتٍ، وَأَقَامَ مِنْ شَوَاهِدِ
الْبَيِّنَاتِ عَلَى لَطِيفِ صَنْعَتِهِ، وَعَظِيمِ قُدْرَتِهِ، مَا انْفَادَتْ لَهُ الْعُقُولُ مُعْرِفَةً بِهِ، وَمُسَلِّمَةً لَهُ،
وَنَعَمَتْ فِي أَسْمَاعِنَا دَلَالَتُهُ عَلَى وَحْدَانِيَّتِهِ، وَمَا دَرَأَ مِنْ مُخْتَلِفِ صُورِ الْأَطْيَارِ الَّتِي أَسْكَنَهَا
أَحَادِيدَ الْأَرْضِ، وَخُرُوقَ فِجَاجِهَا، وَرَوَاسِي أَعْلَامِهَا

They have different kinds of wings, and various characteristics. They are controlled by the rein of (Allah's) authority. They flutter with their wings in the expanse of the vast firmament and the open atmosphere. He brought them into existence from non-existence in strange external shapes, and composed them with joints and bones covered with flesh. He prevented some of them from flying easily in the sky because of their heavy bodies and allowed them to use their wings only close to the ground. He has set them in different colours by His delicate might and exquisite creative power.

مِنْ ذَوَاتِ أَجْنِحَةٍ مُخْتَلِفَةٍ، وَهَيْئَاتِ مُتَبَايِنَةٍ، مُصَرَّفَةٍ فِي زِمَامِ التَّسْخِيرِ، وَمُرْفَقَةٍ بِأَجْنِحَتِهَا
فِي مَخَارِقِ الْجَوِّ الْمُنْفَسِحِ وَالْفَضَاءِ الْمُنْفَرِّجِ. كَوْنَهَا بَعْدَ إِذْ لَمْ تَكُنْ فِي عَجَائِبِ صُورِ ظَاهِرَةٍ،
وَرَكْبَتِهَا فِي حِقَاقِ مَفَاصِلِ مُخْتَجِبَةٍ، وَمَنْعَ بَعْضَهَا بِعِبَالَةِ خَلْقِهِ أَنْ يَسْمُوَ فِي الْهَوَاءِ حُفُوفًا،
وَجَعَلَهُ يَدِفُ دَفِيفًا، وَنَسَقَهَا عَلَى اخْتِلَافِهَا فِي الْأَصَابِعِ بِلَطِيفِ قُدْرَتِهِ، وَدَقِيقِ صَنْعَتِهِ;

Among them are those which are tinted with one hue and there is no other hue except the one in which they have been dyed. There are others which are tinted with one colour, and they have a neck ring of a different colour than that with which they are tinted.

فَمِنْهَا مَعْمُوسٌ فِي قَالِبِ لَوْنٍ لَا يَشُوهُ غَيْرُ لَوْنٍ مَا غَمَسَ فِيهِ، وَمِنْهَا مَعْمُوسٌ فِي لَوْنٍ
صَبِغَ قَدْ طَوَّقَ بِخِلَافٍ مَا صَبِغَ بِهِ.

About the Peacock

الطاووس

The most amazing among them in its creation is the peacock, which Allah has created in the most symmetrical dimensions, and arranged its hues in the best arrangement with wings whose ends are inter-leaved together and whose tail is long. When it moves to its female it spreads out its folded tail and raises it up so as to cast a shade over its head, as if it were the sail of a boat being pulled by the sailor. It feels proud of its colours and swaggers with its movements. It copulates like the cocks. It leaps (on the female) for fecundation like lustful energetic men at the time of fighting.

وَمِنْ أَعْجَبِهَا خَلْقًا الطَّائُوسُ، الَّذِي أَقَامَهُ فِي أَحْكَمِ تَعْدِيلٍ، وَنَصَدَّ أَلْوَانَهُ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَنْضِيدٍ، بِجَنَاحِ أَشْرَجِ قَصْبِهِ، وَذَنْبِ أَطَالَ مَسْحَبِهِ. إِذَا دَرَجَ إِلَى الْأُنْثَى نَشَرَهُ مِنْ طَيْبِهِ، وَسَمَا بِهِ مُطَلًّا عَلَى رَأْسِهِ كَأَنَّهُ قَلْعٌ دَارِيٌّ عَنَجَهُ نُوثِيَّهُ.

يَخْتَالُ بِأَلْوَانِهِ، وَيَمِيسُ بِرَيْفَانِهِ، يُفْضِي كَأَفْضَاءِ الدَّبَّكَ، وَيُؤَرُّ بِمَلَاقِحِهِ أَرَّ الْفُحُولِ الْمُعْتَلِمَةِ

لِلضَّرَابِ

I am telling you all this from observation, unlike he who narrates on the basis of weak authority, as for example, the belief of some people that it fecundates the female by a tear which flows from its eyes and when it stops on the edges of the eyelids the female swallows it and lays its eggs thereby and not through fecundation by a male other than by means of this flowing tear. Even if they say this, it would be no amazing than (what they say about) the mutual feeding of the crows (for fecundation).

You would imagine its feathers to be sticks made of silvers and the wonderful circles and sun-shaped feathers growing thereon to be of pure gold and pieces of green emerald. If you likened them to anything growing on land, you would say that it is a bouquet of flowers collected during every spring. If you likened them to cloths, they would be like printed apparels or amazing variegated cloths of Yemen. If you likened them to ornaments then they would be like gems of different colour with studded silver.

أَحِيلُكَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ عَلَى مُعَايِنَةٍ، لَا كَمَنْ يُجِيلُ عَلَى ضَعِيفِ إِسْنَادِهِ، وَلَوْ كَانَ كَرَعِمَ مَنْ يَزْعُمُ أَنَّهُ يُلْقِحُ بِدَمْعَةٍ تَسْفَحُهَا مَدَامِعُهُ، فَتَقِفُ فِي صَفِّي جُفُونِهِ، وَأَنَّ أُنْثَاهُ تَطْعَمَ ذَلِكَ، ثُمَّ تَبِيضُ لَا مِنْ لِقَاحِ فَحْلِ سَوَى الدَّمْعِ الْمُنْبَجِسِ، لَمَا كَانَ ذَلِكَ بَأَعَجَبٍ مِنْ مُطَاعَمَةِ الْعُرَابِ!. تَخَالُ قَصْبَهُ مَدَارِيٍّ مِنْ فَضَّةٍ، وَمَا أُنْبِتَ عَلَيْهَا مِنْ عَجِيبِ دَارَاتِهِ وَشُمُوسِهِ خَالِصِ الْعُثْيَانِ، وَفَلَدَ الرَّبْرِجِدِ. فَإِنْ شَبَّهْتَهُ بِمَا أُنْبِتَتِ الْأَرْضُ قُلْتَ: جَنِيٌّ جَنِيٍّ مِنْ زَهْرَةٍ كُلِّ رَيْعٍ، وَإِنْ ضَاهَيْتَهُ بِالْمَلَابِسِ فَهُوَ كَمَوْشِيِّ الْخَلْلِ أَوْ كَمُونِقِ عَصَبِ الْيَمَنِ، وَإِنْ شَاكَلْتَهُ بِالْحَلِيِّ فَهُوَ كَفُصُوصِ ذَاتِ أَلْوَانٍ، قَدْ نُطِقَتْ بِاللُّجَيْنِ الْمُكَلَّلِ.

The peacock walks with vanity and pride, and throws open its tail and wings and laughs admiring the handsomeness of its dress and the hues of its necklace of gems. But when it casts its glance at its legs it cries loudly with

a voice which indicates its call for help and displays its true grief, because its legs are thin like the legs of Indo-Persian cross-bred cocks.

At the end of its shin there is a thin thorn and on the crown of its head there is a bunch of green variegated feathers. Its neck begins in the shape of a goblet and its stretch up to its belly is like the hair-dye of Yemen in colour or like silk cloth put on a polished mirror which looks as if it has been covered with a black veil, except that on account of its excessive lustre and extreme brightness it appears that a lush green colour has been mixed with it.

Along the openings of its ears there is a line of shining bright daisy colour like the thin end of a pen. Whiteness shines on the black background. There is hardly a hue from which it has not taken a bit and improved it further by regular polish, lustre, silken brightness and brilliance. It is therefore like scattered blossoms which have not been seasoned by the rains of spring or the sun of the summer.

بِمَشْيِ مَشْيِ الْمَرْحِ الْمُخْتَالِ، وَيَتَصَفَّحُ ذَنْبَهُ وَجَنَاحَهُ، فَيَقْهَقُهُ ضَاحِكًا لِجَمَالِ سِرْبَالِهِ،
وَأَصَابِيغِ وَشَاحِيهِ؛ فَإِذَا رَمَى بِبَصَرِهِ إِلَى قَوَائِمِهِ زَقَا مُعْوَلًا بِصَوْتِ نِكَادٍ يُبِينُ عَنِ اسْتِعَاثَتَيْهِ،
وَيَشْهَدُ بِصَادِقِ تَوَجُّعِهِ، لِأَنَّ قَوَائِمَهُ حُمُشٌ كَقَوَائِمِ الدِّيَكَةِ الْخِلَاسِيَّةِ. وَقَدْ نَجَمَتْ مِنْ ظُنُوبِ
سَاقِهِ صِبْصِيَّةٌ حَفِيَّةٌ، وَلَهُ فِي مَوْضِعِ الْعُرْفِ فُنْرَعَةٌ خَضْرَاءُ مُوشَّاءٌ، وَمُخْرَجٌ عُنُقِهِ كَالْأَبْرِيقِ،
وَمَعْرُزُهَا إِلَى حَيْثُ بَطْنُهُ كَصَبِغِ الْوَسْمَةِ الْيَمَانِيَّةِ، أَوْ كَحَرِيرَةٍ مُلْبَسَةٍ مِرَاءً ذَاتَ صِقَالٍ، وَكَأَنَّهُ
مُتَلَفِّعٌ بِمِعْجَرِ أَسْحَمٍ؛ إِلَّا أَنَّهُ يُحْيِلُ لِكَثْرَةِ مَائِهِ، وَشِدَّةِ بَرِيقِهِ، أَنَّ الْخُضْرَةَ النَّاصِرَةَ مُتْرَجَّةٌ بِهِ،
وَمَعَ فَتَقِ سَعِهِ حَطُّ كُمُسْتَدَقِ الْقَلَمِ فِي لَوْنِ الْأَفْحُوَانِ، أَبْيَضُ يَقُوقُ، فَهُوَ بِيَاضِهِ فِي سَوَادِ مَا
هُنَالِكَ يَأْتَلُقُ. وَقَلَّ صَبِغٌ إِلَّا وَقَدْ أَخَذَ مِنْهُ بِقَسْطٍ، وَعَلَاةٌ بِكَثْرَةِ صِقَالِهِ وَبَرِيقِهِ، وَبَصِصِ
دِيَابِجِهِ وَرَوِّقِهِ، فَهُوَ كَالْأَزَاهِيرِ الْمَبْثُوثَةِ، لَمْ تُرَبِّهَا أَمْطَارُ رَبِيعٍ، وَلَا شُمُوسُ قَيْظٍ

It also sheds its plumage and puts off its dress. They all fall away and grow again. They fall way from the feather stems like the falling of leaves from twigs, and then they begin to join together and grow till they return to the state that existed before their falling away. The new hues do not change from the previous ones, nor does any colour occur in other than its own place. If you carefully look at one hair from the hairs of its feather stems it would look like red rose, then emerald green and then golden yellow.

وَقَدْ يَنْحَسِرُ مِنْ رِيَشِهِ، وَيَعْرِى مِنْ لِبَاسِهِ، فَيَسْقُطُ تَتْرَى، وَيَنْبُثُ تَبَاعًا، فَيَنْحَتُّ مِنْ
قَصَبِهِ الشَّجَاتِ أَوْرَاقِ الْأَعْصَانِ، ثُمَّ يَتَلَاخَقُ نَامِيًا حَتَّى يَعُودَ كَهَيْئَتِهِ قَبْلَ سُقُوطِهِ، لَا يُخَالِفُ
سَالِفَ أَلْوَانِهِ، وَلَا يَقَعُ لَوْنٌ فِي غَيْرِ مَكَانِهِ!
وَإِذَا تَصَفَّحَتْ شَعْرَةً مِنْ شَعْرَاتِ قَصَبِهِ أَرْتَاكَ حُمْرَةً وَرْدِيَّةً، وَتَارَةً خُضْرَةً زَبْرَجِدِيَّةً، وَأَحْبَانًا
صُفْرَةً عَسْجِدِيَّةً

How can sharpness of intellect describe such a creation, or faculty of mind, or the utterances of describers manage to tell of it. Even its smallest

parts have made it impossible for the imagination to pick them out or for tongues to describe them. Glorified is Allah who has disabled intellects from describing the creation which He placed openly before the eyes and which they see bounded, shaped, arranged and coloured. He also disabled tongues from briefly describing its qualities and also from expanding in its praise.

فَكَيْفَ تَصِلُ إِلَى صِفَةِ هَذَا عَمَائِقُ الْفِطَنِ، أَوْ تَبْلُغُهُ قَرَائِحُ الْعُقُولِ، أَوْ تَسْتَظُنُّمْ وَصْفَهُ
أَقْوَالُ الْوَاصِفِينَ؟! وَأَقَلُّ أَجْرَائِهِ قَدْ أَعْجَزَ الْأَوْهَامَ أَنْ تُدْرِكَهُ، وَالْأَلْسِنَةَ أَنْ تَصِفَهُ! فَسُبْحَانَ
الَّذِي بَهَرَ الْعُقُولَ عَنْ وَصْفِ خَلْقِ جَلَاءَهُ لِلْعُيُونِ، فَأَدْرَكَتَهُ مَحْدُوداً مُكُوناً، وَمُؤَلَّفاً مُلَوَّنًا،
وَأَعْجَزَ الْأَلْسُنَ عَنْ تَلْخِيصِ صِفَتِهِ، وَقَعَدَ بِهَا عَنْ تَأْدِيَةِ نَعْتِهِ!

The magnificence of the Creator in great and small creation

صغار المخلوقات

Glorified is Allah who has assigned feet to small ants and gnats and also to those above them, the serpents and the elephants. He has made it obligatory upon Himself that no skeleton in which He infuses the spirit would move, but that death is its promised place and destruction its final end.

فَسُبْحَانَ مَنْ أَدْمَجَ قَوَائِمَ الذَّرَّةِ وَالْهَمَجَةَ إِلَى مَا فَوْقَهُمَا مِنْ خَلْقِ الْحَيَاتَانِ وَالْأَفِيلَةِ! وَوَأَى
عَلَى نَفْسِهِ أَلَّا يَضْطَرِبَ شَيْخٌ بِمَا أُولِجَ فِيهِ الرُّوحَ، إِلَّا وَجَعَلَ الْحِمَامَ مَوْعِدَهُ، وَالْفَنَاءَ غَايَتَهُ.

A part of the same sermon describing Paradise

منها: في صفة الجنة

If you cast your mind's eye at what is described to you about Paradise, your heart would begin to hate the delicacies of this world that have been displayed here, namely its desires and its pleasures, and the beauties of its scenes, and you would be lost in the rustling of the trees whose roots lie hidden in the mounds of musk on the banks of the rivers in Paradise and in the attraction of the bunches of fresh pearls in the twigs and branches of those trees, and in the appearance of different fruits from under the cover of their leaves. These fruits can be picked without difficulty as they come down at the desire of their pickers. Pure honey and fermented wine will be handed round to those who settle down in the courtyards of its palaces.

فَلَوْ رَمَيْتَ بِبَصَرِ قَلْبِكَ نَحْوَ مَا يُوصَفُ لَكَ مِنْهَا لَعَرَفْتَ نَفْسَكَ عَنْ بَدَائِعِ مَا أُخْرِجَ إِلَى
الدُّنْيَا مِنْ شَهَوَاتِهَا وَلَذَائِعِهَا، وَزَخَارِفِ مَنَاطِرِهَا، وَلَدَهْلَتِ بِالْفِكْرِ فِي اصْطِطَاقِ أَشْجَارِ غَيْبَتِ
عُرُوقِهَا فِي كُنْبَانِ الْمَسْكِ عَلَى سَوَاحِلِ أَنْهَارِهَا، وَفِي تَعْلِيْقِ كَبَائِسِ اللُّؤْلُؤِ الرَّطْبِ فِي
عَسَالِيحِهَا وَأَفْنَانِهَا، وَطُلُوعِ تِلْكَ الثَّمَارِ مُخْتَلِفَةً فِي غُلْفِ أَكْمَامِهَا، بُحْتَى مِنْ غَيْرِ تَكْلُفٍ فَتَأْتِي
عَلَى مُنْبِيَةِ مُجْتَنِبِيهَا، وَيُطَافُ عَلَى نُزُلِهَا فِي أَفْنِيَةِ قُصُورِهَا بِالْأَعْسَالِ الْمُصَفَّقَةِ، وَالْحُمُورِ الْمُرَوَّقَةِ .

They are a people whom honour has always followed till they were made to settle in the house of eternal abode, and they obtained rest from the

movement of journeying. O listener! If you busy yourself in advancing towards these wonderful scenes which will rush towards you, then your heart will certainly die due to eagerness for them, and you will be prepared to seek the company of those in the graves straight away from my audience here and hasten towards them. Allah may, by His mercy, include us and you too among those who strive with their hearts for the abodes of the virtuous.

قَوْمٌ لَمْ تَزَلِ الْكَرَامَةُ تَتَمَادَى بِهِمْ حَتَّى حَلُّوا دَارَ الْقَرَارِ، وَأَمِنُوا نُقْلَةَ الْأَسْفَارِ. فَلَوْ شَعَلَتْ قَلْبَكَ أَيُّهَا الْمُسْتَمِيعُ بِالْوُصُولِ إِلَى مَا يَهْجُمُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ تِلْكَ الْمَنَاطِرِ الْمُؤْنِقَةِ، لَرَهَقَتْ نَفْسَكَ شَوْقاً إِلَيْهَا، وَلَتَحَمَلْتِ مِنْ مَجْلِسِي هَذَا إِلَى مُجَاوِرَةِ أَهْلِ الْقُبُورِ اسْتِعْجَالاً بِهَا. جَعَلَنَا اللَّهُ وَإِيَّاكُمْ مِمَّنْ يَسْعَى بِقَلْبِهِ إِلَى مَنَازِلِ الْأَبْرَارِ بِرَحْمَتِهِ.

Note explaining some of the wonderful and obscure portions of this sermon

تفسير بعض ما في هذه الخطبة من الغريب

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: In Amir al-mu'minin's words "ya'urru bimalaqihihi", "al-arr" implies "copulation", e.g. when it is said "arra'r-rajulu al-mar'ata ya'urruha", it means "He copulated with the woman."

In his words "ka'annahu qal'u dariyyin `anajahu nutiyyuhu", "al-qal`" means the sail of a boat. "dari" means belonging to Darin which is a small town on the coast from where scents are bought. And "`anajahu" means "turned it". It is said "`anajtun'n-naqata - like nasartu - a`najuha `anjan". "When you turn the she-camel." And "an-nuti" means sailor. His words "daffatay jufunihi" means edges of the eyelids, since "ad-daffatan" means the two edges. His words "wa filadhu'z-zabarjadi": "al-filadh" is the plural of "al-fildhah" it means piece. His words "ka ba'isi'l-lu'lu'i'r-ratibi". "al-kibasah" means bunch of dates. "al-`asaliy" means twigs. Its singular is "`usluj".

قال السيد الشريف: قَوْلُهُ (عليه السلام): «وَيُؤَرُّ بِمَلَاقِحِهِ» الْأُرُّ: كِنَايَةٌ عَنِ النَّكَاحِ، يُقَالُ: أَرَّ الْمَرْأَةَ يُؤَرِّهَا، إِذَا نَكَحَهَا. وَقَوْلُهُ (عليه السلام): «كَأَنَّهُ قَلَعُ دَارِي عَنَجَهُ نُوتِيَهُ» الْقَلْعُ: شِرَاطُ السَّفِينَةِ، وَدَارِيٌّ: مَنْسُوبٌ إِلَى دَارِينَ، وَهِيَ بَلَدَةٌ عَلَى الْبَحْرِ يُجَلَّبُ مِنْهَا الطِّيبُ. وَعَنَجَهُ: أَيَّ عَطْفَهُ. يُقَالُ: عَنَجْتُ النَّاقَةَ أَعْنَجُهَا عَنَجًا إِذَا عَطَفْتُهَا. وَالتَّوَيُّ: الْمَلَاخُ. وَقَوْلُهُ: «ضَفَّتِي جُفُونِي» أَرَادَ جَانِبِي جُفُونِي. وَالضَّفَّتَانِ: الْجَانِبَانِ. وَقَوْلُهُ: «وَفَلَدَ الزَّبْرَجِدِ» الْفَلْدُ: جَمْعُ فَلْدَةٍ، وَهِيَ الْقِطْعَةُ. وَقَوْلُهُ: «كَبَائِسِ اللَّوْلُؤِ الرَّطْبِ» الْكِبَاسَةُ: الْعِدْقُ. وَالْعَسَالِيخُ: الْعُصُونُ، وَاجِدَهَا عُسْلُوجٌ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 165

(1) *Al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I;*

(2) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 27, II, 140 (d.w.r), III, 238 (a.s.l.j).*

Sermon 166: The young among you...

Advice for observing courtesy and kindness and keeping in and out of the same

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

الحث على التألف

The young among you should follow the elders while the elders should be kind to the young. Do not be like those rude people of the pre-Islamic (al-jahiliyyah) period who did not exert themselves in religion nor use their intellects in the matter of Allah. They ¹ are like the breaking of eggs in the nest of a dangerous bird, because their breaking looks bad, but keeping them intact would mean the production of dangerous young ones.

لِيَتَأَسَّ صَغِيرُكُمْ بِكَبِيرِكُمْ، وَلِيَرَأْفَ كَبِيرِكُمْ بِصَغِيرِكُمْ، وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَجُفَاةِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ: لَا فِي الدِّينِ يَتَفَقَّهُونَ، وَلَا عَنِ اللَّهِ يَعْقِلُونَ، كَفَيْضِ بَيْضٍ فِي أَدَاخٍ يَكُونُ كَسَرُهَا وَزُرًّا، وَيُخْرَجُ حِضَانُهَا شَرًّا.

A part of the same sermon about the autocracy and oppression of the Umayyads and their fate

منها: في بني أمية

They will divide after their unity and scatter away from their centre. Some of them will stick to the branches, and bending down as the branches bend, until Allah, the Sublime, will collect them together for the day that will be worst for the Umayyads just as the scattered bits of clouds collect together in the autumn. Allah will create affection among them. Then He will make them into a strong mass like the mass of clouds. Then he will open doors for them to flow out from their starting place like the flood of the two gardens (of Saba') from which neither high rocks remained safe nor small hillocks, and its flow could be repulsed neither by strong mountains nor by high lands. Allah will scatter them in the low lands of valleys and then He will make them flow like streams throughout the earth, and through them He will arrange the taking of rights of one people by another people and make one people to stay in the houses of another people. By Allah, all their position and esteem will dissolve as fat dissolves on the fire.

افْتَرَفُوا بَعْدَ اَلْفَتْحِهِمْ، وَتَشَتَّتُوا عَنِ اَصْلِهِمْ، فَمِنْهُمْ اَخِذٌ بِعُضْنِ اَيْنَمَا مَالَ مَالَ مَعَهُ، عَلَيَّ اَنَّ اللّٰهَ تَعَالٰى سَيَجْمَعُهُمْ لِيَوْمِ لَبْنِي اُمَيَّةَ، كَمَا يَجْتَمِعُ فَرْعُ الْحَرِيفِ يُؤَلِّفُ اللّٰهُ بَيْنَهُمْ، ثُمَّ يَجْعَلُهُمْ رِكَامًا كَرَكَامِ السَّحَابِ، ثُمَّ يَفْتَحُ لَهُمْ اَبْوَابًا، يَسِيلُونَ مِنْ مُسْتَنَارِهِمْ كَسَيْلِ الْجَنَّتَيْنِ، حَيْثُ لَمْ تَسْلَمْ عَلَيْهِ قَارَةٌ وَلَمْ تَنْبُتْ عَلَيْهِ اَكْمَةٌ، وَلَمْ يَرُدَّ سَنَّهُ رِصُّ طُودٍ، وَلَا حِدَابٌ اَرْضٍ، يُذْعَدُهُمْ اللّٰهُ فِي بَطُونِ اَوْدِيَّتِهِ، ثُمَّ يَسْلُكُهُمْ يَنْابِيعَ فِي الْاَرْضِ، يَأْخُذُ بِهِمْ مِنْ قَوْمٍ حُقُوقَ قَوْمٍ، وَيُمْكِرُ

لِقَوْمٍ فِي دِيَارِ قَوْمٍ. وَإِيمَ اللَّهِ، لِيُدْوَ بِنَ مَا فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ بَعْدَ الْعُلُوقِ وَالتَّمَكِينِ، كَمَا تُدْوَ بِنَ الْأَيْمَةُ عَلَى النَّارِ .

The cause of tyranny

الناس آخر الزمان

O people! If you had not evaded support of the truth and had not felt weakness from crushing wrong then he who was not your match would not have aimed at you and he who overpowered you would not have overpowered you. But you roamed about the deserts (of disobedience) like Banu Isra'il (Children of Israel). I swear by my life that after me your tribulations will increase several times, because you will have abandoned the truth behind your backs, severed your connection with your near ones and established relations with remote ones.

Know that if you had followed him who was calling you (to guidance) he would have made you tread the ways of the Prophet, then you would have been spared the difficulties of misguidance, and you would have thrown away the crushing burden from your necks.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، لَوْ لَمْ تَتَّخِذُوا عَنْ نَصْرِ الْحَقِّ، وَلَمْ تَهْنُوا عَنْ تَوْهِينِ الْبَاطِلِ، لَمْ يَطْمَعْ فِيكُمْ مَنْ لَيْسَ مِثْلَكُمْ، وَلَمْ يَفْوَ مِنْ قَوِي عَلَيْكُمْ، لَكِنَّكُمْ تَهْتَمُونَ بِبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ. وَلَعَمْرِي، لِيَضَعَنَّ لَكُمْ التَّيَّةَ مِنْ بَعْدِي أَوْضَعًا، بِمَا خَلَقْتُمُ الْحَقَّ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِكُمْ، وَقَطَعْتُمُ الْأَذْنَ، وَوَصَلْتُمُ الْأَبْعَدَ. وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ إِنْ اتَّبَعْتُمُ الدَّاعِيَ لَكُمْ، سَلَكَ بِكُمْ مِنْهَاجَ الرَّسُولِ، وَكُفَيْتُمْ مَوْوَنَةَ الْاِعْتِسَافِ، وَتَبَدُّتُمْ التِّقْلَ الْقَادِحَ عَنِ الْأَعْنَاقِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 166

- (1) *Kitab Sulaym ibn Qays*, 89;
- (2) *al-Kulayni, Rawdah*, 62;
- (3) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad*, 373;
- (4) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah*, I, 46.

Notes

1. The implication is that the outer Islam of these people required that they should not be molested, but the consequence of sparing them in this way was that they would create mischief and rebellion.

Sermon 167: Allah, the Glorified, has sent down a guiding Book...

At the beginning of his Caliphate. About Fulfilment of rights and obligations, and advice to fear Allah in all matters.

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في أول خلافته

Allah, the Glorified, has sent down a guiding Book wherein He has explained virtue and vice. You should adopt the course of virtue whereby you will have guidance, and keep aloof from the direction of vice so that you remain on the right way. (Mind) the obligations, (mind) the obligations! Fulfil them for Allah and they will take you to Paradise. Surely, Allah has made unlawful the things which are not unknown and made lawful the things which are without defect.

He has declared paying regard to Muslims as the highest of all regards. He has placed the rights of Muslims in the same grade (of importance) as devotion (to Himself and His Oneness). Therefore, a Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand every (other) Muslim is safe, save in the matter of truth. It is not, therefore, lawful to molest a Muslim except when it is obligatory.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْزَلَ كِتَابًا هَادِيًا بَيِّنَ فِيهِ الْحَيْرَ وَالشَّرَّ; فَخُذُوا نَهَجَ الْحَيْرِ تَهْتَدُوا، وَاصْدِفُوا

عَنْ سَمْتِ الشَّرِّ تَقْصِدُوا.

الْفَرَائِضَ الْفَرَائِضَ! أَدْوَهَا إِلَى اللَّهِ تُؤَدُّكُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ. إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى حَرَّمَ حَرَامًا غَيْرَ مَجْهُولٍ، وَأَحَلَّ حَلَالًا غَيْرَ مَدْخُولٍ، وَفَضَّلَ حُرْمَةَ الْمُسْلِمِ عَلَى الْحُرْمِ كُلِّهَا، وَشَدَّ بِالْأَخْلَاصِ وَالتَّوْحِيدِ حُقُوقَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فِي مَعَاذِهَا، فَالْمُسْلِمُ مَنْ سَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَيَدِهِ إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ، وَلَا يَحِلُّ أَدَى الْمُسْلِمِ إِلَّا بِمَا يَجِبُ.

Hasten towards the most common matter which is peculiar to every one; and that is death. Certainly, people (who have already gone) are ahead of you while the hour (Day of Judgement) is driving you from behind. Remain light, in order that you may overtake them. Your backs are being awaited for the sake of the fronts. Fear Allah in the matter of His creatures and His cities because you will be questioned even about lands and beasts. Obey Allah and do not disobey Him. When you see virtue adopt it, and when you see vice avoid it.

بَادِرُوا أَمْرَ الْعَامَّةِ وَخَاصَّةِ أَحَدِكُمْ وَهُوَ الْمَوْتُ، فَإِنَّ النَّاسَ أَمَامَكُمْ، وَإِنَّ السَّاعَةَ تَحْدُوكُمْ

مِنْ خَلْفِكُمْ، تَخَفُّوا تَلَحُّفُوا، فَإِنَّمَا يُنْتَظَرُ بِأَوْلِكُمْ آخِرِكُمْ. اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ فِي عِبَادِهِ وَبِلَادِهِ، فَإِنَّكُمْ

مَسْئُولُونَ حَتَّىٰ عَنِ الْبِقَاعِ وَالْبَهَائِمِ، أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تَعْصُوهُ، وَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمُ الْخَيْرَ فَخُذُوا بِهِ، وَإِذَا
رَأَيْتُمُ الشَّرَّ فَأَعْرِضُوا عَنْهُ

Alternative Sources for Sermon 167

(1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, V, 157, events of 35 H.;*

(2) *al-Radi, al-Khasa'is, 87.*

Sermon 168: O my brothers! I am not ignorant of what you know...

After swearing of allegiance to Amir al-mu'minin, some people from among the companions of the Prophet said to him, "You should punish the people who assaulted `Uthman," whereupon he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

بعد ما بويع بالخلافة

وقد قال له قوم من الصحابة: لو عاقبت قوماً ممن أجلب على عثمان؟ فقال:

O my brothers! I am not ignorant of what you know, but how do I have the power for it while those who assaulted him are in the height of their power. They have superiority over us, not we over them. They are now in the position that even your slaves have risen with them and Bedouin Arabs too have joined them. They are now among you and are harming you as they like. Do you see any way to be able to do what you aim at?

يَا إِخْوَتَاهُ! إِنِّي لَسْتُ أَجْهَلُ مَا تَعْلَمُونَ، وَلَكِنْ كَيْفَ لِي بِقُوَّةِ وَالْقَوْمِ الْمُجْلِبُونَ عَلَى حَدِّ شَوْكَتِهِمْ، يَمْلِكُونَنَا وَلَا تَمْلِكُهُمْ! وَهَاهُمْ هَهُلَاءِ قَدْ نَارَتْ مَعَهُمْ عِبْدَانِكُمْ، وَالتَّمَّتْ إِلَيْهِمْ أَعْرَابُكُمْ، وَهُمْ خِلَالَكُمْ يَسُومُونَكُمْ مَا شَاءُوا؛ وَهَلْ تَرَوْنَ مَوْضِعاً لِقُدْرَةِ عَلَيَّ شَيْءٍ، تُرِيدُونَهُ؟!

This demand is certainly that of the pre-Islamic (al-jahiliyyah) period and these people have support behind them. When the matter is taken up, people will have different views about it. One group will think as you do, but another will not think as you think, and there will be still another group who will be neither this way nor that way. Be patient till people quieten down and hearts settle in their places so that rights can be achieved for people easily.

Rest assured from me, and see what is given to you by me. Do not do anything which shatters your power, weakens your strength and engenders feebleness and disgrace. I shall control this affair as far as possible, but if I find it necessary the last treatment will, of course, be branding with a hot iron (through fighting).

إِنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ أَمْرٌ جَاهِلِيَّةٌ، وَإِنَّ هَهُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ مَادَّةٌ. إِنَّ النَّاسَ مِنْ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ. إِذَا حَرَكْتَ. عَلَى أُمُورٍ: فِرْقَةٌ تَرَى مَا تَرَوْنَ، وَفِرْقَةٌ تَرَى مَا لَا تَرَوْنَ، وَفِرْقَةٌ لَا تَرَى لَا هَذَا وَلَا هَذَا، فَاصْبِرُوا حَتَّى يَهْدَأَ النَّاسُ، وَتَفْعَ الْقُلُوبُ مَوَاقِعَهَا، وَتُؤَخِّدَ الْحَقُوقُ مُسْمَحَةً؛ فَاهْدَأُوا عَيِّي، وَانظُرُوا مَاذَا يَأْتِيكُمْ بِهِ أَمْرِي، وَلَا تَفْعَلُوا فَعْلَةً تُضَعِّعُ قُوَّةً، وَتُسْقِطُ مَنَّةً، وَتُورِثُ وَهْنًا وَذِلَّةً. وَسَأُمْسِكُ الْأَمْرَ مَا اسْتَمْسَكَ، وَإِذَا لَمْ أَجِدْ بُدًّا فَآخِرُ الدَّوَاءِ الْكَيُّ

Alternative Sources for Sermon 168

(1) Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, V, 158, events of 35 H.;

(2) *Ibn Miskawayh, Tajarib, I, 510.*

Sermon 169: There is no doubt that Allah sent down the Prophet (S) as a guide...

When the people of Jamal set off for Basrah Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)
عند مسير أصحاب الجمل إلى البصرة
الامور الجامعة للمسلمين

There is no doubt that Allah sent down the Prophet (S) as a guide with an eloquent Book and a standing command. No one will be ruined by it except one who ruins himself. Certainly, only doubtful innovations cause ruin except those from which Allah may protect. In Allah's authority lies the safety of your affairs. Therefore, render Him such obedience as is neither blameworthy nor insincere. By Allah, you must do so, otherwise Allah will take away from you the power of Islam, and will never thereafter return it to you till it reverts to others.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى بَعَثَ رَسُولًا هَادِيًا بِكِتَابٍ نَاطِقٍ وَأَمْرٍ قَائِمٍ، لَا يَهْلِكُ عَنْهُ إِلَّا هَالِكٌ، وَإِنَّ الْمُبْتَدِعَاتِ الْمَشْتَبَهَاتِ هُنَّ الْمُهْلِكَاتُ إِلَّا مَا حَفِظَ اللَّهُ مِنْهَا، وَإِنَّ فِي سُلْطَانِ اللَّهِ عِصْمَةً لِأَمْرِكُمْ، فَأَعْطُوهُ طَاعَتَكُمْ غَيْرَ مُلَوَّمَةٍ وَلَا مُسْتَكْرَهٍ بِهَا. وَاللَّهُ لَتَفْعَلَنَّ أَوْ لَيَنْفَلَنَّ اللَّهُ عَنْكُمْ سُلْطَانَ الْأَسْلَامِ، ثُمَّ لَا يَنْفُلُهُ إِلَيْكُمْ أَبَدًا حَتَّى يَأْرَرَ الْأَمْرَ إِلَى غَيْرِكُمْ.

Certainly, these people are in agreement in disliking my authority. I will carry on till I perceive disunity among you; because if, in spite of the unsoundness of their view, they succeed, the whole organisation of the Muslims will be shattered. They are hankering after this world out of jealousy against him on whom Allah has bestowed it. So they intend reverting the matters on their backs (pre-Islamic period), while on us it is obligatory, for your sake, to abide by the Book of Allah (Qur'an), the Sublime, and the conduct of the Prophet of Allah, to stand by His rights and the revival of his sunnah.

إِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ قَدْ تَمَالَأُوا عَلَيَّ سَخَطَةَ إِمَارَتِي، وَسَأَصْبِرُ مَا لَمْ أَحْفَ عَلَيَّ جَمَاعَتِكُمْ؛ فَإِنَّهُمْ إِنْ تَمَّمُوا عَلَيَّ فَيَأَلَوْا هَذَا الرَّأْيَ انْقَطَعَ نِظَامُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَإِنَّمَا طَلَبُوا هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا حَسَدًا لِمَنْ أَفَاءَهَا اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ، فَأَرَادُوا رَدَّ الْأُمُورِ عَلَيَّ أَدْبَارِهَا. وَلكُمْ عَلَيْنَا الْعَمَلُ بِكِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَسِيرَةِ رَسُولِهِ، وَالْقِيَامُ بِحَقِّهِ، وَالنَّعْشُ لِسُنَّتِهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 169

(1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 163*

Sermon 170: If those at your back send you.....

About the obligation of following the truth after it has been established

When Amir al-mu'minin approached Basrah an Arab met him and spoke to him, as he had been sent to him by a group of people of Basrah to enquire from him on their behalf position vis-à-vis the people of Jamal. Amir al-mu'minin explained to him his position with respect to them, from which he was convinced that Amir al-mu'minin was in the right. Then Amir al-mu'minin asked him to swear allegiance, but he replied "I am just a message carrier of a people and shall not do anything until I get back to them." Upon this Amir al-mu'minin said to him:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)
في وجوب اتباع الحق عند قيام الحجّة
كلم به بعض العرب، وقد أرسله قوم من أهل البصرة لما قرب (عليه السلام) منها ليعلم
لهم منه حقيقة حاله مع أصحاب الجمل لتزول الشبهة من نفوسهم، فبين له (عليه السلام)
من أمره معهم ما علم به أنه على الحق.
ثم قال له: بايع. فقال: إني رسول قوم، ولا أحدث حدثاً حتى أرجع إليهم. فقال (عليه
السلام):

If those at your back send you as a forerunner to search out a rain-fed area for them, and you return to them and apprise them of greenery and water but they disagree with you and go towards dry and barren land, what would you do then? He said: I would leave them and go towards greenery and water. Amir al-mu'minin then said: So then extend your hand.

This man related that: By Allah, by such a clear argument I could not refrain from swearing allegiance to Amir al-mu'minin.

This man was know as Kulayb al-Jarmi.

أَرَأَيْتَ لَوْ أَنَّ الَّذِينَ وَرَاءَكَ بَعَثُوكَ رَائِدًا تَبْتَغِي لَهُمْ مَسَاقِطَ الْعَيْثِ، فَرَجَعْتَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَأَخْبَرْتَهُمْ
عَنِ الْكَلَاءِ وَالْمَاءِ، فَخَالَفُوا إِلَى الْمَعَاطِشِ وَالْمَجَادِبِ، مَا كُنْتَ صَانِعًا؟
قال: كُنْتُ تَارِكُهُمْ وَمُخَالَفَهُمْ إِلَى الْكَلَاءِ وَالْمَاءِ. فَقَالَ لَهُ . عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ :. فَاْمُدُّ إِذَا يَدَكَ.
فَقَالَ الرَّجُلُ: فَوَاللَّهِ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ أَنْ أَمْتَنِعَ عِنْدَ قِيَامِ الْحُجَّةِ عَلَيَّ، فَبَايَعْتُهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.
وَالرَّجُلُ يُعْرَفُ بِكَلَيْبِ الْجَرْمِيِّ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 170

- (1) *Al-Waqidi, al-Jamal, in al-Mufid, al-Jamal, 156;*
- (2) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, V, 192, events of 36 H.;*
- (3) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, bab al-jawabat al-muskitah wa rashaqat al-kalam.*

Sermon 171: O My God! Sustainer of the high sky....

When Amir al-mu'minin decided to fight the enemy face to face at Siffin he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)
لما عزم على لقاء القوم بصفين

Supplication

الدعاء

O My God! Sustainer of the high sky and the suspended firmament which Thou hast made a shelter for the night and the day, an orbit for the sun and the moon and a path for the rotating stars, and for populating it Thou hast created a group of Thy angels who do not get weary of worshipping Thee. O Sustainer of this earth which Thou hast made an abode for people and a place for the movement of insects and beasts and countless other creatures seen and unseen.

O Sustainer of strong mountains which Thou hast made as pegs for the earth and (a means of) support for people. If Thou givest us victory over our enemy, save us from excesses and keep us on the straight path of truth. But if Thou givest them victory over us, then grant us martyrdom and save us from mischief.

اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّ السَّقْفِ الْمَرْفُوعِ، وَالْجَوِّ الْمَكْمُوفِ، الَّذِي جَعَلْتَهُ مَغِيضاً لِلَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ، وَخَجْرًا لِلشَّمْسِ وَالْقَمَرِ، وَمُخْتَلَفًا لِلنُّجُومِ السَّيَّارَةِ، وَجَعَلْتَ سُكَّانَهُ سَبْطاً مِنْ مَلَائِكَتِكَ، لَا يَسْأَمُونَ مِنْ عِبَادَتِكَ. وَرَبِّ هَذِهِ الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي جَعَلْتَهَا قَرَارًا لِلْإِنَامِ، وَمَدْرَجاً لِلْهَوَامِّ وَالْأَنْعَامِ، وَمَا لَا يُحْصَى بِمَا يُرَى وَمَا لَا يُرَى. وَرَبِّ الْجِبَالِ الرَّوَاسِي الَّتِي جَعَلْتَهَا لِلْأَرْضِ أَوْتَاداً، وَلِلخَلْقِ اعْتِمَاداً. إِنَّ أَظْهَرَتْنَا عَلَى عَدُوِّنَا فَجَبِّبْنَا الْبَغْيَ وَسَدِّدْنَا لِلْحَقِّ، وَإِنْ أَظْهَرْتَهُمْ عَلَيْنَا فَارْزُقْنَا الشَّهَادَةَ وَأَعْصِمْنَا مِنَ الْفِتْنَةِ.

Calling men to battle

الدعوة للقتال

Where are those who protect honour, and those self-respecting persons who defend respectable persons in the time of hardship? Shame is behind you while Paradise is in front of you.

أَيْنَ الْمَانِعِ لِلدِّمَارِ، وَالْعَائِزِّ عِنْدَ نُزُولِ الْحَقَائِقِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْحِفَاظِ؟! الْعَارُ وَرَاءَكُمْ، وَالْجَنَّةُ أَمَامَكُمْ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 171

(1) *Nasr ibn Muzahim, Siffin, 232;*

(2) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 8, events of 37 H.;*

(3) *Ibn Tawus, in Muhaj from al-Husayn ibn Sa`id al-Ahwazi, Kitab al-du`a' wa al-dhikr.*

Sermon 172: Praise be to Allah from whose view one sky...

About the Consultative Committee and the Battle of Jamal

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

Praise be to Allah from whose view one sky does not conceal another sky nor one earth another earth.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَا تُوَارِي عَنْهُ سَمَاءُ سَمَاءٍ، وَلَا أَرْضٌ أَرْضًا.

A part of the same sermon about the Consultative Committee after the death of `Umar ibn al-Khattab

منها: في يوم الشورى

Someone ¹ said to me, "O' son of Abi Talib, you are eager for the caliphate." Then I told him:

"Rather, you are, by Allah, more greedy, although more remote, while I am more suited as well as nearer. I have demanded it as my right, while you are intervening between me and it, and you are turning my face from it." When I knocked at his ears with arguments among the crowd of those present he was startled as if he was stunned not knowing what reply to give me about it.

وَقَالَ قَائِلٌ: إِنَّكَ يَا أَبَنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَلَى هَذَا الْأَمْرِ لَحَرِيصٌ.
فَقُلْتُ: بَلْ أَنْتُمْ وَاللَّهِ أَحْرَصُ وَأَبْعَدُ، وَأَنَا أَحْصُ وَأَقْرَبُ، وَإِنَّمَا طَلَبْتُ حَقًّا لِي وَأَنْتُمْ تَحُولُونَ
بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُ، وَتَضْرِبُونَ وَجْهِي دُونَهُ، فَلَمَّا قَرَعْتُهُ بِالْحُجَّةِ فِي الْمَلَاءِ الْحَاضِرِينَ هَبَّ كَأَنَّهُ بُهِتَ لَا
يَدْرِي مَا يُجِيبُنِي بِهِ!

Seeking aid against the Quraysh

الاستنصار على قريش

O My God! I seek Thy succour against the Quraysh and those who are assisting them, because they are denying me (the rights of) kinship, have lowered my high position, and are united in opposing me in the matter (of the caliphate) which is my right, and then they said, "Know that the rightful thing is that you have it and also that you may leave it." ²

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَعْدِيكَ عَلَى قُرَيْشٍ وَمَنْ أَعَانَهُمْ! فَإِنَّهُمْ قَطَعُوا رَحِمِي، وَصَعَّرُوا عَظِيمَ مَنْزِلَتِي،
وَأَجْمَعُوا عَلَيَّ مُنَارَعَتِي أَمْرًا هُوَ لِي. ثُمَّ قَالُوا: أَلَا إِنَّ فِي الْحَقِّ أَنْ تَأْخُذَهُ، وَفِي الْحَقِّ أَنْ تَتْرُكَهُ.

A part of the same sermon describing the people of Jamal

منها: في ذكر أصحاب الجمل

They (Talhah, az-Zubayr and their supporters) came out dragging the wife of the Messenger of Allah (the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants) just as a maidslave is dragged for sale. They took her to Basrah where those two (Talhah and az-Zubayr) put their own women

in their houses but exposed the wife of the Messenger of Allah to themselves and to others in the army in which there was not a single individual who had not offered me his obedience and sworn to me allegiance quite obediently, without any compulsion.

فَخَرَجُوا يَخْرُونَ حُرْمَةَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) كَمَا بُحِرُ الْأُمَّةُ عِنْدَ شِرَائِهَا،
مُتَوَجِّهِينَ بِهَا إِلَى الْبَصْرَةِ، فَحَبَسَا نِسَاءَهُمَا فِي بُيُوتِهِمَا، وَأَبْرَزَا حَبِيسَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه
وآله) هُمَا وَلِعَيْرِهِمَا، فِي جَيْشٍ مَا مِنْهُمْ رَجُلٌ إِلَّا وَقَدْ أُعْطِيَ الطَّاعَةَ، وَسَمَحَ لِي بِالْبَيْعَةِ، طَائِعاً
غَيْرَ مُكْرَهٍ،

Here in Basrah they approached my governor and treasurers of the public treasury and its other inhabitants. They killed some of them in captivity and others by treachery. By Allah, even if they had wilfully killed only one individual from among the Muslims without any fault, it would have been lawful for me to kill the whole of this army because they were present in it but did not disagree with it nor prevented it by tongue or hand, not to say that they killed from among the Muslims a number equal to that with which they had marched on them.

فَقَدِمُوا عَلَى عَامِلِي بِهَا وَخُرَّانِ بَيْتِ مَالِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَغَيْرِهِمْ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا، فَقَتَلُوا طَائِفَةً
صَبْرًا، وَطَائِفَةً عَدْرًا.

فَوَاللَّهِ لَوْ لَمْ يُصِيبُوا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ إِلَّا رَجُلًا وَاحِدًا مُعْتَمِدِينَ لِقَتْلِهِ، بِإِلَّا جُرْمِ جِرَّةٍ، لَحَلَّ لِي
قَتْلُ ذَلِكَ الْجَيْشِ كُلِّهِ، إِذْ حَضَرُوهُ فَلَمْ يُنْكِرُوا، وَلَمْ يَدْفَعُوا عَنْهُ بِلِسَانٍ وَلَا يَدٍ. دَعَا مَا أَنَّهُمْ قَدْ
قَتَلُوا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ مِثْلَ الْعِدَّةِ الَّتِي دَخَلُوا بِهَا عَلَيْهِمْ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 172

- (1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 48;*
- (2) *al-Bayhaqi, al-Mahasin, 41;*
- (3) *al-Saduq, al-'Amali;*
- (4) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, (bab al-ba');*
- (5) *al-Karajiki, Ma'dan, 226;*
- (6) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 329;*
- (7) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, I, 295;*
- (8) *al-Mufid, al-Jamal, * 45, 76.*

Notes

1. On the occasion of the Consultative Committee Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas repeated to Amir al-mu'minin what Caliph `Umar had said in his last hours namely that "O' `Ali, you are very greedy for the position of caliphate," and `Ali replied that, "He who demands his own right cannot be called greedy; rather greedy is he who prevents the securing of the right and tries to grab it despite being unfit for it."

There is no doubt that Amir al-mu'minin considered the Caliphate to be his right, and demanded his right. The demand for a right does not dispel a right so that it may be put forth as an excuse for not assigning him the caliphate, and the demand may be held as a mark of greed. Even if it was greed, who was not involved in this greed? Was not the pull between the muhajirun and the ansar the mutual struggle between the members of the Consultative Committee and the mischief mongering of Talhah and az-Zubayr the product of this very greed. If Amir al-mu'minin had been greedy for this position, he would have

stood for it, closing his eyes to the consequences and results, when `Abbas (uncle of the Prophet) and Abu Sufyan pressed him for (accepting) allegiance, and when, after the third Caliph people thronged to him for (swearing) allegiance, he should have accepted their offer without paying any attention to the deteriorated conditions. But at no time did Amir al-mu'minin take any step which could prove that he wanted the Caliphate for the sake of caliphate, but rather his demand for the caliphate was only with the object that its features should not be altered and the religion should not become the victim of others' desires, not that he should enjoy the pleasures of life which could be attributed to greed.

2. Explaining the meaning, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes that Amir al-mu'minin's intention was to say:

They (the Quraysh and those who are assisting them) were not only content to keep me away from my right over the caliphate which they have usurped (from me), but rather claimed that it was their right whether to give it to me or prevent me from the same; and that I have no right to argue with them.

Furthermore, the intention (of Amir al-mu'minin) is that:

If they had not said that it is right to keep away from the caliphate, it would have been easy to endure it because this would have, at least, showed their admitting my right although they were not prepared to concede it. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 9, p. 306)

Sermon 173: The Prophet (S) is the trustee of Allah's revelation...

On eligibility for the Caliphate

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في رسول الله (ﷺ)

ومن هو جدير بأن يكون للخلافة وفي هوان الدنيا

The Prophet (S) is the trustee of Allah's revelation, the Last of His Prophets. the giver of tidings of His mercy and the warner for His chastisement.

أَمِينٌ وَخِيَه، وَخَاتَمٌ رُسُلِهِ، وَبَشِيرٌ رَحْمَتِهِ، وَنَذِيرٌ نَقْمَتِهِ.

O people! The most rightful of all persons for this matter (namely the caliphate) is he who is most competent among them to maintain it, and he who knows best Allah's commands about it. If any mischief is created by a mischief-monger, he will be called upon to repent. If he refuses, he will be fought.

By my life, ¹ if the question of Imamah was not to be decided unless all the people were present, then there would be no such case. But those who agreed about it imposed the decision on those who were absent, so much so that he who was present could not dissent and the one who was absent could not choose (any one else). Know that I shall fight two persons - one who claims what is not his and the other who ignores what is obligatory upon him.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّ أَحَقَّ النَّاسِ بِهَذَا الْأَمْرِ أَقْوَاهُمْ عَلَيْهِ، وَأَعْلَمُهُمْ بِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ فِيهِ، فَإِنْ شَعَبَ شَاغِبٌ اسْتُعْتَبَ، فَإِنْ أَبِي قُوْتَلٍ.

وَأَعْمَرِي، لَيْنَ كَانَتْ الْأَمَامَةُ لَا تَنْعَقِدُ حَتَّى يَخْضُرَهَا عَامَّةُ النَّاسِ، [ف] مَا إِلَى ذَلِكَ سَبِيلٌ، وَلَكِنْ أَهْلُهَا يَخْكُمُونَ عَلَى مَنْ غَابَ عَنْهَا، ثُمَّ لَيْسَ لِلشَّاهِدِ أَنْ يَرْجِعَ، وَلَا لِلْغَائِبِ أَنْ يَخْتَارَ. أَلَا وَإِيَّيْ أَفَاتِلُ رَجُلَيْنِ: رَجُلًا ادَّعَى مَا لَيْسَ لَهُ، وَآخَرَ مَنَعَ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِ.

The need for sagacity in fighting against Muslims

O creatures of Allah! I advise you to have fear of Allah because it is the best advice to be mutually given by persons, and the best of all things before Allah. The door of war has been opened between you and the other Muslims. And this banner will be borne only by him who is a man of sight, of endurance and of knowledge of the position of rightfulness. Therefore, you should go ahead with what you are ordered and desist from what you are refrained. Do not make haste in any matter till you have clarified it. For in the case of every matter which you dislike we have a right to change it.

أَوْصِيَكُمْ عِيَادَ اللَّهِ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّهُ [] حَيْرٌ مَا تَوَاصَى الْعِبَادُ بِهِ، وَخَيْرٌ عَوَاقِبِ الْأُمُورِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ، وَقَدْ فُتِحَ بَابُ الْحَرْبِ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ أَهْلِ الْقِبْلَةِ، وَلَا يَحْمِلُ هَذَا الْعَلَمَ إِلَّا أَهْلُ الْبَصَرِ وَالصَّبْرِ وَالْعِلْمِ بِمَوَاضِعِ الْحَقِّ، فَاْمْضُوا لِمَا تُؤْمَرُونَ بِهِ، وَقِفُوا عِنْدَ مَا تُنْهَوْنَ عَنْهُ، وَلَا تَعْجَلُوا فِي أَمْرٍ حَتَّى تَتَبَيَّنُوا، فَإِنَّ لَنَا مَعَ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ تُنْكَرُونَهُ غَيْرًا

The behaviour of this world with its adherents

هوان الدنيا

Know that this world which you have started to covet and in which you are interested, and which sometimes enrages you and sometimes pleases you is not your (permanent) abode, nor the place of your stay for which you might have been created, nor one to which you have been invited. Know that it will not last for you nor will you live along with it. If anything out of this world deceives you (into attraction), its evils warn you too.

You should give up (the objects of) its deceits in favour of (the objects of) its warning and (the objects of) its attractions in favour of (the objects of) its terrors. And while here in it, advance towards that house to which you have been called, and turn away your hearts from the world. None of you should cry like a maid slave over anything which she has been deprived of. Seek the perfection of Allah's bounty over you by endurance in obedience to Allah and in guarding what He has asked you to guard, namely His Book.

أَلَا وَإِنَّ هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا الَّتِي أَصْبَحْتُمْ تَتَمَنَّوْنَهَا وَتَرْغَبُونَ فِيهَا، وَأَصْبَحْتُمْ تُعْضِبُكُمْ وَتُرْضِيكُمْ، لَيْسَتْ بِدَارِكُمْ، وَلَا مَنْزِلِكُمْ الَّذِي خُلِقْتُمْ لَهُ وَلَا الَّذِي دُعِيتُمْ إِلَيْهِ، أَلَا وَإِنَّهَا لَيْسَتْ بِبَاقِيَةٍ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَبْقَوْنَ عَلَيْهَا، وَهِيَ وَإِنْ غَرَّتْكُمْ مِنْهَا فَقَدْ حَدَرَتْكُمْ شَرَّهَا، فَادْعُوا غُرُورَهَا لِتَحْذِيرِهَا، وَأَطْمَاعَهَا لِتَحْوِيلِهَا، وَسَابِقُوا فِيهَا إِلَى الدَّارِ الَّتِي دُعِيتُمْ إِلَيْهَا، وَأَنْصَرِفُوا بِقُلُوبِكُمْ عَنْهَا، وَلَا يَخْنَقَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ حَيْنَ الْأَمَةِ عَلَى مَا رُؤِيَ عَنْهُ مِنْهَا، وَاسْتَمُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالصَّبْرِ عَلَى طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ وَالْمَحَافَظَةِ عَلَى مَا اسْتَحْفَظَكُمْ مِنْ كِتَابِهِ.

Know that the loss of anything of this world will not harm you, if you have guarded the principles of your religion. Know also that after the loss of your religion nothing of this world for which you have cared will benefit you. May Allah carry our hearts and your hearts towards the right and may He grant us and you endurance.

أَلَا وَإِنَّهُ لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ تَضْيِيعُ شَيْءٍ مِنْ دُنْيَاكُمْ بَعْدَ حِفْظِكُمْ قَائِمَةَ دِينِكُمْ، أَلَا وَإِنَّهُ لَا يَنْفَعُكُمْ بَعْدَ تَضْيِيعِ دِينِكُمْ شَيْءٌ حَافِظْتُمْ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَمْرِ دُنْيَاكُمْ، أَخَذَ اللَّهُ بِقُلُوبِنَا وَقُلُوبِكُمْ إِلَى الْحَقِّ، وَأَهْمَنَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ الصَّبْرَ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 173

(1) Al-Harrani, Tuhaq, 130;

(2) *Abu Ja`far al-Iskafi, Naqd al-`Uthmaniyyah, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, II, 171-173.*

Notes

1. When the people collected in the Saqifah of Banu Sa`idah in connection with the election, even those who were not present there were made to follow the decision taken there, and the principle was adopted that those present at the election had no right to reconsider the matter or to break the allegiance and those not present could do nothing but acquiesce in the agreed decision. But when the people of Medina swore allegiance at the hands of Amir al-mu'minin, the Governor of Syria (Mu`awiyah) refused to follow suit on the ground that since he was not present on the occasion he was not bound to abide by it, whereupon Amir al-mu'minin gave a reply in this sermon on the basis of these accepted and agreed principles and conditions which had been established among these people and had become incontrovertible namely that: "When the people of Medina and the ansar and the muhajirun have sworn allegiance on my hand, Mu`awiyah had no right to keep aloof from it on the ground that he was not present on the occasions nor were Talhah and az-Zubayr entitled to break the pledge after swearing allegiance."

On this occasion, Amir al-mu'minin did not argue on the strength of any saying of the Prophet which would serve as his final say about the caliphate, because the grounds for refusal in his case was in respect of the modus operandi of the principle of election. Therefore, in keeping with the requirements of the situation a reply based on the agreed principles of the adversary could alone quieten him. Even if he had argued on the strength of the Prophet's command it would have been subjected to various interpretations and the matter would have been prolonged instead of being settled. Again Amir al-mu'minin had seen that soon after the death of the Prophet all his sayings and commands had been set aside. Therefore, how after the lapse of a long time, could one be expected to accept it when habit had been established to follow one's free will against the Prophet's sayings.

Sermon 174: As for me, I would never be frightened of fighting...

About Talhah ibn `Ubaydillah. Delivered when he received the news that Talhah and az-Zubayr had already left for Basrah to fight against him.

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في معنى طلحة بن عبيدالله [وقد قاله حين بلغه خروج طلحة والزبير إلى البصرة لقتاله]

As for me, I would never be frightened of fighting or be made to fear striking because I am satisfied with Allah's promise of support to me. By Allah, Talhah has hastened with drawn sword to avenge `Uthman's blood for fear lest the demand for `Uthman's blood be made against himself, because the people's idea in this matter is about him, and, in fact, he was the most anxious among them for his killing. Therefore, he has tried to create misunderstanding by collecting forces in order to confuse the matter and to create doubt.

قَدْ كُنْتُ وَمَا أَهْدُدُّ بِالْحَرْبِ، وَلَا أَرْهَبُ بِالضَّرْبِ، وَأَنَا عَلَى مَا قَدْ وَعَدَنِي رَبِّي مِنَ النَّصْرِ. وَاللَّهِ مَا اسْتَعْجَلْتُ مُتَجَرِّدًا لِلطَّلَبِ بِدَمِ عُثْمَانَ إِلَّا خَوْفًا مِنْ أَنْ يُطَالَبَ بِدَمِهِ، لِأَنَّهُ مَطْنَتُهُ، وَمَنْ يَكُنْ فِي الْقَوْمِ أَخْرَصُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْهُ، فَأَرَادَ أَنْ يُعَالِطَ بِمَا أُجْلِبُ فِيهِ لِيَلْتَبَسَ الْأَمْرُ وَيَقَعَ الشُّكُّ.

By Allah, he did not act in either of three ways about `Uthman. If the son of `Affan (`Uthman) was in the wrong, as Talhah believed, it is necessary for him to support those who killed ¹ him or to keep away from his supporters. If `Uthman was the victim of oppression. then Talhah should have been among those who were keeping (the assaulters) away from him or were advancing pleas on his behalf. If he was in doubt about these two alternatives, then it was incumbent upon him to leave him (`Uthman) and retire aside and leave the men with him (to deal with him as they wished). But he adopted none of these three ways, and came out with a thing in which there is no good, and his excuses are not acceptable.

وَوَاللَّهِ مَا صَنَعَ فِي أَمْرِ عُثْمَانَ وَاحِدَةً مِنْ ثَلَاثٍ: لَعِنَ كَانَ ابْنُ عَقَّانَ ظَالِمًا. كَمَا كَانَ يَرْعُمُ . لَقَدْ كَانَ يَنْبَغِي لَهُ أَنْ يُوَارَرَ قَاتِلِيهِ وَأَنْ يُنَابِذَ نَاصِرِيهِ، وَلَعِنَ كَانَ مَظْلُومًا لَقَدْ كَانَ يَنْبَغِي لَهُ أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنَ الْمُنْهَنِّهِينَ عَنْهُ وَالْمُعَذِّبِينَ فِيهِ، وَلَعِنَ كَانَ فِي شُكِّ مِنَ الْخُصَلَتَيْنِ، لَقَدْ كَانَ يَنْبَغِي لَهُ أَنْ يَعْتَرِلَهُ وَيَرْكُدَ جَانِبًا وَيَدْعَ النَّاسَ مَعَهُ، فَمَا فَعَلَ وَاحِدَةً مِنَ الثَّلَاثِ، وَجَاءَ بِأَمْرٍ لَمْ يُعْرِفْ بَابَهُ، وَمَنْ تَسَلَّمَ مَعَاذِيرُهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 174

(1) *Al-Tusi, al-'Amali, I, 172;*

(2) *al-Khwarazmi, al-Manaqib, 117;*

(3) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 171, 282, II, 167, V, 66, 240;*

- (4) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat*;
- (5) *al-Tabari, al-Mustarshid, 95*;
- (6) *Ibn Tawus, Kashf, 173*;
- (7) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-Imamah, I, 154*.

Notes

1. It means that if Talhah considered `Uthman an oppressor, then after his assassination, instead of getting ready to avenge his blood, he should have supported his killers and justified their action. It is not the intention that in the case of `Uthman being in the wrong Talhah should have supported the attackers because he was already supporting and encouraging them.

Sermon 175: O people who are (negligent of Allah but) not neglected (by Allah)...

Warning to neglectful people, and about the vastness of his own knowledge

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في الموعدة وبيان قرباه من رسول الله

O people who are (negligent of Allah but) not neglected (by Allah), and those who miss (doing good acts) but are to be caught. How is it that I see you becoming removed from Allah and becoming interested in others? You are like the camel whom the grazer drives to a disease-stricken pasture and a disastrous watering place. They are like beasts who are fed in order to be slaughtered, but they do not know what is intended for them. When they are treated well they think that day to be their whole life, and eating their full to be their aim.

أَيُّهَا الْعَافِلُونَ غَيْرُ الْمَعْفُولِ عَنْهُمْ، وَالتَّارِكُونَ الْمَأْخُودُ مِنْهُمْ، مَا لِي أَرَاكُمْ عَنِ اللَّهِ ذَاهِبِينَ، وَإِلَى غَيْرِهِ زَاغِينَ! كَأَنَّكُمْ نَعَمَ أَرَاخَ بِهَا سَائِمٌ إِلَى مَرْعَىٰ وَيٍّ، وَمَشْرَبَ دَوِيٍّ، وَإِنَّمَا هِيَ كَالْمَعْلُوفَةِ لِلْمُدَىٰ لَا تَعْرِفُ مَاذَا يُرَادُ بِهَا! إِذَا أَحْسِنَ إِلَيْهَا تَحَسَّبَ يَوْمَهَا دَهْرَهَا، وَشَبَعَهَا أَمْرَهَا

By Allah, if I wish, I can tell every one of you from where he has come, where he has to go and all his affairs, but I fear lest you abandon the Messenger of Allah - peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his progeny - in my favour. I shall certainly convey these things to the selected ones who will remain safe from that fear. By Allah, Who deputed the Prophet with Right and distinguished him over creation. I do not speak save the truth. He (the Prophet) informed me of all this and also about the death of every one who dies, the salvation of every one who is granted salvation, and the consequences of this matter (the caliphate). He left nothing (that could) pass into my head without putting it in my ear and telling me about it.¹

وَاللَّهِ لَوْ شِئْتُ أَنْ أُخْبِرَ كُلَّ رَجُلٍ مِنْكُمْ بِمَخْرَجِهِ وَمَوْلَجِهِ وَجَمِيعِ شَأْنِهِ لَفَعَلْتُ، وَلَكِنْ أَخَافُ أَنْ تَكْفُرُوا بِي بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله). أَلَا وَإِنِّي مُفْضِيهِ إِلَى الْخَاصَّةِ مِمَّنْ يُؤْمِنُ ذَلِكَ مِنْهُ. وَالَّذِي بَعَثَهُ بِالْحَقِّ، وَاصْطَفَاهُ عَلَى الْخَلْقِ، مَا أَنْطِقُ إِلَّا صَادِقًا، وَقَدْ عَهَدَ إِلَيَّ بِذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ، وَمَهْلِكُ مَنْ يَهْلِكُ، وَمَنْجَى مَنْ يَنْجُو، وَمَالِ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ، وَمَا أَبْقَى شَيْئًا يَمُرُّ عَلَى رَأْسِي إِلَّا أَفْرَعَهُ فِي أَدْنَىٰ وَأَفْضَىٰ بِهِ إِلَيَّ.

O people! By Allah, I do not impel you to any obedience unless I practise it before you and do not restrain you from any disobedience unless I desist from it before you.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنِّي، وَاللَّهِ، مَا أَحْتُكُم عَلَى طَاعَةِ إِلَّا وَأَسْبِقُكُمْ إِلَيْهَا، وَلَا أَنهَاكُم عَنْ مَعْصِيَةٍ إِلَّا وَأَتْنَاهِي قَبْلَكُمْ عَنْهَا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 175

(1) *Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 191;*

(2) *See 'Abd al-Zahra', II, 422.*

Notes

1. Those who drink from the springs of revelation and divine inspiration see things hidden behind the curtains of the unknown and the events which will occur in the future in the same way as objects can be seen with the eyes, and this does not conflict with the saying of Allah that:

Say: "None (either) in the heavens or in the earth knoweth the unseen save Allah..." (Qur'an, 27:65)

because this verse contains the negation of personal knowledge of the unknown, but not the negation of knowledge which is required by the prophets and holy persons through divine inspiration, by virtue of which they make prophesies about the future and unveil many events and happenings. Several verses of the Qur'an support this view such as:

When the Prophet confided unto one of his wives a matter, but when she divulged it (unto others) and Allah apprised him thereof, he made known a part of it and avoided a part; so when he informed her of it, said she: "Who informed thee of this?" He said: "Informed me, the All-knowing, the All-aware." (Qur'an, 66:3)

These are of the tidings of the unseen which We reveal unto thee (O' Our Prophet Muhammad)...(Qur'an, 11:49)

Therefore, it is incorrect to argue in support of the view that if it is said that the prophets and holy persons possess knowledge of the unknown it would imply duality in the divine attributes. It would have implied duality if it were said that someone other than Allah has personal knowledge of the unknown. When it is not so and the knowledge possessed by the Prophets and Imams is that given by Allah it has no connection with duality. If duality should mean what is alleged, what would be the position of `Isa's (Jesus's) assertion related in the Qur'an namely:

. . . Out of clay will I make for you like the figure of a bird, and I will breathe into it, and it shall become a flying bird by Allah's permission; and I shall heal the blind and the leper and will rise the dead to life by Allah 's permission; and I will declare to you what ye eat and what ye store up in your houses. . . (Qur'an, 3:49)

If it is believed that `Isa (Jesus) could create and bestow life with Allah's permission does it mean that he was Allah's partner in the attributes of creation and revival? If this is not so then how can it be held that if Allah gives someone the knowledge of the unknown it implies that he has been taken to be His partner in His attributes, and how can one extol one's belief in the oneness of Allah by holding that the knowledge of the unknown implies duality.

No one can deny the fact that some people either see in dreams certain things which have yet to occur in the future, or that things can be read through interpretation of the dream, while during a dream neither do the senses function nor do the powers of understanding and comprehension co-operate. Therefore, if some events become known to some people in wakefulness why should there be amazement over it and what are the grounds for rejecting it, when it stands to reason that things possible in dreams are also possible in wakefulness. Thus, Ibn Maytham al-Bahrani has written that it is possible to achieve all this, because in a dream the spirit becomes free from looking after the body and is removed from bodily connections; as a result of this it perceives such hidden realities which could not be seen because of the obstruction of the body. In the same way those perfect beings who pay no heed to bodily matters, and turn with all the attention of spirit and heart towards the centre of knowledge can see those realities and secrets which the ordinary eyes are unable to discern. Therefore, keeping in view the spiritual greatness of Ahlul Bayt (members of the Prophet's family) it should not appear strange that they were aware of events which were going to occur in future. Ibn Khaldun has written:

"When thaumaturgic feats are performed by others what do you think about those who were distinguished in knowledge and honesty and were a mirror of the Prophet's traits, while the consideration Allah had for their noble root (namely the Prophet) is a proof of the high performances of his chaste off-shoots (Ahlul Bayt). Consequently many events about knowledge of the unknown are related about Ahlul Bayt which are not related about others.." (al-Muqaddamah, p. 23).

In this way there is no cause for wonder over Amir al-mu'minin's claim since he was brought up by the Prophet and was a pupil of Allah's school. Of course, those whose knowledge does not extend beyond the limits of physical objectivity and whose means of learning are confined to the bodily senses refuse to believe in the knowledge about the paths of divine cognisance and reality. If this kind of claim were unique and were heard only from over Amir al-mu'minin then minds could have wavered and temperaments could have hesitated in accepting it, but if the Qur'an records even such a claim of `Isa (Jesus) that - "I can tell you what you eat or drink or store in your houses," then why should there be hesitation over Amir al-mu'minin's claim, when it is agreed that Amir al-mu'minin had succeeded to all the attainments and distinctions of the Prophet and it cannot be contended that the Prophet did not know what `Isa (Jesus) knew. Thus, if the successor of the Prophet advances such a claim, why should it be rejected, particularly as this vastness of knowledge of Amir al-mu'minin is the best evidence and proof for the Prophet's knowledge and perfection and a living miracle of his truthfulness.

In this connection, it is amazing that even having knowledge of events Amir al-mu'minin did not, through any of his words or deeds, indicate that he knew them. Thus, commenting of the extraordinary importance of this claim, as-Sayyid Ibn Tawus writes: "An amazing aspect of this claim is that despite the fact that Amir al-mu'minin was aware of conditions and events, yet he observed such conduct by way of his words and deeds that one who saw him could not believe that he knew the secrets and unknown acts of others, because the wise agree that if a person knows what event is likely to take place or what step his comrade is going to take, or if the hidden secrets of people are known to him, then the effects of such knowledge would appear through his movements and the expressions of his face. But the man who, in spite of knowing everything, behaves in a way as though he is unaware and knows nothing, then his personality is a miracle and a combination of contradictions."

At this stage, the question arises as to why Amir al-mu'minin did not act upon the dictates of his secret knowledge. The reply to this is that the commands of the shari'ah are based on apparent conditions. Otherwise secret knowledge is a kind of miracle and power which Allah grants to His prophets and Imams. Although the prophets and Imams possess this power always, they cannot make use of it at any time unless and until by the permission of Allah and on the proper occasion. For example, the verse quoted above about `Isa (Jesus) which tells that he had the power to give life, to heal the blind and declare what one ate and stored in his house, etc., he (Jesus) did not used to practise this power on every thing or every corpse or everyone who met him. He used to practise this power only by the permission of Allah and on the proper occasion.

If prophets and other divines acted on the basis of their secret knowledge it would have meant serious dislocation and disturbance in the affairs of the people. For example, if a prophet or divine, on the basis of his secret knowledge, punishes a condemnable man by killing him, there would be great commotion and agitation among those who see it on the ground that he killed an innocent man. That is why Allah has not permitted the basing of conclusions on secret knowledge save in a few special cases, and has enjoined the following of observable factors. Thus, despite his being aware of the hypocrisy of some of the hypocrites, the Prophet extended to them the treatment that should be extended to a Muslim.

Now, there can be no scope for the objection that if Amir al-mu'minin knew secret matters then why did he not act according to them because it has been shown that he was not obliged to act according to the requirements of his secret knowledge. Of course, where conditions so required he did disclose some matters for the purposes of preaching, admonishing, giving good tidings (of reward) or warning (against punishment), so that future events could be fore-closed. For example, Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq (p.b.u.h.) informed Yahya ibn Zayd that if he went out he would be killed. Ibn Khaldun writes in this

connection: "It has been authentically related from Imam Ja`far as-Sadiq that he used to apprise some of his relations of the events to befall them. For example, he warned his cousin Yahya ibn Zayd of being killed but he disobeyed him and went out and was killed in Juzajan." (al-Muqaddamah, p. 233).

Nevertheless, where there was apprehension that minds would get worried it was not at all disclosed. That is why in this sermon Amir al-mu'minin avoided more details, in view of the fear that people would begin to regard him higher than the Prophet. Despite all this people did go astray about `Isa (Jesus), and in the same way about Amir al-mu'minin also they began to say all sorts of things and were misled into resorting to exaggeration.

Sermon 176: Seek benefit from the sayings of Allah...

Admonishing the people, expounding the excellences of the Qu'ran and forbidding innovation

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

وفيها يعظ ويبيّن فضل القرآن وينهى عن البدعة

Admonishing the people

[عظة الناس]

(O creatures!) Seek benefit from the sayings of Allah, be admonished of Allah and accept the advice of Allah because Allah has left no excuse for you by providing clear guidance, has put before you the plea and clarified for you what acts He likes and what acts He hates, so that you may follow the one and avoid the other. The Prophet of Allah used to say. "Paradise is surrounded by unpleasant things while Hell is surrounded by desires."

انْتَفِعُوا بِبَيَانِ اللَّهِ، وَاتَّعِظُوا بِمَوَاعِظِ اللَّهِ، وَاقْبَلُوا نَصِيحَةَ اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى قَدْ أَعَدَّ لَكُمْ بِالْجَلِيَّةِ، وَاتَّخَذَ عَلَيْكُمْ الْحُجَّةَ، وَبَيَّنَّ لَكُمْ مَحَابَّةَ مِنَ الْأَعْمَالِ، وَمَكَارِهَهُ مِنْهَا، لِتَتَّبِعُوا هَذِهِ، وَتُجْتَنَّبُوا هَذِهِ، فَإِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) كَانَ يَقُولُ: «إِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ حُفَّتْ بِالْمَكَارِهِ، وَإِنَّ النَّارَ حُفَّتْ بِالشَّهَوَاتِ.»

You should know that every obedience to Allah is unpleasant in appearance while every disobedience to Allah has the appearance of enjoyment. Allah may have mercy on the person who kept aloof from his desire and uprooted the appetite of his heart, because this heart has far-reaching aims and it goes on pursuing disobedience through desires.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ مَا مِنْ طَاعَةٍ لِلَّهِ شَيْءٌ إِلَّا يَأْتِي فِي كُرْهِهِ، وَمَا مِنْ مَعْصِيَةٍ لِلَّهِ شَيْءٌ إِلَّا يَأْتِي فِي شَهْوَةٍ. فَرَجِمَ اللَّهُ رَجُلًا نَزَعَ عَنِ شَهْوَتِهِ، وَقَمَعَ هَوَى نَفْسِهِ، فَإِنَّ هَذِهِ النَّفْسَ أَبْعَدُ شَيْءٍ مَنْرَعًا، وَإِنَّهَا لَا تَزَالُ تَنْزِعُ إِلَى مَعْصِيَةٍ فِي هَوَى.

You should know, O creatures of Allah, that a believer should be distrustful of his heart every morning and evening. He should always blame it (for shortcomings) and ask it to add to (its good acts). You should behave like those who have gone before you and the precedents in front of you. They left this world like a traveller and covered it as distance is covered.

وَاعْلَمُوا . عِبَادَ اللَّهِ . أَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ لَا يُصْبِحُ وَلَا يُمَسِي إِلَّا وَنَفْسُهُ ظَنُونٌ عِنْدَهُ، فَلَا يَزَالُ زَارِيًا عَلَيْهَا وَمُسْتَزِيدًا لَهَا، فَكُونُوا كَالسَّابِقِينَ قَبْلَكُمْ، وَالْمَاضِينَ أَمَامَكُمْ، فَوَضُّوا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا تَفْوِيضَ الرَّاحِلِ، وَطَوَّوْهَا طَيَّ الْمَنَازِلِ.

The greatness of the Holy Qur'an

فضل القرآن

And know that this Qur'an is an adviser who never deceives, a leader who never misleads and a narrator who never speaks a lie. No one will sit beside this Qur'an but that when he rises he will achieve one addition or one diminution - addition in his guidance or elimination in his (spiritual) blindness. You should also know that no one will need anything after (guidance from) the Qur'an and no one will be free from want before (guidance from) the Qur'an.

Therefore, seek cure from it for your ailments and seek its assistance in your distresses. It contains a cure for the biggest diseases, namely unbelief, hypocrisy, revolt and misguidance. Pray to Allah through it and turn to Allah with its love. Do not ask the people through it. There is nothing like it through which the people should turn to Allah, the Sublime.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ هُوَ النَّاصِحُ الَّذِي لَا يُعْشُ، وَالْهَادِي الَّذِي لَا يُضِلُّ، وَالْمُحَدِّثُ الَّذِي لَا يَكْذِبُ، وَمَا جَالَسَ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا قَامَ عَنْهُ بِزِيَادَةٍ أَوْ نُقْصَانٍ: زِيَادَةٌ فِي هُدًى، أَوْ نُقْصَانٍ مِنْ عَمَى.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ عَلَى أَحَدٍ بَعْدَ الْقُرْآنِ مِنْ فَاقَةٍ، وَلَا لِأَحَدٍ قَبْلَ الْقُرْآنِ مِنْ غِيٍّ؛ فَاسْتَشْفُوهُ مِنْ أَدْوَائِكُمْ، وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِهِ عَلَى لَأْوَائِكُمْ، فَإِنَّ فِيهِ شِفَاءً مِنْ أَكْبَرِ الدَّاءِ، وَهُوَ الْكُفْرُ وَالنِّفَاقُ، وَالْغِيُّ وَالضَّلَالُ، فَاسْأَلُوا اللَّهَ بِهِ، وَتَوَجَّهُوا إِلَيْهِ بِحُبِّهِ، وَلَا تَسْأَلُوا بِهِ خَلْقَهُ، إِنَّهُ مَا تَوَجَّهَ الْعِبَادُ إِلَى اللَّهِ بِمِثْلِهِ.

Know that it is an interceder and its intercession will be accepted. It is a speaker who is testified. For whoever the Qur'an intercedes on the Day of Judgement, its intercession for him would be accepted. He about whom the Qur'an speaks ill on the Day of Judgement shall testify to it. On the Day of Judgement an announcer will announce, "Beware. every sower of a crop is in distress except the sowers of the Qur'an."

Therefore, you should be among the sowers of the Qur'an and its followers. Make it your guide towards Allah. Seek its advice for yourselves, do not trust your views against it. and regard your desires in the matter of the Qur'an as deceitful.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ شَافِعٌ مُشَفَّعٌ، وَقَائِلٌ مُصَدِّقٌ، وَأَنَّهُ مَنْ شَفَعَ لَهُ الْقُرْآنُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ شَفَعَ فِيهِ، وَمَنْ مَحَلَّ بِهِ الْقُرْآنُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ صَدَّقَ عَلَيْهِ، فَإِنَّهُ يُنَادِي مُنَادٍ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ: أَلَا إِنَّ كُلَّ حَارِثٍ مُبْتَلَى فِي حَرْثِهِ وَعَاقِبَةُ عَمَلِهِ، غَيْرَ حَرْثَةِ الْقُرْآنِ؛ فَكُونُوا مِنْ حَرْثَتِهِ وَأَتْبَاعِهِ، وَاسْتَدِلُّوهُ عَلَى رَبِّكُمْ، وَاسْتَنْصِحُوهُ عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَاتَّهَمُوا عَلَيْهِ آرَاءَكُمْ، وَاسْتَعِشُّوا فِيهِ أَهْوَاءَكُمْ.

About the believers and their good deeds; and the hypocrites and their bad deeds

الحث على العمل

Action! action! Then (look at) the end; the end, and (remain) steadfast; steadfast. Thereafter (exercise) endurance, endurance, and piety, piety. You have an objective. Proceed towards your objective. You have a sign. Take guidance from your sign. Islam has an objective. Proceed towards its objective. Proceed towards Allah's by fulfilling His rights which He has enjoined upon you. He has clearly stated His demands for you. I am a witness for you and shall plead excuses on your behalf on the Day of Judgement.

الْعَمَلِ الْعَمَلِ، ثُمَّ النَّهْيَةَ النَّهْيَةَ، وَالاسْتِقَامَةَ الاسْتِقَامَةَ، ثُمَّ الصَّبْرَ الصَّبْرَ، وَالْوَرَعَ الْوَرَعَ!
إِنَّ لَكُمْ نَهْيَةً فَأَنْتَهُوا إِلَى نَهْيِكُمْ، وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ عِلْمًا فَاهْتَدُوا بِعِلْمِكُمْ، وَإِنَّ لِلْإِسْلَامِ غَايَةً فَأَنْتَهُوا
إِلَى غَايَتِهِ، وَاحْزِرُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ بِمَا افْتَرَضَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَقِّهِ، وَبَيَّنَّ لَكُمْ مِنْ وَظَائِفِهِ. أَنَا شَاهِدٌ
لَكُمْ، وَحَجِيجٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَنْكُمْ.

Beware! What had been ordained has occurred and that which had been destined has come into play. I am speaking to you with the promise and pleas of Allah. Allah the Sublime, has said:

Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is Allah" and persevere aright, the angels descend upon them (saying): "Fear ye not, nor be grieved, and receive the glad tidings of the Garden which ye were promised." (Qur'an, 41:30)

You have said. "Our Lord is Allah." Then keep steadfast to His Book, to the way of His command and to the virtuous course of His worship. Thereafter do not go out of it, do not introduce innovations in it, and do not turn away from it, because those who go away from this course will be cut off from (the mercy of) Allah on the Day of Judgement.

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الْقَدَرَ السَّابِقَ قَدْ وَقَعَ، وَالْقَضَاءَ الْمَاضِيَ قَدْ تَوَرَّدَ، وَإِنِّي مُتَكَلِّمٌ بِعِدَّةِ اللَّهِ وَحُجَّتِهِ،
قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أُنَّ لَا تَخَافُوا وَلَا
تَخْزُونَ وَأَبْشُرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ، وَقَدْ قُلْتُمْ: رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ، فَاسْتَقِيمُوا عَلَى كِتَابِهِ، وَعَلَى
مَنْهَاجِ أَمْرِهِ، وَعَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ الصَّالِحَةِ مِنْ عِبَادَتِهِ، ثُمَّ لَا تَمُرُّوا مِنْهَا، وَلَا تَبْتَدِعُوا فِيهَا، وَلَا
تُخَالِفُوا عَنْهَا; فَإِنَّ أَهْلَ الْمُرُوقِ مُنْقَطِعٌ بِهِمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

Counselling people

نصائح للناس

Beware from destroying your manners and changing them, maintaining one tongue. A man should control his tongue because the tongue is obstinate with its master. By Allah, I do not find that fear of Allah benefits a man who practises it unless he controls his tongue. Certainly the tongue of a believer is at the back of his heart while the heart of a hypocrite is at the back of his tongue; because, when a believer intends to say anything, he thinks it over in his mind. If it is good he discloses it, but if it is bad he lets it remain concealed. While a hypocrite speaks whatever comes to his tongue, without knowing what is in his favour and what goes against him.

ثُمَّ إِيَّاكُمْ وَتَهْزِيعَ الْأَخْلَاقِ وَتَصْرِيْفَهَا، وَاجْعَلُوا اللِّسَانَ وَاحِدًا، وَلِيَحْتَرِنَ الرَّجُلُ لِسَانَهُ، فَإِنَّ هَذَا اللِّسَانَ جُمُوحٌ بِصَاحِبِهِ، وَاللَّهُ مَا أَرَى عَبْدًا يَتَّقِي تَفْوَى تَنْفَعُهُ حَتَّى يَحْتَرِنَ لِسَانَهُ، وَإِنَّ لِسَانَ الْمُؤْمِنِ مِنْ وَرَاءِ قَلْبِهِ، وَإِنَّ قَلْبَ الْمُنَافِقِ مِنْ وَرَاءِ لِسَانِهِ: لِأَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ إِذَا أَرَادَ أَنْ يَتَكَلَّمَ بِكَلَامٍ تَدَبَّرَهُ فِي نَفْسِهِ، فَإِنْ كَانَ خَيْرًا أَبَدَاهُ، وَإِنْ كَانَ شَرًّا وَارَاهُ، وَإِنَّ الْمُنَافِقَ يَتَكَلَّمُ بِمَا أَتَى عَلَى لِسَانِهِ لَا يَدْرِي مَاذَا لَهُ، وَمَاذَا عَلَيْهِ،

The Prophet of Allah - peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants - said: "The belief of a person cannot be firm unless his heart is firm, and his heart cannot be firm unless his tongue is firm." So whoever of you can manage to meet Allah, the Sublime, in such a position that his hands are unsmearred with the blood of Muslims and their property and his tongue is safe from exposing them, he should do so.

وَلَقَدْ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): «لَا يَسْتَقِيمُ إِيْمَانُ عَبْدٍ حَتَّى يَسْتَقِيمَ قَلْبُهُ، وَلَا يَسْتَقِيمُ قَلْبُهُ حَتَّى يَسْتَقِيمَ لِسَانُهُ»; فَمَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَلْقَى اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَهُوَ نَفْسِي الرَّاحَةِ مِنْ دِمَائِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ، سَلِّمِ اللِّسَانَ مِنْ أَعْرَاضِهِمْ، فَلْيَفْعَلْ.

Following the sunnah and refraining from innovation

تحريم البدع

Know, O creatures of Allah, that a believer should regard lawful this year what he regarded lawful in the previous year, and should consider unlawful this year what he considered unlawful in the previous year. Certainly people's innovation cannot make lawful for you what has been declared unlawful; rather, lawful is that which Allah has made lawful and unlawful is that which Allah has made unlawful. You have already tested the matters and tried them; you have been preached by those before you. Illustrations have been drawn for you and you have been called to clear fact. Only a deaf man can remain deaf to all this, and only a blind man can remain blind to all this.

وَاعْلَمُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ أَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ يَسْتَحِلُّ الْعَامَ مَا اسْتَحَلَ عَامًا أَوَّلًا، وَيُحَرِّمُ الْعَامَ مَا حَرَّمَ عَامًا أَوَّلًا، وَأَنَّ مَا أَحَدَثَ النَّاسُ لَا يُجِلُّ لَكُمْ شَيْئًا مِمَّا حَرَّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَلَكِنَّ الْحَلَالَ مَا أَحَلَّ اللَّهُ، وَالْحَرَامَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ، فَقَدْ جَرَّبْتُمُ الْأُمُورَ وَضَرَسْتُمُوهَا، وَوَعِظْتُمُ بِمَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ، وَضُرِبَتِ الْأَمْثَالُ لَكُمْ، وَدُعِيتُمْ إِلَى الْأَمْرِ الْوَاضِحِ; فَلَا يَصُمُّ عَنْ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا أَصَمُّ، وَلَا يَعْمَى عَنْهُ إِلَّا أَعْمَى.

He whom Allah does not allow benefit from trials and experience cannot benefit from preaching. He will be faced with losses from in front, so that he will approve what is bad and disapprove what is good. People are of two categories - the follower of the shari`ah (religious laws), and the follower of the innovations to whom Allah has not given any testimony by way of sunnah or the light of any plea.

وَمَنْ لَمْ يَنْفَعَهُ اللَّهُ بِالْبَلَاءِ وَالْتَّجَارِبِ لَمْ يَنْتَفِعْ بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْعِظَةِ، وَأَتَاهُ التَّقْصِيرُ مِنْ أَمَامِهِ، حَتَّى يَعْرِفَ مَا أَنْكَرَ، وَيُنْكِرَ مَا عَرَفَ. وَإِنَّمَا النَّاسُ رَجُلَانِ: مُتَّبِعٌ شَرِّعَةً، وَمُتَّبِدِعٌ بِدْعَةً، لَيْسَ مَعَهُ مِنَ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ بُرْهَانٌ سُنَّةً، وَلَا ضِيَاءٌ حُجَّةً.

Guidance from the Holy Qur'an

القرآن

Allah the Glorified, has not counselled anyone on the lines of this Qur'an, for it is the strong rope of Allah and His trustworthy means. It contains the blossoming of the heart and springs of knowledge. For the heart there is no other gloss than the Qur'an although those who remembered it have passed away while those who forgot or pretended to have forgotten it have remained. If you see any good give your support to it, but if you see evil evade it, because the Messenger of Allah used to say: "O son of Adam, do good and evade evil; by doing so you will be treading correctly."

وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ لَمْ يَعِظْ أَحَدًا بِمِثْلِ هَذَا الْقُرْآنِ، فَإِنَّهُ حَبْلُ اللَّهِ الْمَتِينُ، وَسَبَبُهُ الْأَمِينُ، وَفِيهِ رَيْعُ الْقَلْبِ، وَبَيْنَايِعُ الْعِلْمِ، وَمَا لِلْقَلْبِ جَلَاءٌ غَيْرُهُ، مَعَ أَنَّهُ قَدْ ذَهَبَ الْمُتَذَكِّرُونَ، وَبَقِيَ النَّاسُونَ أَوْ الْمُتَنَاسُونَ. فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمْ خَيْرًا فَأَعِينُوا عَلَيْهِ، وَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمْ شَرًّا فَادْهَبُوا عَنْهُ، فَإِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) كَانَ يَقُولُ: «يَا بَنَ آدَمَ، اْعْمَلِ الْخَيْرَ وَدَعْ الشَّرَّ، فَإِذَا أَنْتَ جَوَادٌ قَاصِدٌ»

Categories of oppression

أنواع الظلم

Know that injustice is of three kinds - one, the injustice that will not be forgiven, another, that will not be left unquestioned, and another that will be forgiven without being questioned. The injustice that will not be forgiven is duality of Allah. Allah has said:

Verily Allah forgiveth not that (anything) be associated with Him ... (Qur'an, 4:48,116).

The injustice that will be forgiven is the injustice a man does to himself by committing small sins; and the injustice that will not be left unquestioned is the injustice of men against other men. The retribution in such a case is severe. It is not wounding with knives, nor striking with whips, but it is so severe that all these things are small against it. You should therefore avoid change in the matter of Allah's religion for your unity in respect of a right which you dislike is better than your scattering away in respect of a wrong that you like. Certainly, Allah the Glorified has not given any person, whether among the dead or among those who survive, any good from separation.

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الظُّلْمَ ثَلَاثَةٌ: فَظُلْمٌ لَا يُعْفَرُ، وَظُلْمٌ لَا يُتْرَكُ، وَظُلْمٌ مَعْفُورٌ لَا يُطْلَبُ:

فَأَمَّا الظُّلْمَ الَّذِي لَا يُعْفَرُ فَالتَّشْرِكُ بِاللَّهِ، قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: (إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ) وَأَمَّا
الظُّلْمَ الَّذِي يُعْفَرُ فَظُلْمُ الْعَبْدِ نَفْسَهُ عِنْدَ بَعْضِ الْهَنَاتِ. وَأَمَّا الظُّلْمَ الَّذِي لَا يُتْرَكُ فَظُلْمُ الْعِبَادِ
بَعْضِهِمْ بَعْضًا.

الْقَصَاصُ هُنَاكَ شَدِيدٌ، لَيْسَ هُوَ جَرْحًا بِالْمُدَى وَلَا ضَرْبًا بِالسِّيَاطِ، وَلَكِنَّهُ مَا يُسْتَصْعَرُ
ذَلِكَ مَعَهُ. فَإَيَّاكُمْ وَالتَّلَوْنَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّ جَمَاعَةً فِيمَا تَكْرَهُونَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ، خَيْرٌ مِنْ فُرْقَةٍ فِيمَا
تُحِبُّونَ مِنَ الْبَاطِلِ، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ لَمْ يُعْطِ أَحَدًا بِفُرْقَةٍ خَيْرًا مِمَّنْ مَضَى، وَلَا يَمُنُّ بِقِيٍّ.

O people, blessed is the man whose own shortcomings keep him away from (looking into) the shortcomings of others, and also blessed is the man who is confined to his house, eats his meal, buries himself in obeying his Allah. and weeps over his sins, so that he is engaged in himself and people are in safety from him.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ طُوبَى لِمَنْ شَعَلَهُ عَيْبُهُ عَنْ غُيُوبِ النَّاسِ، وَطُوبَى لِمَنْ لَزِمَ بَيْتَهُ، وَأَكَلَ قُوتَهُ،
وَاشْتَعَلَ بِطَاعَةِ رَبِّهِ، وَبَكَى عَلَى خَطِيئَتِهِ، فَكَانَ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ فِي شُعْلِ، وَالنَّاسُ مِنْهُ فِي رَاحَةٍ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 176

- (1) *Al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, 219;*
- (2) *al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, II, 443;*
- (3) *al-Barqi, al-Mahasin, 6;*
- (4) *al-Saduq, al-'Amali, 153;*
- (5) *al-'Ayyashi, Tafsir, II, 262;*
- (6) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 71.*

Sermon 177: Your party had decided to select two persons...

About the two arbiters (after the battle of Siffin)

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في معنى الحكّمين

Your party had decided to select two persons, and so we took their pledge that they would act according to the Qur'an and would not commit excess, that their tongues should be with it and that their hearts should follow it. But they deviated from it, abandoned what was right although they had it before their eyes. Wrong-doing was their desire, and going astray was their behaviour. Although we had settled with them to decide with justice, to act according to the light and without the interference of their evil views and wrong judgement. Now that they have abandoned the course of right and have come out with just the opposite of what was settled, we have strong ground (to reject their verdict).

فَأَجْمَعَ رَأْيِي مَلْفِكُمْ عَلَى أَنْ اخْتَارُوا رَجُلَيْنِ، فَأَخَذْنَا عَلَيْهِمَا أَنْ يُجْعِجَعَا عِنْدَ الْقُرْآنِ، وَلَا يُجَاوِزَاهُ، وَتَكُونَ أَلْسِنَتُهُمَا مَعَهُ وَقُلُوبُهُمَا تَبَعُهُ، فَتَاهَا عَنْهُ، وَتَرَكَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمَا يُبْصِرَانِهِ، وَكَانَ الْجَوْرُ هَوَاهُمَا، وَالْأَعْوَجَاجُ دَابَّهُمَا، وَقَدْ سَبَقَ اسْتِثْنَاؤُنَا عَلَيْهِمَا فِي الْحُكْمِ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْعَمَلِ بِالْحَقِّ سُوءَ رَأْيِهِمَا وَجَوْرَ حُكْمِهِمَا، وَالثَّقَّةُ فِي أَيْدِينَا لِأَنْفُسِنَا، حِينَ خَالَفَا سَبِيلَ الْحَقِّ، وَأَتَيَا بِمَا لَا يُعْرَفُ مِنْ مَعْكُوسِ الْحُكْمِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 177

(1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, V, 48 (chronicle of the year 37) from Abu Mikhnaf.*

Sermon 178: One condition does not prevent Him...

Praise of Allah, transience of this world, and causes of the decline of Allah's blessings. (Delivered at the beginning of his caliphate after the killing of `Uthman)

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في الشهادة والتقوى

[وقيل: إنه خطبها بعد مقتل عثمان في أول خلافته]

One condition does not prevent Him from (getting into) another condition, time does not change Him, place does not locate him and the tongue does not describe Him. The number of drops of water, of stars in the sky, or of currents of winds in the air are not unknown to Him, nor the movements of ants on rocks, or the resting place of grubs in the dark night. He knows the places where leaves fall, and the secret movements of the pupils of the eyes.

لَا يَشْعَلُهُ شَأْنٌ، وَلَا يُعَيِّرُهُ زَمَانٌ، وَلَا يَحْوِيهِ مَكَانٌ، وَلَا يَصِفُهُ لِسَانٌ، وَلَا يَعْرُبُ عَنْهُ عَدْدٌ
قَطْرِ الْمَاءِ، وَلَا نُجُومِ السَّمَاءِ، وَلَا سَوَافِي الرِّيحِ فِي الْهَوَاءِ، وَلَا ذَيْبِ النَّمْلِ عَلَى الصَّفَا، وَلَا
مَقِيلِ الذَّرِّ فِي اللَّيْلَةِ الظَّلْمَاءِ. يَعْلَمُ مَسَاقِطَ الْأُزْرَاقِ، وَخَفِيِّ طَرْفِ الْأَخْدَاقِ.

I stand witness that there is no god but Allah, Who has no parallel, Who is not doubted, Whose religion is not denied and Whose creativeness is not questioned. My witnessing is like that of a man whose intention is free, whose conscience is clear, whose belief is pure and whose loads (of good actions) are heavy. I also stand witness that Muhammad - the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his progeny - is His slave and His Messenger, chosen from His creations, selected for detailing His realities, picked for His selected honours and chosen for His esteemed messages. Through him the signs of guidance have been lighted and the gloom of blindness (misguidance) has been dispelled.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ غَيْرَ مَعْدُولٍ بِهِ، وَلَا مَشْكُوكٍ فِيهِ، وَلَا مَكْفُورٍ دِينُهُ، وَلَا مَجْحُودٍ
تَكْوِينُهُ، شَهَادَةٌ مِنْ صِدْقَتِ نَبِيِّتِهِ، وَصَفَتْ دِخْلَتَهُ، وَخَلَصَ يَقِينُهُ، وَتَقَلَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ. وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ
مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، الْمُجْتَبَى مِنْ خَلَائِقِهِ، وَالْمُعْتَمَدُ لِشَرْحِ حَقَائِقِهِ، وَالْمُخْتَصَّ بِعَقَائِلِ
كَرَامَاتِهِ، وَالْمُصْطَفَى لِكِرَائِمِ رِسَالَاتِهِ، وَالْمُوضَّحَةُ بِهِ أَشْرَاطُ الْهُدَى، وَالْمَجْلُوبُ بِهِ غَرْبِيبِ
الْعَمَى.

O people, surely this world deceives him who longs for it and who is attracted towards it. It does not behave niggardly with him who aspires for it and overpowers him who overpowers it. By Allah, no people are deprived of the lively pleasures of life after enjoying them, except as a result of sins committed by them, because certainly Allah is not unjust to His creatures.

Even then, when calamities descend upon people and pleasures depart from them, they turn towards Allah with true intention and the feeling in their hearts that He will return them everything that has fled from them and cure all their ills.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا تَعُرُّ الْمُؤْمِلَ لَهَا وَالْمُخْلِدَ إِلَيْهَا، وَلَا تَنْفَسُ بِمَنْ نَافَسَ فِيهَا، وَتَعْلِبُ مَنْ غَلَبَ عَلَيْهَا. وَإِيْمُ اللَّهِ، مَا كَانَ قَوْمٌ قَطُّ فِي غَضِّ نِعْمَةٍ مِنْ عَيْشٍ فَرَّالٍ عَنْهُمْ إِلَّا يَدُنُوبٍ اجْتَرَحُوهَا، لِإِنَّ (اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَّامٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ) وَلَوْ أَنَّ النَّاسَ حِينَ تَنْزِلُ بِهِمُ النَّعْمُ، وَتَزُولُ عَنْهُمْ النَّعْمُ، فَرَعُوا إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ بِصِدْقٍ مِنْ تِيَابَتِهِمْ، وَوَلَهُ مِنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ، لَرَدَّ عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ شَارِدٍ، وَأَصْلَحَ لَهُمْ كُلَّ فَاسِدٍ،

I fear about you lest you fall into ignorance (that prevailed before the appearance of the Prophet). In the past there were certain matters in which you were deflected, and in my view you were not worthy of admiration; but if your previous position could be returned to you then you would become virtuous. I can only strive; but if I were to speak I would (only) say may Allah forgive your past actions.

وَإِيَّيَّيْ لَأَحْشَى عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونُوا فِي فِتْرَةٍ، وَقَدْ كَانَتْ أُمُورٌ مَضَتْ، مِلْنِمَ فِيهَا مَيْلَةٌ، كُنْتُمْ فِيهَا عِنْدِي عَيْرٌ مَحْمُودِينَ، وَلَيْزُنْ رُدَّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَمْرُكُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَسَعْدَاءُ، وَمَا عَلَيَّ إِلَّا الْجُهْدُ، وَلَوْ أَشَاءُ أَنْ أَقُولَ لَقُلْتُ: عَفَا اللَّهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 178

- (1) *Al-Wasiti, `Uyun al-hikam, see al-Majlisi, Bihar, vol. 77, 307;*
- (2) *al-Saduq, al-Khisal, II, 163;*
- (3) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, 162;*
- (4) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, III, 282 (`a.q.l.).*

Sermon 179: Eyes cannot see Him...

Dhi`lib al-Yamani asked Amir al-mu'minin whether he had seen Allah, when he replied, "Do I worship one whom I have not seen?" Then he enquired, "How have you seen Him?" Then Amir al-mu'minin replied:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

وقد سأله ذِعلَبُ اليماني فقال: هل رأيت ربك يا أميرالمؤمنين؟

فقال (عليه السلام): أَفَأَعْبُدُ مَا لَا أَرَى؟

قال: قال: وكيف تراه؟

Eyes cannot see Him face to face, but hearts perceive Him through the realities of belief. He is near to things but not (physically) contiguous. He is far from them but not (physically) separate. He is a speaker, but not with reflection. He intends, but not with preparation. He moulds, but not with (the assistance of) limbs. He is subtle but cannot be attributed with being concealed. He is great but cannot be attributed with haughtiness. He sees but cannot be attributed with the sense (of sight). He is Merciful but cannot be attributed with weakness of heart. Faces feel low before His greatness and hearts tremble out of fear of Him.

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْعُيُونُ بِمُشَاهَدَةِ الْعِيَانِ، وَلَكِنْ تُدْرِكُهُ الْقُلُوبُ بِحَقَائِقِ الْإِيمَانِ، قَرِيبٌ مِنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ
عَبِيدٌ مِنْهَا غَيْرٌ مُبَايِنٌ، مُتَكَلِّمٌ بِلَا رَوِيَّةٍ، مُرِيدٌ بِلَا هَمَّةٍ، صَانِعٌ لَا بِجَارِحَةٍ، لَطِيفٌ
لَا يُوصَفُ بِالْحَفَاءِ، كَبِيرٌ لَا يُوصَفُ بِالْجَفَاءِ، بَصِيرٌ لَا يُوصَفُ بِالْحَاسَةِ، رَحِيمٌ لَا يُوصَفُ
بِالرَّقَّةِ، تَعْنُو الْوُجُوهُ لِعَظَمَتِهِ، وَتَحِبُّ الْقُلُوبُ مِنْ خَافَتِهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 179

- (1) *Al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, I, 98, 138;*
- (2) *al-Saduq, al-Tawhid, 96, 320, 324;*
- (3) *al-Saduq, al-'Amali, 205;*
- (4) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 131;*
- (5) *al-Mufid, al-'Ikhtisas, 236;*
- (6) *Sibt, Tadhkirah, 157.*

Sermon 180: I praise Allah for whatever matter He ordained...

Condemning his disobedient men

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في ذمّ العصاة من أصحابه

I praise Allah for whatever matter He ordained and whatever action He destines and for my trial with you, O group of people who do not obey when I order and do not respond when I call you. If you are at ease you engage in (conceited) conversation, but if you are faced with battle you show weakness.

If people agree on one Imam you taunt them. If you are faced with an arduous matter you turn away from it. May others have no father (woe to your enemy!) what are you waiting for in the matter of your assistance and for fighting for your rights? For you there is either death or disgrace. By Allah, if my day (of death) comes. and it is sure to come, it will cause separation between me and you while I am sick of your company and feel alone although I am with you.

أَحْمَدُ اللهُ عَلَى مَا قَضَى مِنْ أَمْرٍ، وَقَدَّرَ مِنْ فِعْلٍ، وَعَلَى ابْتِلَائِي بِكُمْ أَيَّتُهَا الْفِرْقَةُ الَّتِي إِذَا أَمَرْتُ لَمْ تُطِيعْ، وَإِذَا دَعَوْتُ لَمْ تُجِبْ، إِنْ أُمِّهَلْتُمْ حُضُنْتُمْ، وَإِنْ حُورِبْتُمْ حُرِّمْتُمْ، وَإِنْ اجْتَمَعَ النَّاسُ عَلَى إِمَامٍ طَعَنْتُمْ، وَإِنْ أُجِئْتُمْ إِلَى مُشَاقَّةٍ نَكَصْتُمْ.

لَا أَبَا لِعَيْرِكُمْ! مَا تَنْتَظِرُونَ بِنَصْرِكُمْ وَالْجِهَادِ عَلَى حَقِّكُمْ؟ الْمَوْتُ أَوْ الدَّلُّ لَكُمْ؟ فَوَاللَّهِ لَئِنْ جَاءَ يَوْمِي . وَلِيَأْتِيَنِي . لَيُفَرِّقَنَّ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَكُمْ وَأَنَا لِصُحْبَتِكُمْ قَال، وَبِكُمْ غَيْرُ كَثِير .

May Allah deal with you! Is there no religion which may unite you or sense of shamefulfulness that may sharpen you? Is it not strange that Mu`awiyah calls out to some rude low people and they follow him without any support or grant, but when I call you, although you are the successors of Islam and the (worthy) survivors of the people, with support and distributed grants you scatter away from me and oppose me?

Truly, there is nothing between me to you which I like and you also like it, or with which I am angry and you may also unite against it. What I love most is death. I have taught you the Qur'an, clarified to you arguments, apprised you of what you were ignorant and made you swallow what you were spitting out. Even a blind man would have been able to see, and he who was sleeping would have been awakened. How ignorant of Allah is their leader Mu`awiyah and their instructor Ibn an-Nabighah! ¹

لِلَّهِ أَنْتُمْ! أَمَا دِينَ يَجْمَعُكُمْ! وَلَا حَمِيَّةَ تَشْحَدُكُمْ! أَوْلَيْسَ عَجَبًا أَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ يَدْعُو الْجُفَاءَةَ الطَّعَامَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَهُ عَلَى غَيْرِ مَعُونَةٍ وَلَا عَطَاءٍ، وَأَنَا أَدْعُوكُمْ . وَأَنْتُمْ تَرِيكُهُ الْأَسْلَامَ، وَبِقِيَّةِ النَّاسِ . إِلَى الْمَعُونَةِ أَوْ طَائِفَةٍ مِنَ الْعَطَاءِ، فَتَفَرِّقُونَ عَنِّي وَتَحْتَلِفُونَ عَلَيَّ؟ إِنَّهُ لَا يَخْرُجُ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِي

رَضِيَ فَتَرَضَوْنَهُ، وَلَا سُخْطٌ فَتَجْتَمِعُونَ عَلَيْهِ، وَإِنَّ أَحَبَّ مَا أَنَا لَأَقِ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ! قَدْ دَارَسْتُمْ
الْكِتَابَ، وَفَاتَحْتُمْ الْحِجَابَ، وَعَرَفْتُمْ مَا أَنْكَرْتُمْ، وَسَوَّعْتُمْ مَا مَجَّحْتُمْ، لَوْ كَانَ الْأَعْمَى
يَلْحَظُ، أَوْ النَّائِمُ يَسْتَيْقِظُ! وَأَقْرَبُ بِقَوْمٍ مِنَ الْجَهْلِ بِاللَّهِ قَائِدُهُمْ مُعَاوِيَةُ! وَمُؤَدِّبُهُمْ ابْنُ النَّابِغَةِ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 180

- (1) *Al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, I, 291;*
- (2) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 60, events of 38 H.;*
- (3) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 188 (t.r.k).*

Notes

1. "an-Nabighah" is the surname of Layla bint Harmalah al-`Anaziyyah, mother of `Amr ibn al-`As. The reason for attributing him to his mother is her common reputation in the matter. When Arwa bint al-Harith ibn `Abd al-Muttalib went to Mu`awiyah, during the conversation, when `Amr ibn al-`As intervened, she said to him: "O' son of an-Nabighah, you too dare speak, although your mother was known publicly and was a singer of Mecca. That is why five persons claimed you (as a son), and when she was asked she admitted that five people had visited her and that you should be regarded as the son of him you resembled most. You must have resembled al-`As ibn Wa'il and therefore you came to be known as his son."

These five persons were (1) al-`As ibn Wa'il, (2) Abu Lahab, (3) Umayyah ibn Khalaf, (4) Hisham ibn al-Mughirah, and (5) Abu Sufyan ibn Harb. (Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd al-farid, vol. 2, p. 120; Ibn Tayfur, Balaghat an-nisa', p. 27; Ibn Hijjah, Thamarat al-awraq, vol. 1, p. 132; Safwat, Jamharat khutab al-`Arab, vol. 2, p.363; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 6, pp. 283-285, 291; al-Halabi, as-Sirah vol. 1, p. 46).

Sermon 181: May Allah's mercy remain away from them....

Amir al-mu'minin sent one of his men to bring him news about a group of the army of Kufah who had decided to join the Kharijites but were afraid of him. ¹ When the man came back Amir al-mu'minin said to him: "Are they satisfied and staying or feeling weak and going astray?" The man replied, "They have gone away, O' Amir al-mu'minin." Then Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)
وقد أرسل رجلاً من أصحابه، يَعْلَمُ له عِلْمٌ [أحوال] قوم من جند الكوفة، هموا باللحاق بالخوارج، وكانوا على خوف منه (عليه السلام)، فلما عاد إليه الرجل قال له:
أأْمُنُوا فَفَطَنُوا، أم جنبوا فَفَطَنُوا؟
فقال (عليه السلام): فقال الرجل: بل ظَعُنُوا يا أمير المؤمنين.

May Allah's mercy remain away from them

“..just as Thamud was distanced (from His mercy)” (11:95).

Know that when the spears are hurled towards them and the swords are struck at their heads they will repent of their doings. Surely today Satan has scattered them and tomorrow he will disclaim any connection with them, and will leave them. Their departing from guidance, returning to misguidance and blindness, turning away from truth and falling into wrong is enough (for their chastisement).

بُعْدًا هُمْ (كَمَا بَعَدَتْ ثَمُودُ)! أَمَا لَوْ أُشْرِعَتِ الْأَسِنَّةُ إِلَيْهِمْ وَصَبَّتِ السُّيُوفُ عَلَى هَامَاتِهِمْ، لَقَدْ نَدِمُوا عَلَى مَا كَانَ مِنْهُمْ، إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ الْيَوْمَ قَدِ اسْتَقَلَّ لَهُمْ، وَهُوَ غَدًا مُتَبَرِّئٌ مِنْهُمْ، وَمُخَلِّ عَنَّهُمْ، فَحَسْبُهُمْ يُخْرِجُهُمْ مِنَ الْهُدَى، وَازْتِكَاسِهِمْ فِي الضَّلَالِ وَالْعَمَى، وَصَدِّهِمْ عَنِ الْحَقِّ، وَجَمَاحِهِمْ فِي التَّبْيِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 181

- (1) *Al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, I, 265;*
- (2) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 65, events of 38 H.*

Notes

1. A man of the tribe Banu Najiyah named al-Khirrit ibn Rashid an-Naji was on Amir al-mu'minin's side in the battle of Siffin, but after Arbitration he became rebellious, and, coming to Amir al-mu'minin with thirty persons, said: "By Allah, I Will no more obey your command, nor offer prayers behind you, and shall leave you tomorrow." Whereupon Amir al-mu'minin said: "You should first take into account the grounds underlying this Arbitration and discuss it with me. If you are satisfied, you do as you will." He said he would come the next day to discuss the matter. Amir al-mu'minin then cautioned him, "Look, on going from here do not get misled by others and do not adopt any other course. If you have the will to understand, I will get you out of this wrong path and put you on the course of guidance." After this conversation he went away, but his countenance indicated he was bent on revolt, and would not see reason by any means. And so it happened. He

stuck to his point and on reaching his place he said to his tribesmen, "When we are determined to abandon Amir al-mu'minin there is no use going to him. We should do what we have decided to do." On this occasion `Abdullah ibn Qu`ayn al Azdi also went to them to enquire, but when he came to know the position he asked Mudrik ibn ar-Rayyan an-Naji to speak to him and to apprise him of the ruinous consequence of this rebellion, whereupon Mudrik assured him that this man would not be allowed to take any step. Consequently, `Abdullah came back satisfied and related the whole matter before Amir al-mu'minin on returning the next day. Amir al-mu'minin said, "Let us see what happens when he comes. " But when the appointed hour passed and he did not turn up Amir al-mu'minin asked `Abdullah to go and see what the matter was and what was the cause for the delay. On reaching there `Abdullah found that all of them had left. When he returned to Amir al-mu'minin he spoke as in this sermon.

The fate that befell al-Khirrit ibn Rashid an-Naji has been stated under Sermon 44.

Sermon 182: Praise be to Allah to Whom is the return of all creation...

It has been related by Nawf al-Bikali that Amir al-mu'minin `Ali (p.b.u.h.) delivered this sermon at Kufah standing on a stone which Ja`dah ibn Hubayrah al-Makhzumi had placed for him. Amir al-mu'minin had a woollen apparel on his body, the belt of his sword was made of leaves, and the sandals on his feet too were of palm leaves. His forehead had a hardened spot like that a camel (on its knee, due to many and long prostrations).

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

روي عن نوف البكالي قال: خطبنا بهذه الخطبة أمير المؤمنين عليّ (عليه السلام) بالكوفة وهو قائم على حجارة، نصبها له جعدة بن هبيرة المخزومي، وعليه مذرعة من صوف وحمائل سيفه ليف، وفي رجله نعلان من ليف، وكأن جبينه تفتة بعير، فقال:

About Allah's attributes, His creatures and His being above physical limitations

حمد الله واستعانته

Praise be to Allah to Whom is the return of all creation and the end of all matters. We render Him praise for the greatness of His generosity, the clarity of His proofs, the increase of His bounty and His favours - praise which may fulfil His right, repay His thanks, take (us) near His reward and be productive of increase in His kindness. We seek His help like one who is hopeful of His bounty, desirous of His benefit, and confident of His warding off (calamities), who acknowledges His gifts and is obedient to Him in word and deed. We believe in Him like him who reposes hope in Him with conviction, inclines to Him as a believer, humbles himself before Him obediently, believes in His oneness exclusively, regards Him great, acknowledging His dignity, and seeks refuge with Him with inclination and exertion.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ مَصَائِرُ الْخَلْقِ، وَعَوَاقِبُ الْأَمْرِ، نَحْمَدُهُ عَلَى عَظِيمِ إِحْسَانِهِ، وَنَبِّرُ بُرْهَانِهِ، وَنَوَامِي فَضْلِهِ وَامْتِنَانِهِ، حَمْدًا يَكُونُ لِحَقِّهِ قَضَاءً، وَلِشُكْرِهِ أَدَاءً، وَإِلَى ثَوَابِهِ مُقَرِّبًا، وَحُسْنٍ مَزِيدٍ مُوجِبًا.

وَنَسْتَعِينُ بِهِ اسْتِعَانَةَ رَاحٍ لِفَضْلِهِ، مُؤَمِّلٍ لِنَفْعِهِ، وَاتِّقٍ بِدَفْعِهِ، مُعْتَرِفٍ لَهُ بِالطُّوْلِ، مُدْعِنٍ لَهُ بِالْعَمَلِ وَالْقَوْلِ.

وَنُؤْمِنُ بِهِ إِيمَانًا مِنْ رَجَاهُ مُوقِنًا، وَأَنَابَ إِلَيْهِ مُؤْمِنًا، وَخَنَعَ لَهُ مُدْعِنًا، وَأَخْلَصَ لَهُ مُوَحِّدًا، وَعَظَّمَهُ مُمَجِّدًا، وَلَاذً بِهِ رَاغِبًا مُجْتَهِدًا.

Allah the Glorified has not been born so that someone could be (His) partner in glory. Nor has He begotten anyone so as to be inherited from after dying. Time and period have not preceded Him. Increase and decrease do not occur to Him. But He has manifested Himself to our understanding through our having observed His strong control and firm decree.

Among the proofs of His creation is the creation of the skies which are fastened without pillars and stand without support. He called them and they responded obediently and humbly without being lazy or loathsome. If they had not acknowledged His Godhead and obeyed Him He would not have made them the place for His throne, the abode of His angels and the destination to which ascend 'the pure utterances and the righteous deeds' (ref. 35:10) of the creatures.

لَمْ يُؤَلَّدْ سُبْحَانَهُ فَيَكُونَ فِي الْعِزِّ مُشَارِكًا، وَلَمْ يَلِدْ فَيَكُونَ مُؤْتُوثًا هَالِكًا، وَلَمْ يَتَفَدَّمْهُ وَفَتْ
وَلَا زَمَانٌ، وَلَمْ يَتَعَاوَرَهُ زِيَادَةٌ وَلَا نُقْصَانٌ، بَلْ ظَهَرَ لِلْعُمُولِ بِمَا أَرَانَا مِنْ عِلَامَاتِ التَّدْبِيرِ
الْمُتَّقِنِ، وَالْقَضَاءِ الْمُبْرَمِ.

فَمِنْ شَوَاهِدِ خَلْقِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ مُوَطَّدَاتٍ بِلَا عَمَدٍ، قَائِمَاتٍ بِلَا سَنَدٍ، دَعَاهُنَّ فَأَجَبْنَ
طَائِعَاتٍ مُدْعِنَاتٍ، غَيْرِ مُتَلَكِّمَاتٍ وَلَا مُبْطِطَاتٍ، وَلَوْ لَا إِفْرَازُهُنَّ لَهُ بِالرُّبُوبِيَّةِ وَإِدْعَانُهُنَّ
بِالطَّوَاعِيَّةِ، لَمَا جَعَلَهُنَّ مَوْضِعًا لِعَرْشِهِ، وَلَا مَسْكَنًا لِمَلَائِكَتِهِ، وَلَا مَصْنَعًا لِلِكَلِمِ الطَّيِّبِ
وَالْعَمَلِ الصَّالِحِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ.

He has made the stars in the skies by way of signs by which travellers wandering the various routes of the earth may be guided. The gloom of the dark curtains of the night does not prevent the flame of their light, nor do the veils of blackish nights have the power to turn back the light of the moon when it spreads in the skies. Glory be to Allah from Whom neither the blackness of dark dusk or of gloomy night (falling) in the low parts of the earth or on high dim mountains is hidden, nor the thundering of clouds on the horizons of the skies, nor the sparking of lightning in the clouds, nor the falling of leaves blown away from their falling places by the winds of hurricanes or by downpour from the sky. He knows where the drops fall and where they stay, where the grubs leave their trails or where they drag themselves, what livelihood would suffice the mosquitoes and what a female bears in its womb.

جَعَلَ نُجُومَهَا أَغْلَامًا يَسْتَدِلُّ بِهَا الْحَيْرَانُ فِي مُحْتَلَفِ فِجَاجِ الْأَقْطَارِ، لَمْ يَمْتَعْ ضَوْؤُهُ نُورِهَا
أَذْهِمًا سُجْفِ اللَّيْلِ الْمُظْلِمِ، وَلَا اسْتَطَاعَتْ جَلَابِيبُ سَوَادِ الْحَنَادِسِ أَنْ تَرُدَّ مَا شَاعَ فِي
السَّمَاوَاتِ مِنْ تَلَالُؤِ نُورِ الْقَمَرِ.

فَسُبْحَانَ مَنْ لَا يَخْفَى عَلَيْهِ سَوَادُ عَسَقِ دَاجٍ، وَلَا لَيْلِ سَاجٍ، فِي بَقَاعِ الْأَرْضِينَ
الْمُتَطَاطِفَاتِ، وَلَا فِي بَقَاعِ السُّفْعِ الْمُتَجَاوِرَاتِ، وَمَا يَتَجَلَّجَلُ بِهِ الرَّعْدُ فِي أَفْقِ السَّمَاءِ، وَمَا
تَلَاشَتْ عَنْهُ بُرُوقُ الْعَمَامِ، وَمَا تَسْفُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ تُزِيلُهَا عَنْ مَسْقِطِهَا عَوَاصِفُ الْأَنْوَاءِ وَأَهْطَالُ
السَّمَاءِ! وَيَعْلَمُ مَسْقِطَ الْقَطْرَةِ وَمَقَرَّهَا، وَمَسْحَبَ الدَّرَّةِ وَجَرَّهَا، وَمَا يَكْفِي الْبُعُوضَةَ مِنْ
قُوَّتِهَا، وَمَا تُحْمِلُ مِنْ أَنْثَى فِي بَطْنِهَا.

Praise be to Allah Who exists from before the coming into existence of the seat, the throne, the sky, the earth, the jinn or human being. He cannot

be perceived by imagination nor measured by understanding. He who begs from Him does not divert Him (from others), nor does giving away cause Him diminution. He does not see by means of an eye, nor can He be confined to a place. He cannot be said to have companions. He does not create with (the help of) limbs. He cannot be perceived by senses. He cannot be compared with people.

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْكَائِنِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَكُونَ كُرْسِيِّ أَوْ عَرْشٍ، أَوْ سَمَاءٍ أَوْ أَرْضٍ، أَوْ جَانٍّ أَوْ إِنْسٍ، لَا يُدْرِكُ بِهِمْ، وَلَا يُقَدَّرُ بِهِمْ، وَلَا يَشْعَلُهُ سَائِلٌ، وَلَا يَنْقُصُهُ نَائِلٌ، وَلَا يَنْظُرُ بَعَيْنٌ، وَلَا يُحَدُّ بِأَيْنٍ، وَلَا يُوصَفُ بِالْأَزْوَاجِ، وَلَا يُخْلَقُ بِعِلَاجٍ، وَلَا يُدْرِكُ بِالْحَوَاسِّ، وَلَا يُقَاسُ بِالنَّاسِ،

It is He who spoke to Musa clearly and showed him His great signs without the use of bodily parts, the organ of speech or the uvula. O you who exert yourself in describing Allah, if you are serious then (first try to) describe Gabriel, Michael or the host of angels who are close (to Allah) in the receptacles of sublimity; but their heads are bent downwards and their wits are perplexed as to how to assign limits (of definition) to the Highest Creator. This is because those things can only be perceived through qualities which have shape and parts and which succumb to death after reaching the end of their times. There is no god but He. He has lighted every darkness with His effulgence and has darkened every light with the darkness (of death).

الَّذِي كَلَّمَ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا، وَأَرَاهُ مِنْ آيَاتِهِ عَظِيمًا، بِأَلْجَوَارِحِ وَلَا أَدْوَاتٍ، وَلَا تُنْقَى وَلَا هَوَاتٍ. بَلْ إِنْ كُنْتَ صَادِقًا أَيُّهَا الْمُتَكَلِّفُ لِيُوصَفِ رَبُّكَ، فَصِفْ جِبْرَائِيلَ وَمِيكَائِيلَ وَجُنُودَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ، فِي حُجَرَاتِ الْقُدْسِ مُرْجِحِينَ، مُتَوَهَّهَةً عُقُولُهُمْ أَنْ يَحْدُوا أَحْسَنَ الْحَالِقِينَ. وَإِنَّمَا يُدْرِكُ بِالصِّفَاتِ دُؤَاهِيَّتَاتِ وَالْأَدْوَاتِ، وَمَنْ يَنْقُضِي إِذَا بَلَغَ أَمَدَ حَدِّهِ بِالْفَنَاءِ، فَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ، أَضَاءَ بِنُورِهِ كُلَّ ظَلَامٍ، وَأَظْلَمَ بِظُلْمَتِهِ كُلَّ نُورٍ.

An account of past peoples and about learning from them

الوصية بالتقوى

I advise you, creatures of Allah, to practise fear of Allah Who gave you good clothing and bestowed an abundance of sustenance on you. If there was anyone who could secure a ladder to everlasting life or a way to avoid death it was Sulayman ibn Dawud (p. b. u. h.) who was given control over the domain of the jinn and men along with prophethood and great position (before Allah), but when he finished what was his due in food (of this world) and exhausted his (fixed) time the bow of destruction shot him with arrow of death. His houses became vacant and his habitations became empty. Another group of people inherited them. Certainly, the by-gone centuries have a lesson for you.

أَوْصِيَكُمْ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَلْبَسَكُمْ الرِّيَاشَ، وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَعَاشَ؛ فَلَوْ أَنَّ أَحَدًا يَجِدُ إِلَى الْبَقَاءِ سُلْمًا، أَوْ لِدْفَعِ الْمَوْتِ سَبِيلًا، لَكَانَ ذَلِكَ سُلَيْمَانَ بْنِ دَاوُدَ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ)،

الَّذِي سُجِّرَ لَهُ مُلْكُ الْجِنِّ وَالْأَنْسِ، مَعَ النَّبِيِّ وَعَظِيمِ الرُّؤْفَةِ، فَلَمَّا اسْتَوْفَى طُعْمَتَهُ، وَاسْتَكْمَلَ
مُدَّتَهُ، رَمَتْهُ قِسِيُّ الْفَنَاءِ بِنِبَالِ الْمَوْتِ، وَأَصْبَحَتِ الدِّيَارُ مِنْهُ خَالِيَةً، وَالْمَسَاكِينُ مُعْطَلَّةً، وَرِثَهَا
قَوْمٌ آخِزُونَ، وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْقُرُونِ السَّالِفَةِ لَعِبْرَةً!

Where are the Amalekites¹ and the sons of Amalekites? Where are the Pharaohs?² Where are the people of the cities of ar-Rass³ who killed the prophets, destroyed the traditions of the divine messengers and revived the traditions of the despots? Where are those who advanced with armies, defeated thousands, mobilised forces and populated cities?

أَيُّنَ الْعَمَالِقَةُ وَأَبْنَاؤُ الْعَمَالِقَةِ! أَيُّنَ الْفِرَاعِنَةُ وَأَبْنَاؤُ الْفِرَاعِنَةِ! أَيُّنَ أَصْحَابِ مَدَائِنِ الرَّسِّ
الَّذِينَ قَتَلُوا النَّبِيِّينَ، وَأَطْفَأُوا سُنْنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، وَأَحْيَوْا سُنْنَ الْجَبَّارِينَ! أَيُّنَ الَّذِينَ سَارُوا بِالْجَيْشِ،
وَهَزَمُوا الْأَلُوفَ، وَعَسَكُوا الْعَسَاكِرَ، وَمَدَّنُوا الْمَدَائِنَ!؟

A part of the same sermon about the Imam al-Mahdi

منها:

He will be wearing the armour of wisdom, which he will have secured with all its conditions, such as full attention towards it, its (complete) knowledge and exclusive devotion to it. For him it is like a thing which he had lost and which he was then seeking, or a need which he was trying to fulfil. If Islam is in trouble he will feel forlorn like a traveller and like a (tired) camel beating the end of its tail and with its neck flattened on the ground. He is the last of Allah's proofs and one of the vicegerents of His prophets.

قَدْ لَيْسَ لِلْحِكْمَةِ حُنْتَهَا، وَأَخَذَهَا بِجَمِيعِ أَدْيَمِهَا، مِنَ الْأَقْبَالِ عَلَيْهَا، وَالْمَعْرِفَةِ بِهَا، وَالتَّفَرُّغِ
لَهَا، فَهِيَ عِنْدَ نَفْسِهِ ضَالَّةٌ الَّتِي يَطْلُبُهَا، وَحَاجَتُهُ الَّتِي يَسْأَلُ عَنْهَا، فَهُوَ مُعْتَرِبٌ إِذَا اعْتَرَبَ
الْأَسْلَامَ، وَضَرَبَ بِعَسِيبِ ذَنْبِهِ وَالصَّقَ الْأَرْضَ بِجِرَانِهِ، بَقِيَّةً مِنْ بَقَايَا حُجَّتِهِ، خَلِيفَةً مِنْ
خَلَائِفِ أَنْبِيَائِهِ.

On the method of his ruling, and grief over the martyrdom of his companions

Then Amir al-mu'minin continued:

ثم قال (عليه السلام):

O people! I have divulged to you advice which the prophets used to preach before their peoples, and I have conveyed to you what the vicegerents (of the prophets) conveyed to those coming after them. I tried to train you with my whip but you could not be straightened. I drove you with admonition but you did not acquire proper behaviour. May Allah deal with you! Do you expect an Imam other than me to take you on the (right) path, and show you the correct way?

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنِّي قَدْ بَشَّرْتُ لَكُمْ الْمَوَاعِظَ الَّتِي وَعَظَ بِهَا الْأَنْبِيَاءُ أُمَّهُمُ، وَأَدَيْتُ إِلَيْكُمْ مَا
أَدَّتِ الْأَوْصِيَاءُ إِلَى مَنْ بَعْدَهُمْ، وَأَدَّبْتُكُمْ بِسَوَاطِي فَلَمْ تَسْتَقِيمُوا، وَحَدَوْتُكُمْ بِالزَّوْاجِرِ فَلَمْ
تَسْتَوْسِقُوا. اللَّهُ أَنْتُمْ! اتَّقَوْعُونَ إِمَامًا غَيْرِي يَطَّأُ بِكُمْ الطَّرِيقَ، وَيُرْشِدُكُمْ السَّبِيلَ؟

Beware, the things in this world which were forward have become things of the past, and those of which were behind are going ahead. The virtuous people of Allah have made up their minds to leave and they have purchased, with a little perishable (pleasure) of this world, a lot of such (reward) in the next world that will remain. What loss did our brothers whose blood was shed in Siffin suffer by not being alive today? Only that they are not suffering choking on swallowings and not drinking turbid water. By Allah, surely they have met Allah and He has bestowed upon them their rewards and He has lodged them in safe houses after their (having suffered) fear.

أَلَا إِنَّهُ قَدْ أَدْبَرَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا مَا كَانَ مُقْبِلًا، وَأَقْبَلَ مِنْهَا مَا كَانَ مُدْبِرًا، وَأَزْمَعَ التَّرْحَالَ
عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْأَخْبَارَ، وَبَاعُوا قَلِيلًا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا لَا يَنْبَغِي، بِكَثِيرٍ مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ لَا يَنْبَغِي. مَا ضَرَّ إِخْوَانَنَا
الَّذِينَ سَفِكَتْ دِمَاؤُهُمْ - وَهُمْ بِصَفِينٍ - أَلَّا يَكُونُوا الْيَوْمَ أَحْيَاءَ؟ يُسَيِّعُونَ الْعُصَصَ، وَيَشْرَبُونَ
الرَّنَقَ! قَدْ - وَاللَّهِ - لَقُوا اللَّهَ فَوَقَّاهُمْ أَجُورَهُمْ، وَأَحْلَهُمْ دَارَ الْأَمْنِ بَعْدَ خَوْفِهِمْ.

Where are my brethren who took the (right) path and trod in rightness. Where is `Ammar? ⁴ Where is Ibn at-Tayyihan? ⁵ Where is Dhu'sh-Shahadatayn? ⁶ And where are others like them ⁷ from among their comrades who had pledged themselves to death and whose (severed) heads were taken to the wicked enemy.

أَيْنَ إِخْوَانِي الَّذِينَ رَكِبُوا الطَّرِيقَ، وَمَضَوْا عَلَى الْحَقِّ؟ أَيْنَ عَمَّارٌ؟ وَأَيْنَ ابْنُ التَّيْهَانِ؟ وَأَيْنَ
دُوالِ الشَّهَادَتَيْنِ؟ وَأَيْنَ نُظَرَاؤُهُمْ مِنْ إِخْوَانِهِمُ الَّذِينَ تَعَاقَدُوا عَلَى الْمَنِيَّةِ، وَأُبْرِدَ بِرُؤُوسِهِمْ إِلَى
الْفَجْرَةِ؟

Then Amir al-mu'minin wiped his hand over his auspicious, honoured beard and wept for a long time, then he continued:

قال: ثمَّ ضرب (عليه السلام) بيده إلى لحيته، فأطال البكاء، ثمَّ قال:

Oh my brothers who recited the Qur'an and strengthened it, thought over their obligation and fulfilled it, revived the sunnah and destroyed innovation! When they were called to jihad they responded and trusted in their leader then followed him.

أَوْهَى عَلَى إِخْوَانِي الَّذِينَ تَلَّوْا الْقُرْآنَ فَأَحْكَمُوهُ، وَتَدَبَّرُوا الْفُرْضَ فَأَقَامُوهُ، أَحْيُوا السُّنَّةَ،
وَأَمَاتُوا الْبِدْعَةَ، دُعُوا لِلْجِهَادِ فَأَجَابُوا، وَوَثِقُوا بِالْقَائِدِ فَاتَّبَعُوا.

Then Amir al-mu'minin shouted at the top of his voice:

ثمَّ نادى بأعلى صوته:

Al-jihad, al-jihad (fighting, fighting), O creatures of Allah! By Allah, I am mobilising the army today. He who desires to proceed towards Allah should come forward.

الْجِهَادَ الْجِهَادَ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ! أَلَا وَإِنِّي مُعَسِّكٌ فِي يَوْمِي هَذَا، فَمَنْ أَرَادَ الرِّوَاخَ إِلَى اللَّهِ فَلْيُخْرِجْ .

Nawf said: Then Amir al-mu'minin put Husayn (p.b.u.h.) over (a force of) ten thousand, Qays ibn Sa'd (mercy of Allah be upon him) over ten thousand, Abu Ayyub al-Ansari over ten thousand, and others over different numbers, intending to return to Siffin, but Friday did not appear again and the accursed Ibn Muljam (may Allah curse him) killed him. Consequently, the armies came back and were left like sheep who had lost their shepherd while wolves were snatching them away from all sides.

قال نَوْفٌ: وعقد للحسين(عليه السلام) في عشرة آلاف، ولقيس بن سعد في عشرة آلاف، ولايبي أيوب الانصاري في عشرة آلاف، ولغيرهم على أعداد آخر، وهو يريد الرجعة إلى صفين، فما دارت الجمعة حتى ضربه الملعون ابن ملجم لعنه الله، فتراجعت العساكر، فكنا كأغنام فقدت راعيها، تحتطفها الذئاب من كل مكان!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 182

- (1) *Al-Wasiti, `Uyun al-hikam, see al-Majlisi, vol. 77, 310;*
- (2) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, II, 145, 198.*

Notes

1. History shows that very often the ruin and destruction of peoples has been due to their oppression and open wickedness and profligacy. Consequently, communities which had extended their sway over all the corners of the populated world and had flown their flags in the East and West of the globe disappeared from the surface of the earth like a wrong word, on disclosure of their vicious actions and evil doings.

Amalekites: ancient nomadic tribe, or collection of tribes, described in the Old Testament as relentless enemies of Israel, even though they were closely related to Ephraim, one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Their name derives from Amalek, who is celebrated in Arabian tradition but cannot be identified. The district over which they ranged was south of Judah and probably extended into northern Arabia. The Amalekites harassed the Hebrews during their exodus out of Egypt and attacked them at Rephidim (near Mt. Sinai), where they were defeated by Joshua. They also filled out the ranks of the nomadic raiders defeated by Gideon and were condemned to annihilation by Samuel. The Amalekites, whose final defeat occurred in the time of Hezekiah, were the object of a perpetual curse. (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica [Micropaedia], vol. 1, p. 288, ed. 1973-1974; also see [for further reference] The Encyclopaedia Americana, [International Edition] vol. 1, p. 651, ed. 1975).

2. Pharaoh: Hebrew form of the Egyptian per-'o ("the great house"), signifying the royal palace, an epithet applied in the New Kingdom and after, as a title of respect, to the Egyptian king himself. In the 22nd dynasty the title was added to the king's personal name. In official documents the full titulary of the Egyptian king contained five names. The first and oldest identified him as the incarnation of the falcon god, Horus; it was often written inside a square called serekh, depicting the facade of the archaic palace. The second name, "two ladies", placed him under the protection of Nekhbet and Buto, the vulture and uraeus (snake) goddesses of Upper and Lower Egypt; the third, "golden Horus", signified perhaps originally "Horus victorious over his enemies." The last two names, written within a ring or cartouche, are generally referred to as the praenomen and nomen, and were the ones most commonly used; the praenomen and nomen, and were the ones most commonly used; the praenomen, preceded by the hieroglyph meaning "King of Upper and Lower Egypt," usually contained a reference to the king's Unique relationship with the sun god, Re, while the fifth, or nomen, was preceded by the hieroglyph for "Son of Re," or by that for "Lord of the two lands." The last name was given him at birth, the rest at his coronation. (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica [Micropaedia], vol. VII, p. 927, ed. 1973-1974; also see [for

further reference] The Encyclopaedia Americana, [International Edition], vol. 21, p. 707, ed. 1975).

Among the Pharaohs was the Pharaoh of the days of Prophet Musa. His pride, egotism, insolence and haughtiness were such that by making the claim "I am your sublime God" he deemed himself to be holding sway over all other powers of the world, and was under the misunderstanding that no power could wrest the realm and government from his hands. The Qur'an has narrated his claim of "I and no one else" in the following words:

And proclaimed Pharaoh unto his people, "O' my people! is not the kingdom of Egypt mine? And these rivers flow below me; What! behold ye not? (43:51)

But when his empire came near the end it was destroyed in a few moments. Neither his position and servants could come in the way of its destruction nor could the vastness of his realm prevent it. Rather, the waves of the very streams which he was extremely proud to possess, wrapped him in and dispatched his spirit to Hell throwing the body on the bank to serve as a lesson for the whole of creation.

3. The people of the cities of ar-Rass: In the same way the people of ar-Rass were killed and destroyed for disregarding the preaching and call of a prophet, and for revolt and disobedience. About them the Qur'an says:

And the (tribes of) `Ad and Thamud and the inhabitants of ar-Rass, and generations between them, in great number. And unto each of them We did give examples and every one (of them) We did destroy with utter extermination. (25:38,39)

Belied (also) those before them the people of Noah and the dwellers of ar-Rass and Thamud; And `Ad and Pharaoh, and the brethren of Lot; And the dwellers of the Wood and the people of Tubba`; all belied the apostles, so was proved true My promise (of the doom) (50:12-14)

4. `Ammar ibn Yasir ibn `Amir al-`Ansi al-Madhhi al Makhzumi (a confederate of Banu Makhzum) was one of the earliest converts to Islam, and the first Muslim to build a mosque in his own house in which he used to worship Allah (at-Tabaqat, vol. 3, Part 1, p. 178; Usd al-ghabah, vol. 4, p. 46; Ibn Kathir, at-Tarikh, vol. 7, p. 311).

`Ammar accepted Islam along with his father Yasir and his mother Sumayyah. They suffered great tortures by the Quraysh, due to their conversion to Islam, to such an extent that `Ammar lost his parents; and they were the first martyrs man and woman in Islam.

`Ammar was among those who immigrated to Abyssinia, and the earliest immigrants (muhajirun) to Medina. He was present in the battle of Badr and all other battles as well as places of assembly by the Muslims during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet; and he showed his might and favour in all Islamic struggles in the best way.

Many traditions are narrated from the Holy Prophet about `Ammar regarding his virtues, outstanding traits and his glorious deeds, such as the tradition which `A'ishah and other have narrated that the Holy Prophet himself had said that `Ammar was filled with faith from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. (Ibn Majah, as-Sunan, vol. 1, p. 65; Abu Nu'aym, Hilyah al-Awliya', vol. 1, p. 139; al-Haytami, Majma' az-zawa'id, vol. 9, p. 295; al-Isti'ab, vol. 3, p. 1137; al-Isabah, vol. 2, p. 512)

In another tradition the Holy Prophet said about `Ammar:

`Ammar is with the truth and the truth is with `Ammar. He turns wherever the truth turns. `Ammar is as near to me as an eye is near to the nose. Alas! a rebellious group will kill him. (at-Tabaqat, vol. 3, part 1, p. 187; al-Mustadrak, vol. 3, p. 392; Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah, vol. 2, p. 143; Ibn Kathir, at-Tarikh, vol. 7, pp. 268-270)

Also in the decisive and widely known tradition which al-Bukhari (in Sahih, vol. 8, pp. 185-186), at-Tirmidhi (in al-Jami' as-Sahih, vol. 5, p. 669); Ahmad ibn Hanbal (in al-Musnad, vol. 2, pp. 161,164,206; vol. 3, pp.5, 22, 28, 91; vol. 4, pp.197, 199, vol. 5 pp.215, 306, 307; vol. 6, pp.289, 300, 311, 315), and all the narrators of Islamic traditions and historians transmitted through twenty-five Companions that the Holy Prophet said about `Ammar:

Alas! a rebellious group which swerves from the truth will murder `Ammar. `Ammar will be calling them towards Paradise and they will be calling him towards Hell. His killer and those who strip him of arms and clothing will be in Hell.

Ibn Hajar al-`Asqalani (in Tahdhib at-tahdhib, vol. 7, p. 409; al-Isabah, vol. 2, p.512) and as-Suyuti (in al-Khasa'is al-kubra, vol. 2, p. 140) say: "The narration of this (above

mentioned) tradition is mutawatir (i.e. narrated successively by so many people that no doubt can be entertained about its authenticity)."

Ibn `Abd al-Barr (in al-Isti`ab, vol. 3, p. 1140) says:

The narration followed uninterrupted succession from the Holy Prophet, that he said: "A rebellious group will murder `Ammar," and this is a prophecy of the Prophet's secret knowledge and the sign of his prophethood. This tradition is among the most authentic and the most rightly ascribed traditions.

After the death of the Holy Prophet, `Ammar was one of the closest adherents and best supporters of Amir al-mu'minin during the reign of the first three Caliphs. During the caliphate of `Uthman when the Muslim protested (to `Uthman) against his policy on the distribution of the Public Treasury (Baytu'l-mal) `Uthman said in a public assembly that, 'the money which as in the treasury was sacred and belonged to Allah, and that he (as being the successor of the Prophet) had the right to dispose of them as he thought fit. 'He (`Uthman) threatened and cursed all who presumed to censure or murmur at what he said. Upon this, `Ammar ibn Yasir boldly declared his disapprobation and began to charge him with his inveterate propensity to ignore the interests of the general public; accused him with reviving the heathenish customs abolished by the Prophet. Whereupon `Uthman commanded him to be beaten and immediately some of the Umayyads, the kindred of the Caliph fell upon the venerable `Ammar, and the Caliph himself kicking him with his shoes (on his feet) on `Ammar's testicles, and afflicted him with hernia. `Ammar became unconscious for three days, and he was taken care of by Umm al-mu'minin Umm Salamah in her own house. (al-Baladhuri, Ansab al-ashraf, vol. 5, pp. 48,54,88; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 3, pp. 47-52; al-Imamah wa's-siyasah, vol. 1, pp. 35-36; al-Iqd al-farid, vol. 4, p. 307; at-Tabaqat, vol. 3, Part 1, p. 185; Tarikh al-khamis, vol. 2, p. 271)

When Amir al-mu'minin became Caliph, `Ammar was one of his most sincere supporters. He participated fully in all social, political and military activities during this period, especially in the first battle (the battle of Jamal) and the second one (the battle of Siffin).

However, `Ammar was martyred on 9th Safar 37 A.H. in the battle of Siffin when a he was over ninety years of age. On the day `Ammar ibn Yasir achieved martyrdom, he turned his face to the sky and said:

O My God! Surely Thou art aware that if I know that Thy wish is that I should plunge myself into this River (the Euphrates) and be drowned, I will do it. O My God! Surely Thou knowest that if I knew that Thou would be pleased if I put my scimitar on my chest (to hit my heart) and pressed it so hard that it came out of my back, I would do it. O My God! I do not think there is anything more pleasant to Thee than fighting against this sinful group, and if I knew that any action were more pleasant to Thee I would do it.

Abu `Abd ar-Rahman as-Sulami narrates:

"We were present with Amir al-mu'minin at Siffin where I saw `Ammar ibn Yasir was not turning his face towards any side, nor valleys (wadis [of the land]) of Siffin but the companions of the Holy Prophet were following him as if he was a sign for them. Then I heard `Ammar say to Hashim ibn 'Utbah (al-Mirqal): 'O Hashim! Rush into enemy's ranks, paradise is under the sword!

Today I meet my beloved one, Muhammad and his party'.

"Then he said: 'By Allah, if they put us to flight (and pursue us) to the date-palms of Hajar (a town in Bahrain, Persian Gulf [i.e., if they pursue us along all the Arabian desert] nevertheless) we know surely that we are right and they are wrong.'

"Then he (Ammar) continued (addressing the enemies):

We struck you to (believe in) its (Holy Qur'an) revelation; And today we strike you to (believe in) its interpretation; Such strike as to remove heads from their resting places; And to make the friend forget his sincere friend; Until the truth returns to its (right) path."

The narrator says: "I did not see the Holy Prophet's companions killed at any time as many as they were killed on this day."

Then `Ammar spurred his horse, entered the battlefield and began fighting. He persistently chased the enemy, made attack after attack, and raised challenging slogans till at last a group of mean-spirited Syrians surrounded him on all sides, and a man named Abu al-Ghadiyah al-Juhari (al-Fazari) inflicted such a wound upon him that he could not bear it, and returned to his camp. He asked for water. A tumbler of milk was brought to him. When

`Ammar looked at the tumbler he said: "The Messenger of Allah had said the right thing." People asked him what he meant by these words. He said "The Messenger of Allah informed me that the last sustenance for me in this world would be milk." Then he took that tumbler of milk in his hands, drank the milk and surrendered his life to Allah, the Almighty. When Amir al-mu'minin came to know of his death, he came to `Ammar's side, put his (`Ammar's) head on his own lap, and recited the following elegy to mourn his death:

Surely any Muslim who is not distressed at the murder of the son of Yasir, and is not be afflicted by this grievous misfortune does not have true faith.

May Allah show His mercy to `Ammar the day he embraced Islam, may Allah show His mercy to `Ammar the day he was killed, and may Allah show His mercy to `Ammar the day he is raised to life.

Certainly, I found `Ammar (on such level) that three companions of the Holy Prophet could not be named unless he was the fourth, and four of them could not be mentioned unless he was the fifth.

There was none among the Holy Prophet's companions who doubted that not only was Paradise once or twice compulsorily bestowed upon `Ammar, but that he gained his claim to it (a number of times). May Paradise give enjoyment to `Ammar.

Certainly, it was said (by the Holy Prophet) "Surely, `Ammar is with the truth and the truth is with `Ammar. He turns wherever the truth turns. His killer will be in hell."

Then Amir al-mu'minin stepped forward and offered funeral prayers for him, and then with his own hands, he buried him with his clothes.

`Ammar's death caused a good deal of commotion in the ranks of Mu`awiyah too, because there were a large number of prominent people fighting from his side under the impression created in their minds that he was fighting Amir al-mu'minin for a right cause. These people were aware of the saying of the Holy Prophet that `Ammar would be killed by a group who would be on the wrong side. When they observed that `Ammar had been killed by Mu`awiyah's army, they became convinced that they were on the wrong side and that Amir al-mu'minin was definitely on the right. This agitation thus caused among the leaders as well as the rank and file of Mu`awiyah's army, was quelled by him with the argument that it was Amir al-mu'minin who brought `Ammar to the battlefield and therefore it was he who was responsible for his death. When Mu`awiyah's argument was mentioned before Amir al-mu'minin he said it was as though the Prophet was responsible for killing Hamzah as he brought him to the battle of Uhud. (at-Tabari, at-Tarikh, vol. 1, pp. 3316-3322; vol. 3, pp. 2314-2319; Ibn Sa`d, at-Tabaqat, vol. 3, Part 1, pp. 176-189; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil, vol. 3, pp. 308-312; Ibn Kathir, at-Tarikh, vol. 7, pp. 267-272; al-Minqari, Siffin, pp. 320-345; Ibn `Abd al-Barr, al-Isti`ab, vol. 3, pp. 1135-1140; vol. 4, p. 1725; Ibn al-Athir, Usd al-ghabah, vol. 4, pp. 43-47; vol. 5, p. 267; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 5, pp. 252-258; vol. 8, pp. 10-28; vol. 10, pp. 102-107, al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak, vol. 3, pp. 384-394; Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-Iqd al-farid, vol. 4, pp. 340-343; al-Mas`udi, Muruj adh-dhahab, vol. 2, pp. 381-382, al-Haytami, Majma` az-zawa'id, vol. 7, pp. 238-244; vol. 9, pp. 291-298; al-Baladhuri, Ansab al-ashraf (Biography of Amir al-mu'minin), pp. 310-319.

5. Abu'l-Haytham (Malik) ibn at-Tayyihan al-Ansari was one of the twelve chiefs (naqib [of Ansar]) who attended the fair and met at al-`Aqabah -- in the first `Aqabah and among those who attended in the second `Aqabah -- where he gave the Holy Prophet the 'pledge of Islam'. He was present in the battle of Badr and all other battles as well as places of assembly by the Muslims during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. He was also among the sincere supporters of Amir al-mu'minin and he attended the battle of Jamal as well as Siffin where he was martyred. (al-Isti`ab, vol. 4, p. 1773; Siffin, p. 365; Usd al-ghabah, vol. 4, p. 274; vol. 5, p. 318; al-Isabah, vol. 3, p. 341; vol. 4, pp. 312-313; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 10, pp. 107-108; Ansab al-ashraf, p. 319).

6. Khuzaymah ibn Thabit al-Ansari. He is known as Dhu'sh-Shahadatayn because the Holy Prophet considered his evidence equivalent to the evidence of two witnesses He was present in the battle of Badr, and other battles as well as in the places of assembly of the Muslims during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. He is counted among the earliest of those who showed their adherence to Amir al-mu'minin and he was also present in the battle of Jamal and Siffin. `Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Layla narrated that he saw a man in the battle of Siffin fighting the enemy valiantly and when he protested against his action, the man said:

I am Khuzaymah ibn Thabit al-Ansari, I have heard the Holy Prophet saying "Fight, fight, by the side of `Ali." (al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, Muwaddih awham al-jam` wa't-tafriq, vol. 1, p. 277).

Khuzaymah was martyred in the battle of Siffin soon after the martyrdom of `Ammar ibn Yasir.

Sayf ibn `Umar al-Usayyidi (the well known liar) has fabricated another Khuzaymah, and claimed that the one who was martyred in the battle of Siffin was this one and not the one with the surname of 'Dhu'sh-Shahadatayn'. at-Tabari has quoted this fabricated story from Sayf either intentionally or otherwise, and through him this story has affected some other historians who quoted from at-Tabari or relied on him. (For further reference, see al-`Askari, Khamsun wa miah sahabi mukhtalaq [one hundred and fifty fabricated companions], vol. 2, pp. 175-189).

After having denied this story Ibn Abi'l-Hadid adds (in Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 10, pp. 109-110) that:

Furthermore, what is the need for those who want to defend Amir al-mu'minin to make a boast of abundance with Khuzaymah, Abu'l-Haytham, `Ammar and others. If people treat this man (Amir al-mu'minin) with justice and look at him with healthy eyes they will certainly realise that should he be alone (on one side) and the people all together (on the other side) fighting him, he will be in the truth and all the rest will be in the wrong. (at-Tabaqat, vol. 3, Part 1, pp. 185,188; al-Mustadrak, vol. 3, pp. 385, 397; Usd al-ghabah, vol. 2, p. 114; vol. 4, p. 47; al-Isti`ab, vol. 2, p. 448; at-Tabari, vol. 3, pp.2316, 2319, 2401; al-Kamil, vol. 3, p. 325; Siffin, pp. 363, 398; Ansab al-ashraf, pp. 313-314).

7. Among the people who were present in the battle of Jamal on the side of Amir al-muminin there were one hundred and thirty Badries (those who participated in the battle of Badr with the Holy Prophet) and seven hundred of those who were present in the 'pledge of ar-Ridwan' (Bay'atu'r-Ridwan) which took place under a tree. (adh-Dhahabi, Tarikh al-Islam, vol. 2, p. 171; Khalifah ibn Khayyat, at-Tarikh vol. 1, p. 164). Those who were killed in the battle of Jamal from the side of Amir al-muminin numbered some five hundred (some said that the number of martyrs were more than that). But on the side of the people of Jamal twenty thousand were killed. (al-`lqd al-farid, vol. 4, p. 326).

Among those who were present in the battle of Siffin on the side of Amir al-mu'minin, there were eighty Badries and eight hundred of those who gave the Holy Prophet the 'pledge of ar-Ridwan.' (al-Mustadrak, vol. 3, p. 104 al-Isti`a'b, vol. 3, p. 1138; al-Isabah, vol. 2, p. 389; at-Tarikh, al-Ya`qubi, vol. 2, p. 188).

On the side of Mu`awiyah forty-five thousand were killed, and on the side of Amir al-muminin twenty-five thousand. Among these martyrs (of Amir al-mu'minin) there were twenty-five or twenty-six Badries and sixty-three or three hundred and three of the people of the 'pledge of ar-Ridwan'. (Siffin, p. 558; al-Isti`ab, vol. 2, p. 389, Ansab al-ashraf, p. 322; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 10, p. 104; Abu'l-Fida' vol. 1, p. 175, Ibn al-Wardi, at-Tarikh, vol. 1, p. 240; Ibn Kathir, vol. 7, p. 275; Tarikh al-khamis, vol. 2, p. 277)

Besides the distinguished and eminent companions of Amir al-mu'minin like `Ammar, Dhu'sh-Shahadatayn and Ibn al-Tayyihan, those who lay martyred in Siffin were:--

Hashim ibn `Utbah ibn Abi Waqqas al-Mirqal was killed on the same day when `Ammar was martyred. He was the bearer of the standard of Amir al-mu'minin's army on that day.

Abdullah ibn Budayl ibn al-Warqa' al-Khuza'i was sometimes the right wing Commander of Amir al-muminin's army and sometimes the infantry Commander.

Sermon 183: Praise be to Allah Who is recognised without being seen...

Praise of Allah for His bounties (His Might, the excellences of the Qur'an and counseling piety)

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في قدرة الله وفي فضل القرآن وفي الوصية بالتقوى

Praise be to Allah Who is recognised without being seen and Who creates without trouble. He created the creation with His Might, and receives the devotion of rulers by virtue of His dignity. He exercises superiority over great men through His generosity. It is He who made His creation to populate the world and sent towards the jinn and human beings His messengers to unveil it for them, to warn them of its harm, to present to them its examples, to show them its defects and to place before them a whole collection of matters containing lessons about the changings of health and sickness in this world, its lawful things and unlawful things and all that Allah has ordained for the obedient and the disobedient, namely, Paradise and Hell and honour and disgrace. I extend my praise to His Being as He desires His creation to praise Him. He has fixed “..for everything a measure” (65:3), for every measure a time limit, and “..for every time limit a document” (13:38).

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْمَعْرُوفِ مِنْ غَيْرِ رُؤْيَةٍ، وَالْحَالِقِ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَنْصَبَةٍ، خَلَقَ الْخَلَائِقَ بِقُدْرَتِهِ، وَاسْتَعْبَدَ الْأَرْبَابَ بِعِزَّتِهِ، وَسَادَ الْعُظَمَاءَ بِجُودِهِ، وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَسْكَنَ الدُّنْيَا خَلْقَهُ، وَبَعَثَ إِلَى الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ رُسُلَهُ، لِيَكْشِفُوا لَهُمْ عَنْ غِطَائِهَا، وَيُنْحَدِرُوهُمْ مِنْ ضَرَائِهَا، وَيُضَرِّبُوا لَهُمْ أَمْثَالَهَا، وَيُيَبِّصِرُوهُمْ غُيُوبَهَا، وَيَلْمِزُهُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ بِمَعْتَبَرٍ مِنْ تَصَرُّفِ مَصَاحِحِهَا وَأَسْقَامِهَا، وَخَلَالَهَا وَحَرَامِهَا، وَمَا أَعَدَّ سُبْحَانَهُ لِلْمُطِيعِينَ مِنْهُمْ وَالْعَصَاةِ مِنْ جَنَّةٍ وَنَارٍ، وَكَرَامَةٍ وَهَوَانٍ. أَحْمَدُهُ إِلَى نَفْسِهِ كَمَا اسْتَحْمَدَ إِلَى خَلْقِهِ، وَجَعَلَ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدْرًا، وَلِكُلِّ قَدْرٍ أَجَلًا، وَلِكُلِّ أَجَلٍ كِتَابًا.

A part of the same Sermon about the greatness and importance of the Holy Qur'an

منها: في ذكر القرآن

The Qur'an orders as well as refrains, remains silent and also speaks. It is the proof of Allah before His creation. He has taken from them a pledge (to act) upon it. He has perfected its effulgence, and completed through it His religion. He let the Prophet leave this world when he had conveyed to the people all His commands of guidance through the Qur'an.

You should therefore regard Allah great as he has held Himself great, because He has not concealed anything of His religion from you, nor has He

left out anything which He likes or which He dislikes, but He made for it a clear emblem (of guidance) and a definite sign which either refrains from it or calls towards it. His pleasure is the same for all time to come.

فَالْقُرْآنُ أَمْرٌ زَاجِرٌ، وَصَامِتٌ نَاطِقٌ، حُجَّةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى خَلْقِهِ، أَحَدٌ عَلَيْهِمْ مِيثَاقُهُ، وَارْتِهَانٌ عَلَيْهِ أَنْفُسُهُمْ، أَمَّمْ نُورَهُ، وَأَكْرَمَ بِهِ دِينَهُ، وَقَبَضَ نَبِيَّهُ (صلى الله عليه وآله) وَقَدْ فَرَعَ إِلَى الْخَلْقِ مِنْ أَحْكَامِ الْهُدَى بِهِ. فَعَظَّمُوا مِنْهُ سُبْحَانَهُ مَا عَظَّمَ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يُخْفِ عَنْكُمْ شَيْئاً مِنْ دِينِهِ، وَلَمْ يَتْرِكْ شَيْئاً رَضِيَهُ أَوْ كَرِهَهُ إِلَّا وَجَعَلَ لَهُ عِلْماً بَادِيّاً، وَآيَةً مُحْكَمَةً، تَنْزِجُ عَنْهُ، أَوْ تَدْعُو إِلَيْهِ، فَرِضَاهُ فِيمَا بَقِيَ وَاحِدٌ، وَسَخَطُهُ فِيمَا بَقِيَ وَاحِدٌ.

You should know that He will not be pleased with you for anything for which He was displeased with those before you, and He will not be displeased with you for anything for which He was pleased with those before you. You are treading on a clear path, and are speaking the same as the people before you had spoken. Allah is enough for your needs in this world. He has persuaded you to remain thankful, and has made it obligatory on you to mention Him with your tongues.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ لَنْ يَرْضَى عَنْكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ سَخَطَهُ عَلَى مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ، وَلَنْ يَسَخَطَ عَلَيْكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ رَضِيَهُ مِمَّنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ، وَإِنَّمَا تَسِيرُونَ فِي أَثَرِ بَيْنَ، وَتَتَكَلَّمُونَ بِرَجْعِ قَوْلِ قَدْ قَالَهُ الرَّجَالُ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ، قَدْ كَفَأَكُمْ مَوْوَنَةَ دُنْيَاكُمْ، وَحَتَّكُمْ عَلَى الشُّكْرِ، وَافْتَرَضَ مِنْ أَلْسِنَتِكُمُ الدِّكْرَ.

Warning against punishment on the Day of Judgement

الوصية بالتقوى

He has advised you to exercise fear and has made it the highest point of His pleasure and all that He requires from His creatures. You should therefore fear Allah, who is such that you are as though just in front of Him, and your forelocks are in His grip, and your change of position is in His control. If you conceal a matter, He will know of it. If you disclose a matter, He will record it. For this He has appointed honoured guards (angels) who do not omit any rightful matter nor include anything incorrect.

You should know that “..whoever fears Allah, He will make for him a way out” (65:3) of troubles and (grant him) a light (to help him) out of darkness. He will ever keep him in whatever condition he wishes, and will make him stay in a position of honour near Himself, in the house which He has made for Himself. The shade of this house is His throne, its light is His effulgence, its visitors are His angels and its companions are His prophets.

وَأَوْصَاكُمْ بِالتَّقْوَى، وَجَعَلَهَا مُنْتَهَى رِضَاهُ، وَحَاجَتَهُ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ. فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي الَّذِي أَنْتُمْ بَعِيْنِهِ، وَتَوَاصِيَكُمْ بِيَدِهِ، وَتَقْلُبُكُمْ فِي قَبْضَتِهِ، إِنْ أَسْرَرْتُمْ عِلْمَهُ، وَإِنْ أَعْلَنْتُمْ كِتْبَهُ، قَدْ وَكَّلَ بِذَلِكَ حَفَظَةً كِرَاماً، لَا يُسْقِطُونَ حَقّاً، وَلَا يُثْبِتُونَ بَاطِلاً. وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ (مَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجاً)

مِنَ الْفِتَنِ، وَنُوراً مِنَ الظُّلُمِ، وَيُجَلِّدُهُ فِيمَا اشْتَهَتْ نَفْسُهُ، وَيُنزِلُهُ مَنَزِلَ الْكِرَامَةِ عِنْدَهُ، فِي دَارِ اصْطَلَعَهَا لِنَفْسِهِ، ظِلُّهَا عَرْشُهُ، وَنُورُهَا بَهْجَتُهُ، وَرُؤَاؤُهَا مَلَائِكَتُهُ، وَوَفَقَاؤُهَا رُسُلُهُ.

Therefore, hasten towards the place of return and go ahead of (your) deaths (by collecting provision for the next world). Shortly, the expectations of the people will be cut short and death will overtake them while the door of repentance will be closed for them. You are still in a place to which those who were before you have been wishing to return. In this world, which is not your house, you are just a traveller in motion.

You have been given the call to leave from here, and you have been ordered to collect provision while you are here. You should know that this thin skin cannot tolerate the Fire (of Hell). So, have pity on yourselves because you have already tried it in the tribulations of the world.

فَبَادِرُوا الْمَعَادَ، وَسَابِقُوا الْأَجَالَ، فَإِنَّ النَّاسَ يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَنْقَطِعَ بِهِمُ الْأَمَلُ، وَيَرَهَقَهُمُ الْأَجَلُ، وَيَسَدَّ عَنْهُمْ بَابَ التَّوْبَةِ، فَقَدْ أَصْبَحْتُمْ فِي مِثْلِ مَا سَأَلَ إِلَيْهِ الرَّجْعَةَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ، وَأَنْتُمْ بَنُو سَبِيلٍ، عَلَى سَفَرٍ مِنْ دَارٍ لَيْسَتْ بِدِرَاكُمُ، وَقَدْ أُوذِنْتُمْ مِنْهَا بِالْإِنْتِحَالِ، وَأُمِرْتُمْ فِيهَا بِالزَّادِ. وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ لِهَذَا الْجِلْدِ الرَّقِيقِ صَبْرٌ عَلَى النَّارِ، فَارْحَمُوا نَفُوسَكُمْ، فَإِنَّكُمْ قَدْ جَرَيْتُمُوهَا فِي مَصَائِبِ الدُّنْيَا.

Have you ever seen the crying of a person who has been pricked with a thorn or who bleeds due to stumbling or whom hot sand has burnt? How would he feel when he is between two frying pans of Hell with stones all round with Satan as his companion? Do you know that when Malik (the guard-in-charge of Hell) is angry with the fire, its parts begin to clash with each other (in rage), and, when he scolds it, it leaps between the doors of Hell crying on account of his scolding.

أَفَرَأَيْتُمْ جَزَعَ أَحَدِكُمْ مِنَ الشَّوْكَةِ نُصِيْبِهِ، وَالْعَنْتَرَةَ تُدْمِيهِ، وَالرَّمْضَاءَ تُحْرِقُهُ؟ فَكَيْفَ إِذَا كَانَ بَيْنَ طَابِقَيْنِ مِنْ نَارٍ، ضَجِيعَ حَجَرٍ، وَقَرِينَ شَيْطَانٍ؟! أَعَلَيْتُمْ أَنَّ مَالِكاً إِذَا غَضِبَ عَلَى النَّارِ حَطَمَ بَعْضُهَا بَعْضاً لِعَضْبِهِ، وَإِذَا زَجَرَهَا تَوَثَّبَتْ بَيْنَ أَبْوَاهِهَا جَزَعاً مِنْ زَجْرَتِهِ؟!

O you who are advanced in years, whom old age has made hoary, how will you feel when rings of fire will touch the bones of your neck, and handcuffs hold so hard that they eat away the flesh of the forearms? (Fear) Allah! Allah! O crowd of men, while you are in good health before sickness (grips you) and you are in ease before straitness (overtakes you).

You should try for the release of your necks before their mortgage is foreclosed, keep your eyes awake at night, make your bellies lean, use your feet, spend your money, take your bodies and spend them over yourselves, and do not be niggardly about them, because Allah the Glorified, has said:

... if you help (in the way) of Allah, He will (also) help you, and will set firm your feet. (Qur'an, 47:7)

and He, the Sublime, has said:

Who is he who would loan unto Allah a goodly loan so that He may double it for him, and for him shall be a noble recompense. (Qur'an, 57:11)

أَيُّهَا الْيَقِينُ الْكَبِيرُ، الَّذِي قَدْ هَزَّهُ الْقَتِيرُ، كَيْفَ أَنْتَ إِذَا التَّحَمَّتْ أَطْوَاقُ النَّارِ بِعِظَامِ
الْأَعْنَاقِ، وَتَنَبَّتِ الْجَوَامِعُ حَتَّى أَكَلَتْ لُحُومَ السَّوَاعِدِ؟ فَاللَّهُ اللَّهُ مَعَشَرَ الْعِبَادِ! وَأَنْتُمْ سَالِمُونَ
فِي الصِّحَّةِ قَبْلَ السُّقْمِ، وَفِي الْفُسْحَةِ قَبْلَ الضِّيقِ، فَاسْعَوْا فِي فَكَاكِ رِقَابِكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تُغْلَقَ
رَهَائِنُهَا، أَسْهَرُوا عَيْونَكُمْ، وَأَضْمِرُوا بُطُونَكُمْ، وَاسْتَعْمِلُوا أَقْدَامَكُمْ، وَأَنْفِقُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ، وَخُذُوا
مِنْ أَجْسَادِكُمْ بِجُودٍ بِهَا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَلَا تَبْخُلُوا بِهَا عَنْهَا، فَقَدْ قَالَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ: (إِنْ
تَنْصَرُوا لِلَّهِ يَنْصِرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ)، وَقَالَ تَعَالَى: (مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يُفْرِضُ اللَّهُ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا
فَيُضَاعِفُهُ لَهُ وَلَهُ أَجْرٌ كَرِيمٌ).

He does not seek your support because of any weakness, nor does He demand a loan from you because of shortage. He seeks your help, although He possesses all ..the armies of the skies and the earth (48:7) and He is the All-mighty, the All-wise (14:4). He seeks a loan from you, although He owns ..the treasures of the skies and the earth (63:7) and ..He is the All-sufficient, the All-laudable (22:64). (Rather) He intends to try you as to which of you is best in conduct (11:7).

You should therefore be quick in performance of (good) acts so that you may be with His neighbours in His abode; He made His Prophet's companions of these neighbours and made the angels to visit them. He has honoured their ears so that the sound of Hell fire may never reach them, and He has afforded protection to their bodies from weariness and fatigue.

. . . that is the grace of Allah, He bestoweth it upon whomsoever He willeth; and Allah is the Lord of Mighty Grace. (Qur'an, 57:21)

فَلَمْ يَسْتَنْصِرْكُمْ مِنْ دُلٍّ، وَلَمْ يَسْتَقْرِضْكُمْ مِنْ قُلٍّ، اسْتَنْصَرَكُمْ وَلَهُ (جُنُودُ السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ) وَ(هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ)، وَاسْتَقْرِضَكُمْ وَلَهُ (خَزَائِنُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ) وَ(هُوَ الْعَنِيُّ
الْحَمِيدُ)، وَإِنَّمَا أَرَادَ أَنْ (يَبْلُوكُمْ أَيُّكُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا). فَبَادِرُوا بِأَعْمَالِكُمْ تَكُونُوا مَعَ حَيْرَانَ اللَّهِ
فِي دَارِهِ، رَافِقَ بِهِمْ رُسُلُهُ، وَأَزَارَهُمْ مَلَائِكَتُهُ، وَأَكْرَمَ أَسْمَاعَهُمْ أَنْ تَسْمَعَ حَسِيسَ نَارِ أَبَدًا، وَصَانَ
أَجْسَادَهُمْ أَنْ تَلْقَى لُغُوبًا وَنَصَبًا، (ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ)

I say what you are hearing. I seek Allah's help for myself and yourselves. He is enough for us and He is ..an excellent trustee (3:173).

أَقُولُ مَا تَسْمَعُونَ، وَاللَّهُ الْمُسْتَعَانُ عَلَى نَفْسِي وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَهُوَ حَسْبُنَا (وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ)!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 183

(1) Al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, 53;

(2) Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, V, 299;

(3) al-Bahrani, Tafsir al-burhan, I, 9, from a source other than Nahj.

Sermon 184: Keep silent! May Allah disgrace you...

One of the Kharijites al-Burj ibn Mushir at-Ta'i raised the slogan, "Command behoves only Allah" in such a way that Amir al-mu'minin heard it. On hearing it he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

قاله للبرج بن مسهر الطائي، وقد قال له بحيث يسمعه: لا حكم إلا لله، وكان من

الخوارج

Keep silent! May Allah disgrace you, make you ugly, O you with broken tooth. Certainly, by Allah, when truth became manifest even then your personality was weak and your voice was low. But when wrong began to shout loudly you again sprouted up like the horns of a kid.

اسْكُتْ فَبَحَكَ اللهُ يَا أَتْرَمُ، فَوَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ ظَهَرَ الْحَقُّ فَكُنْتُ فِيهِ ضَعِيفاً شَحْصُكاً، خَفِيفاً
صَوْتُكَ، حَتَّى إِذَا نَعَرَ الْبَاطِلُ نَجَمْتَ نُجُومَ قَرْنِ الْمَاعِزِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 184

(1) Al-`Askari, *Kitab al-sina`atayn*, 258.

Sermon 185: Praise be to Allah. He is such that senses cannot perceive Him...

Praise of Allah and His wonderful creatures

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يحمد الله فيها ويثني على رسوله ويصف خلقاً من الحيوان

Praise be to Allah. He is such that senses cannot perceive Him, place cannot contain Him, eyes cannot see Him and veils cannot cover Him. He proves His eternity by the coming into existence of His creation, and (also) by originating His creation (He proves) His existence, and by their (mutual) similarity He proves that there is nothing similar to Him. He is true in His promise. He is too high to be unjust to His creatures. He stands by equity among His creation and practices justice over them in His commands. He provides evidence through the creation of things of His being from ever, through their marks of incapability of His power, and through their powerlessness against death of His eternity.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الشَّوَاهِدُ، وَلَا تُحَوِّيه الْمَشَاهِدُ، وَلَا تَرَاهُ النَّوَاطِرُ، وَلَا تُحْجِبُهُ السَّوَابِرُ، الدَّالِّ عَلَى قَدَمِهِ بِحُدُوثِ خَلْقِهِ، وَبِحُدُوثِ خَلْقِهِ عَلَى وُجُودِهِ، وَبِاشْتِبَاهِهِمْ عَلَى أَنْ لَا شَبَهَ لَهُ، الَّذِي صَدَقَ فِي مِيعَادِهِ، وَارْتَفَعَ عَنْ ظُلْمِ عِبَادِهِ، وَقَامَ بِالْقِسْطِ فِي خَلْقِهِ، وَعَدَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي حُكْمِهِ، مُسْتَشْهِدٌ بِحُدُوثِ الْأَشْيَاءِ عَلَى أَرْزَلِيَّتِهِ، وَبِمَا وَسَمَهَا بِهِ مِنَ الْعَجْزِ عَلَى قُدْرَتِهِ، وَبِمَا اضْطَرَّهَا إِلَيْهِ مِنَ الْفَنَاءِ عَلَى دَوَامِهِ،

He is One, but not by counting. He is everlasting without any limit. He is existent without any support. Minds admit of Him without (any activity of the) senses. Things which can be seen stand witness to Him without confronting Him. Imagination cannot encompass Him. He manifests Himself to the imagination with his help for the imagination, and refuses to be imagined by the imagination. He has made imagination the arbiter (in this matter). He is not great in the sense that volume is vast and so His body is also great. Nor is He mighty in the sense that His limits should extend to the utmost and so His frame be extensive. But He is great in position and mighty in authority.

وَاحِدٌ لَا بَعْدَ، وَدَائِمٌ لَا بِأَمَدٍ، وَقَائِمٌ لَا بَعَمَدٍ، تَتَلَقَّاهُ الْأَذْهَانُ لَا بِمُشَاعَرَةٍ، وَتَشْهَدُ لَهُ الْمَرَائِي لَا بِمُحَاضَرَةٍ، لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ الْأَوْهَامُ، بَلْ جَحَلَى لَهَا بَها، وَبِهَا امْتَنَعَ مِنْهَا، وَإِلَيْهَا حَاكَمَهَا، لَيْسَ بِذِي كِبَرٍ امْتَدَّتْ بِهِ النَّهَائِيَاتُ فَكَبَّرَتْهُ تَجْسِيماً، وَلَا بِذِي عِظَمٍ تَنَاهَتْ بِهِ الْعَايَاتُ فَعَظَّمَتْهُ تَجْسِيداً بَلْ كَبَّرَ شَأْنَهُ، وَعَظَّمَ سُلْطَانَهُ.

About the Holy Prophet

الرسول الاعظم

I stand witness that Muhammad is His slave, His chosen Prophet and His responsible trustee -- may Allah bless him and his descendants. Allah sent

him with undeniable proofs, a clear success and open paths. So he conveyed the message declaring the truth with it. He led the people on the (correct) highway, established signs of guidance and minarets of light, and made Islam's ropes strong and its knots firm.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ الصَّفِيُّ، وَأَمِينُهُ الرَّضِيُّ (ﷺ) أَرْسَلَهُ بِوُجُوبِ الْحُجَجِ، وَظُهُورِ
الْفَلَجِ، وَإِضْاحِ الْمَنْهَجِ، فَبَلَغَ الرِّسَالَةَ صَادِعًا بِهَا، وَحَمَلَ عَلَى الْمَحْجَّةِ دَالًّا عَلَيْهَا، وَأَقَامَ
أَعْلَامَ الْأَهْتِدَاءِ وَمَنَارَ الضِّيَاءِ، وَجَعَلَ أَمْرَاسَ الْأَسْلَامِ مَتِينَةً، وَعُرَا الْأَيْمَانَ وَثِيْقَةً.

A part of the same sermon about the creation of animal species

منها: في صفة عجيب خلق أصناف من الحيوان

Had they pondered over the greatness of His power and the vastness of His bounty they would have returned to the right path and feared the punishment of the Fire; but hearts are sick and eyes are diseased. Do they not see the small things He has created, how He strengthened their system and opened for them hearing and sight and made for them bones and skins? Look at the ant with its small body and delicate form.

It can hardly be seen in the corner of the eye, nor by the perception of the imagination - how it moves on the earth and leaps at its livelihood. It carries the grain to its hole and deposits it in its place of stay. It collects during the summer for its winter, and during strength for the period of its weakness. Its livelihood is guaranteed, and it is fed according to fitness. Allah, the Kind, does not forget it and (Allah the Giver) does not deprive it, even though it may be in dry stone or fixed rocks.

وَلَوْ فَكَّرُوا فِي عَظِيمِ الْقُدْرَةِ، وَجَسِيمِ التَّعَمَّةِ، لَرَجَعُوا إِلَى الطَّرِيقِ، وَخَافُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ،
وَلَكِنَّ الْقُلُوبَ غَلِيْلَةٌ، وَالْأَبْصَارَ مَدْخُولَةٌ! أَلَا تَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى صَغِيرٍ مَّا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ، كَيْفَ أَحْكَمَ
خَلْقَهُ، وَأَتَقَنَ تَرْكِيْبَهُ، وَفَلَقَ لَهُ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ، وَسَوَّى لَهُ الْعَظْمَ وَالْبَشَرَ!. انظُرُوا إِلَى النَّعْلَةِ فِي
صِعْرِ جَنْبِهَا، وَلَطَافَةِ هَيْئَتِهَا، لَا تَكَادُ تُنَالُ بِلَحْظِ الْبَصَرِ، وَلَا بِمُسْتَدْرَكِ الْفِكْرِ، كَيْفَ دَبَّتْ
عَلَى أَرْضِهَا، وَصَبَّتْ عَلَى رِزْقِهَا، تَنْفُلُ الْحَبَّةَ إِلَى جُحْرِهَا، وَتُعِدُّهَا فِي مُسْتَقَرِّهَا. تَجْمَعُ فِي
حَرِّهَا لِيَرُدَّهَا، وَفِي وُرُودِهَا لِصَدْرِهَا، مَكْفُولٌ بِرِزْقِهَا، مَرْزُوقَةٌ بِوَفْقِهَا، لَا يُغْفَلُهَا الْمَنَانُ، وَلَا
يَحْرُمُهَا الدِّيَانُ، وَلَوْ فِي الصَّفَا الْيَابِسِ، وَالْحَجَرِ الْجَامِسِ!

If you have thought about its digestive tracts in its high and low parts, the carapace of its belly, and its eyes and its ears in its head you would be amazed at its creation and you would feel difficulty in describing it. Exalted is He who made it stand on its legs and erected it on its pillars (of limbs). No other originator took part with Him in its origination and no one having power assisted Him in its creation.

If you tread on the paths of your imagination and reach its extremity it will not lead you anywhere except that the Originator of the ant is the same as He who is the Originator of the date-palm, because everything has (the same) delicacy and detail, and every living being has little difference. In His

creation, the big, the delicate, the heavy, the light, the strong, the weak are all equal. ¹

وَلَوْ فَكَّرْتَ فِي بَجَارِي أُكْلِهَا، وَفِي غُلُوبِهَا وَسُفْلِيهَا، وَمَا فِي الْجَوْفِ مِنْ شَرَّاسِيفِ بَطْنِهَا، وَمَا فِي الرَّأْسِ مِنْ عَيْنِهَا وَأُذُنِهَا، لَفَضَّيْتَ مِنْ خَلْقِهَا عَجَبًا، وَلَقَيْتَ مِنْ وَصْفِهَا تَعَبًا! فَتَعَالَى الَّذِي أَقَامَهَا عَلَى قَوَائِمِهَا، وَبَنَاهَا عَلَى دَعَائِمِهَا! لَمْ يَشْرِكْهُ فِي فِطْرَتِهَا فَاطِرٌ، وَلَمْ يُعْنَهُ عَلَى خَلْقِهَا قَادِرٌ. وَلَوْ ضَرَنْتَ فِي مَذَاهِبِ فِكْرِكَ لَتَبْلُغَ غَايَاتِهِ، مَا دَلَّتْكَ الدَّلَالَةُ إِلَّا عَلَى أَنَّ فَاطِرَ النَّمْلَةِ هُوَ فَاطِرُ النَّحْلَةِ، لِذَقِيقِ تَفْصِيلِ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ، وَعَامِضِ اخْتِلَافِ كُلِّ حَيٍّ، وَمَا الْجَلِيلِ وَاللَّطِيفِ، وَالتَّقْوِيلِ وَالْحَفِيفِ، وَالْقَوِيَّ وَالضَّعِيفِ، فِي خَلْقِهِ إِلَّا سَوَاءً.

The Creation of the Universe

خلقة السماء والكون

So is (the creation of) the sky, the air, the winds and the water. Therefore, you look at the sun and moon, the plants and trees, water and stone, the alternation of this night and day, the flowing out of these seas, the large number of mountains and the height of their peaks, the diversity of languages and the variety of tongues. Then woe be to him who disbelieves in the Ordainer and denies the Ruler. They claim that they are like grass for which there is no cultivator nor any maker for their diverse shapes. They have not relied on any argument for what they assert, nor on any research for what they have heard. Can there be any construction without a Constructor, or any offence without an offender.

وَكَذَلِكَ السَّمَاءُ وَالْهَوَاءُ، وَالرِّيَّاحُ وَالْمَاءُ. فَانظُرْ إِلَى الشَّمْسِ وَالْقَمَرِ، وَالنَّبَاتِ وَالشَّجَرِ، وَالْمَاءِ وَالْحَجَرِ، وَاخْتِلَافِ هَذَا اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ، وَتَفَجُّرِ هَذِهِ الْبِحَارِ، وَكَثْرَةِ هَذِهِ الْجِبَالِ، وَطُولِ هَذِهِ الْقِلاَلِ، وَتَفَرُّقِ هَذِهِ اللُّغَاتِ، وَاللِّسَنِ الْمُخْتَلِفَاتِ. فَالْوَيْلُ لِمَنْ جَحَدَ الْمُقَدَّرَ، وَأَنْكَرَ الْمُدِيرَ! زَعَمُوا أَنَّهُمْ كَالنَّبَاتِ مَا لَهُمْ زَارِعٌ، وَلَا لِاخْتِلَافِ صُورِهِمْ صَانِعٌ، وَلَمْ يَلْجَأُوا إِلَى حُجَّةٍ فِيمَا ادَّعَوْا، وَلَا تَحْقِيقٍ لِمَا أُوْعَوْا، وَهَلْ يَكُونُ بِنَاءٌ مِنْ غَيْرِ بِنَانٍ، أَوْ جِنَايَةٌ مِنْ غَيْرِ جَانٍ؟!

The wonderful creation of the locust

خلقة الجراد

If you wish you can reflect on the locust (as well). Allah gave it two red eyes, lighted for them two moon-like pupils, made for it small ears, opened for it a suitable mouth and gave it keen sense, gave it two teeth to cut with and two sickle-like feet to grip with. The farmers are afraid of it in the matter of their crops since they cannot drive it away even though they may join together. The locust attacks the fields and satisfies its desires (of hunger) from them although its body is not equal to a thin finger.

وَإِنْ شِئْتَ قُلْتَ فِي الْجَرَادَةِ، إِذْ خَلَقَ لَهَا عَيْنَيْنِ حَمْرَ أَوْيْنِ، وَأَسْرَجَ لَهَا حَدَقَتَيْنِ قَمْرَاوَيْنِ، وَجَعَلَ لَهَا السَّمْعَ الْحَفِيَّ، وَفَتَحَ لَهَا الْقَمَّ السَّوِيَّ، وَجَعَلَ لَهَا الْحِسَّ الْقَوِيَّ، وَنَابِئِينَ بِهَا تَفْرِضُ،

وَمَنْجَلَيْنِ يَمَّا تَقْبِضُ، يَرْهَبُهَا الرُّزَاعُ فِي زَرْعِهِمْ، وَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ دَبَّهَا، وَلَوْ أَجْلَبُوا بِجَمْعِهِمْ،
حَتَّى تَرِدَ الْحَرْتِ فِي نَزَوَاتِهَا، وَتَقْضِي مِنْهُ شَهَوَاتِهَا، وَخَلَقَهَا كُلُّهُ لَا يُكُونُ إِصْبَعًا مُسْتَدِقَّةً.

About the Glory of Allah

Glorified is Allah before Whom bows in prostration “..whoever there is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly.” (13:15), and submits to Him by placing his cheeks and face (in the dust), casts himself down before Him (in obedience) in health and weakness, and hands over to Him full control in fear and apprehension.

The birds are bound by His commands. He knows the number of their feathers and their breaths. He has made their feet to stand on water and on land. He has ordained their livelihoods. He knows their species: this is the crow, this is the eagle, this is the pigeon and this is the ostrich. He called out every bird with its name (while creating it) and provided it with its livelihood. He created “..heavy clouds” (13:12) and produced from them heavy rain and spread it on various lands. He drenched the earth after its dryness and grew vegetation from it after its barrenness.

فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي يَسْجُدُ لَهُ (مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا)، وَيُعَمَّرُ لَهُ خَدًّا
وَوَجْهًا، وَيُلْقِي بِالطَّاعَةِ إِلَيْهِ سَلْمًا وَضَعْفًا، وَيُعْطِي الْقِيَادَ رَهْبَةً وَخَوْفًا! فَالطَّيْرُ مُسَخَّرَةٌ لِأَمْرِهِ،
أَخْصَى عَدَدَ الرِّيشِ مِنْهَا وَالنَّفْسَ، وَأَرْسَى قَوَائِمَهَا عَلَى النَّدَى وَالْيَبْسِ، قَدَّرَ أَقْوَاتَهَا،
وَأَخْصَى أَجْنَاسَهَا، فَهَذَا غُرَابٌ وَهَذَا عُقَابٌ، وَهَذَا حَمَامٌ وَهَذَا نَعَامٌ، دَعَا كُلَّ طَائِرٍ بِاسْمِهِ،
وَكَفَّلَ لَهُ بَرْقِهِ. (وَأَنْشَأَ) السَّحَابَ الثَّقَالَ، فَأَهْطَلَ دِيمَهَا، وَعَدَّدَ قِسَمَهَا، فَبَلَّ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ
جُفُوفِهَا، وَأَخْرَجَ نَبْتَهَا بَعْدَ جُدُوبِهَا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 185

- (1) Abu Talib Yahya ibn al-Husayn ibn Harun al-Husayni, *al-'Amali*, 192;
- (2) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`*, bab dawabb al-barr wa al-bahr;
- (3) *al-Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj, I*, 305.

Notes

1. The meaning is that if the smallest thing in creation is examined it will be found to contain all that which is found in the biggest creatures, and each will exhibit the same reflection of natures, workmanship and performance, and the ratio of each to Allah's might and power will be the same, whether it be as small as an ant or as big as a date palm. Is it not that making a small thing is easy for Him while the making of a big thing is difficult for Him, because the diversity of colour, volume and quantity is just based on the dictates of His sagacity and expediency, but as regards creation itself there is no difference among them. Therefore, this uniformity of creation is a proof of the oneness and unity of the Creator.

Sermon 186: He who assigns to Him (different) conditions does not believe in His Oneness...

About the Oneness of Allah. This sermon contains principles of knowledge which no other sermon contains

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في التوحيد

وتجمع هذه الخطبة من أصول العلوم ما لا يجمعه خطبة

He who assigns to Him (different) conditions does not believe in His Oneness, nor does he who likens Him grasp His reality. He who illustrates Him does not signify Him. He who points at Him and imagines Him does not mean Him. Everything that is known through itself has been created, and everything that exists by virtue of other things is the effect (of a cause). He works but not with the help of instruments. He fixes measures but not with the activity of thinking. He is rich but not by acquisition.

مَا وَحَدَهُ مَنْ كَيْفَهُ، وَلَا حَقِيقَتَهُ أَصَابَ مَنْ مَثَلَهُ، وَلَا إِيَّاهُ عَنَى مَنْ شَبَّهَهُ، وَلَا صَمَدَهُ مَنْ أَسَارَ إِلَيْهِ وَتَوَهَّمَهُ. كُلُّ مَعْرُوفٍ بِنَفْسِهِ مَصْنُوعٌ، وَكُلُّ قَائِمٍ فِي سِوَاهُ مَعْلُوفٌ. فَاعِلٌ لَا بِاضْطِرَابِ آلَةٍ، مُقَدَّرٌ لَا بِجَوْلِ فِكْرَةٍ، غَنِيٌّ لَا بِاسْتِفَادَةٍ.

Times do not keep company with Him, and implements do not help Him. His Being precedes times. His Existence precedes non-existence and His eternity precedes beginning. By His creating the senses it is known that He has no senses. By the contraries in various matters it is known that He has no contrary, and by the similarity between things it is known that there is nothing similar to Him. He has made light the contrary of darkness, brightness that of gloom, dryness that of moisture and heat that of cold.

لَا تَصْحَبُهُ الْأَوْقَاتُ، وَلَا تَرْفُدُهُ الْأَدَوَاتُ، سَبَقَ الْأَوْقَاتَ كَوْنُهُ، وَالْعَدَمَ وُجُودُهُ، وَالْإِتِّدَاءَ أَرْزُلُهُ. بِتَشْعِيرِهِ الْمَشَاعِرَ عُرِفَ أَنَّ لَا مَشْعَرَ لَهُ، وَبِمُضَادَّتِهِ بَيْنَ الْأُمُورِ عُرِفَ أَنَّ لَا ضِدَّ لَهُ، وَبِمُقَارَنَتِهِ بَيْنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ عُرِفَ أَنَّ لَا قَرِينَ لَهُ. ضَادَّ النُّورِ بِالظُّلْمَةِ، وَالْوُضُوحِ بِالْبُهْمَةِ، وَالْجُمُودِ بِالْبَلْبَلِ، وَالْحَرُورَ بِالصَّرْدِ.

He produces affection among inimical things. He fuses together diverse things, brings near remote things and separates things which are joined together. He is not confined by limits, nor counted by numbers. Material parts can surround things of their own kind, and organs can point out things similar to themselves.

The word ¹ "mundhu" (i.e. since) disproves their eternity, the word "qad" (that denotes nearness of time of occurrence), disproves their being from ever and the word "lawla" (if it were not) keep them remote from perfection. Through them the Creator manifests Himself to the intelligence, and through them He is guarded from the sight of the eyes.

مَوْلُفٌ بَيْنَ مُتَعَادِيَاتِهَا، مُقَارِنٌ بَيْنَ مُتَبَايِنَاتِهَا، مُقَرَّبٌ بَيْنَ مُتَبَاعِدَاتِهَا، مُفَرَّقٌ بَيْنَ مُتَدَانِيَاتِهَا. لَا يُشْمَلُ بِحَدِّ، وَلَا يُحْسَبُ بِعَدِّ، وَإِنَّمَا تَحُدُّ الْأَدْوَاتُ أَنْفُسَهَا، وَتُشِيرُ الْأَلَاتُ إِلَى نَظَائِرِهَا، مَعْتَمِدَةً «مُنْدًا» الْقَدَمَةَ، وَحَمَتَهَا «قَدًا» الْأَزَلِيَّةَ، وَجَنَّبَتَهَا «لَوْلَا» التَّكْمِلَةَ. بِهَا بَحَلَّى صَانِعُهَا لِلْعُقُولِ، وَبِهَا امْتَنَعَ عَنِ نَظْرِ الْعُيُونِ.

Stillness and motion do not occur in Him, and how can that thing occur in Him which He has Himself made to occur, and how can a thing revert to Him which He first created, and how can a thing appear in Him which He first brought to appearance. If it had not been so, His Self would have become subject to diversity, His Being would have become divisible (into parts), and His reality would have been prevented from being deemed Eternal.

If there was a front to Him there would have been a rear also for Him. He would need completing only if shortage befell Him. In that case signs of the created would appear in Him, and He would become a sign (leading to other objects) instead of signs leading to Him. Through the might of His abstention (from affectedness) He is far above being affected by things which affect others.

لَا يَجْرِي عَلَيْهِ السُّكُونُ وَالْحَرَكَةُ، وَكَيْفَ يَجْرِي عَلَيْهِ مَا هُوَ أَجْرَاهُ، وَيَعُودُ فِيهِ مَا هُوَ أَبْدَاهُ، وَيَحْدُثُ فِيهِ مَا هُوَ أَحَدْتُهُ؟! إِذَا لَتَفَاوَتَتْ ذَاتُهُ، وَلَتَجَزَّأَ كُنْهُهُ، وَلَا مَتْنَعٌ مِنَ الْأَزَلِ مَعْنَاهُ، وَلَكَانَ لَهُ وَرَاءَ إِذْ وَجَدَ لَهُ أَمَامَ، وَلَا لَتَمَسَ التَّمَامَ إِذْ لَرِمَهُ التَّقْصَانُ. وَإِذَا لَقَامَتْ آيَةُ الْمَصْنُوعِ فِيهِ، وَلَتَحْوَلَ دَلِيلًا بَعْدَ أَنْ كَانَ مَدْلُولًا عَلَيْهِ، وَخَرَجَ بِسُلْطَانِ الْأَمْتِنَاعِ مِنْ أَنْ يُؤَثَّرَ فِيهِ مَا يُؤَثَّرُ فِي غَيْرِهِ.

He is that which does not change or vanish. The process of setting does not behove Him. He has not begotten any one lest He be regarded as having been born. He has not been begotten otherwise He would be contained within limits. He is too High to have sons. He is too purified to contact women. Imagination cannot reach Him so as to assign Him quantity. Understanding cannot think of Him so as to give him shape. Senses do not perceive Him so as to feel Him. Hands cannot touch Him so as to rub against Him. He does not change into any condition. He does not pass from one state to another. Nights and days do not turn Him old. Light and darkness do not alter Him.

الَّذِي لَا يَحْوَلُ وَلَا يَزُولُ، وَلَا يَجُوزُ عَلَيْهِ الْأَفْوَلُ لَمْ يَلِدْ فَيَكُونَ مَوْلُودًا، وَلَمْ يُولَدْ فَيَصِيرَ مَحْدُودًا، جَلَّ عَنِ اتِّخَاذِ الْأَنْبَاءِ، وَطَهَّرَ عَنِ مَلَامَسَةِ النِّسَاءِ. لَا تَنَالُهُ الْأَوْهَامُ فَتَقْدِرُهُ، وَلَا تَتَوَهَّمُهُ الْفِطْنُ فَتُصَوِّرُهُ، وَلَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْحَوَاسُّ فَتَحِسُّهُ، وَلَا تَلْمَسُهُ الْأَيْدِي فَتَمَسُّهُ. وَلَا يَتَعَيَّرُ بِحَالٍ، وَلَا يَتَبَدَّلُ فِي الْأَحْوَالِ، وَلَا تُبْلِيهِ اللَّيَالِي وَالْأَيَّامُ، وَلَا يُعَيِّرُهُ الصِّبْيَاءُ وَالظَّلَامُ،

He cannot be described through (the possession of) parts, or through limbs and organs, or by a an accidental quality or alteration or portions. It cannot be said that He has a limit or extremity, or end or termination; nor do

things control Him so as to raise Him or lower Him, nor does anything carry Him so as to bend Him or keep Him erect. He is not inside things or outside them. He conveys news, but not with the tongue or voice. He listens, but not with the holes of the ears or the organs of hearing. He says, but does not utter words.

He remembers, but does not memorise. He determines, but not by exercising His mind. He loves and approves without any sentimentality (of heart). He hates and feels angry without any painstaking. When He intends to create something He says "...Be" and it is' (2:117), but not through a voice that strikes (the ears) is that call heard. His speech is an act of His creation. His like never existed before this. If it had been eternal it would have been a second god.

وَلَا يُوصَفُ بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْأَجْزَاءِ، وَلَا بِالْجَوَارِحِ وَالْأَعْضَاءِ، وَلَا بِعَرَضٍ مِنَ الْأَعْرَاضِ، وَلَا بِالْعَرِيَّةِ وَالْأَبْعَاضِ. وَلَا يُقَالُ: لَهُ حَدٌّ وَلَا نَهَايَةٌ، وَلَا انْقِطَاعٌ وَلَا غَايَةٌ، وَلَا أَنَّ الْأَشْيَاءَ تَحْوِيهِ فُتُقَلِّدُهُ أَوْ تُهَوِّيهِ، أَوْ أَنَّ شَيْئًا يَحْمِلُهُ، فَيَمِيلُهُ أَوْ يُعَدِّلُهُ. لَيْسَ فِي الْأَشْيَاءِ بِوَالِجٍ، وَلَا عَنْهَا بِخَارِجٍ. يُخْبِرُ لَا بِلِسَانٍ وَهَوَاتٍ، وَيَسْمَعُ لَا بِخُرُوقٍ وَأَدْوَاتٍ، يَقُولُ وَلَا يَلْفِظُ، يَحْفَظُ وَلَا تَحْفَظُ، وَيُرِيدُ وَلَا يُضْمِرُ. يُحِبُّ وَيَرْضَى مِنْ غَيْرِ رِقَّةٍ، وَيُبْغِضُ وَيَعْصَبُ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَشَقَّةٍ. يَقُولُ لِمَا أَرَادَ كَوْنَهُ: (كُنْ فَيَكُونُ)، لَا بِصَوْتٍ يَفْرَعُ، وَلَا بِبِنْدَاءٍ يُسْمَعُ، وَإِنَّمَا كَلَامُهُ سُبْحَانَهُ فِعْلًا مِنْهُ أَنْشَأَهُ وَمَثَلَهُ، لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنْ قَبْلِ ذَلِكَ كَائِنًا، لَوْ كَانَ قَدِيمًا لَكَانَ إِلَهًا ثَانِيًا.

It cannot be said that He came into being after He had not been in existence because in that case the attributes of the created things would be assigned to Him and there would remain no difference between them and Him, and He would have no distinction over them. Thus, the Creator and the created would become equal and the initiator and the initiated would be on the same level. He created (the whole of) creation without any example made by someone else, and He did not secure the assistance of any one out of His creation for creating it.

لَا يُقَالُ: كَانَ بَعْدَ أَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ، فَتَجْرِي عَلَيْهِ الصِّفَاتُ الْمُخَدَّثَاتُ، وَلَا يَكُونُ بَيْنَهَا وَبَيْنَهُ فَضْلٌ، وَلَا لَهُ عَلَيْهَا فَضْلٌ، فَيَسْتَوِي الصَّانِعُ وَالْمَصْنُوعُ، وَيَتَكَافَأُ الْمُبْتَدِعُ وَالْبَدِيعُ. خَلَقَ الْخَلَائِقَ عَلَى غَيْرِ مِثَالٍ خَلَا مِنْ غَيْرِهِ، وَلَمْ يَسْتَعِنْ عَلَى خَلْقِهَا بِأَحَدٍ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ.

He created the earth and suspended it without being busy, retained it without support, made it stand without legs, raised it without pillars, protected it against bendings and curvings and defended it against crumbling and splitting (into parts). He fixed mountains on it like stumps, solidified its rocks, caused its streams to flow and opened wide its valleys. Whatever He made did not suffer from any frailty, and whatever He strengthened did not show any weakness.

وَأَنْشَأَ الْأَرْضَ فَأَمْسَكَهَا مِنْ غَيْرِ اسْتِعَالٍ، وَأَرْسَاهَا عَلَى غَيْرِ قَرَارٍ، وَأَقَامَهَا بِغَيْرِ قَوَائِمٍ، وَرَفَعَهَا بِغَيْرِ دَعَائِمٍ، وَحَصَّنَهَا مِنَ الْأَوْدِ وَالْأَعْوِجَاجِ، وَمَنْعَهَا مِنَ التَّهَافُتِ وَالْانْفِرَاجِ، أَرَسَى

أَوْتَادَهَا، وَضَرَبَ أَسْدَادَهَا، وَاسْتَفَاضَ عُيُونَهَا، وَحَدَّ أَوْدِيَّتَهَا، فَلَمْ يَهِنْ مَا بَنَاهُ، وَلَا ضَعْفَ مَا قَوَّاهُ.

He manifests Himself over the earth with His authority and greatness. He is aware of its inside through his knowledge and understanding. He has power over every thing in the earth by virtue of His sublimity and dignity. Nothing from the earth that he may ask for defies Him, nor does it oppose Him so as to overpower Him. No swift-footed creature can run away from Him so as to surpass Him. He is not needy towards any possessing person so that he should feed Him. All things bow to Him and are humble before His greatness. They cannot flee away from His authority to someone else in order to escape His benefit or His harm. There is no parallel for Him who may match Him and no one like Him so as to equal Him.

هُوَ الظَّاهِرُ عَلَيْهَا بِسُلْطَانِهِ وَعَظَمَتِهِ، وَهُوَ البَاطِنُ لَهَا بِعِلْمِهِ وَمَعْرِفَتِهِ، وَالْعَالِي عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ مِنْهَا بِجَلَالِهِ وَعِزَّتِهِ. لَا يُعْجِزُهُ شَيْءٌ مِنْهَا طَلَبَهُ، وَلَا يَمْتَنِعُ عَلَيْهِ فَيَعْلِبُهُ، وَلَا يَفُوتُهُ السَّرِيعُ مِنْهَا فَيَسْبِقُهُ، وَلَا يَحْتَاجُ إِلَى ذِي مَالٍ فَيَرْزُقُهُ. خَضَعَتِ الْأَشْيَاءُ لَهُ، وَذَلَّتْ مُسْتَكِينَةً لِعَظَمَتِهِ، لَا تَسْتَطِيعُ الْهَرَبَ مِنْ سُلْطَانِهِ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ فَتَمْتَنِعَ مِنْ نَفْعِهِ وَضَرَرِهِ، وَلَا كُفُوَ لَهُ فَيُكَافِئُهُ، وَلَا نَظِيرَ لَهُ فَيَسَاوِيهِ.

He will destroy the earth after its existence, till all that exists on it will become non-existent. But the extinction of the world after its creation is no more marvelous than its first formation and invention. How could it be otherwise? Even if all the animals of the earth, whether birds or beasts, stabled cattle or pasturing ones, of different origins and species, dull people and sagacious men -- all jointly try to create (even) a mosquito they are not able to bring it into being and do not understand what is the way to its creation. Their wits are bewildered and wandering. Their powers fall short and fail, and return dazzled and weary, knowing that they are defeated and admitting their inability to produce it, also realising that they are too weak (even) to destroy it!

هُوَ الْمُفْنِي لَهَا بَعْدَ وُجُودِهَا، حَتَّى يَصِيرَ مَوْجُودُهَا كَمَقْهُودِهَا. وَلَيْسَ فَنَاءُ الدُّنْيَا بَعْدَ ابْتِدَاعِهَا بِأَعْجَبَ مِنْ إِنْشَائِهَا وَاخْتِرَاعِهَا، وَكَيْفَ وَلَوْ اجْتَمَعَ جَمِيعُ حَيَوَانِهَا مِنْ طَيْرِهَا وَبَهَائِمِهَا، وَمَا كَانَ مِنْ مُرَاحِهَا وَسَائِمِهَا، وَأَصْنَافِ أَسْنَاحِهَا وَأَجْنَاسِهَا، وَمُتَبَلِّدَةِ أُمَّمِهَا وَأَكْيَاسِهَا، عَلَى إِحْدَاثِ بَعُوضَةٍ، مَا قَدَّرَتْ عَلَى إِحْدَاثِهَا، وَلَا عَرَفَتْ كَيْفَ السَّبِيلِ إِلَى إِبْجَادِهَا، وَلَتَحَيَّرَتْ عَقُولُهَا فِي عِلْمِ ذَلِكَ وَتَاهَتْ، وَعَجِزَتْ قُوَاهَا وَتَنَاهَتْ، وَرَجَعَتْ حَاسِئَةً حَسِيرَةً، عَارِفَةً بِأَنَّهَا مَقْهُورَةٌ، مُقَرَّةٌ بِالْعَجْزِ عَنِ إِنْشَائِهَا، مُدْعِنَةٌ بِالضَّعْفِ عَنِ إِنْفَائِهَا!

Surely, after the extinction of the world, Allah the Glorified will remain alone with nothing else beside Him. He will be, after its extinction, as He was before its production: without time or place or moment or period. At this moment, period and time will not exist, and years and hours will disappear. There will be nothing except Allah, the One, the All-powerful.

To Him is the return of all matters. Its initial creation was not in its power; and the prevention of its extinction was (also) not in its power. If it had the power to prevent it, it would have existed for ever.

وَإِنَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ، يُعُودُ بَعْدَ فَنَاءِ الدُّنْيَا وَحَدَهُ لَا شَيْءَ مَعَهُ، كَمَا كَانَ قَبْلَ ابْتِدَائِهَا، كَذَلِكَ يَكُونُ بَعْدَ فَنَائِهَا، بِلَا وَقْتٍ وَلَا مَكَانٍ، وَلَا حِينَ وَلَا زَمَانَ، عُدِمَتْ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ الْأَجَالُ وَالْأَوْقَاتِ، وَزَالَتِ السِّنُونَ وَالسَّاعَاتُ، فَلَا شَيْءَ إِلَّا الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ مَصِيرُ جَمِيعِ الْأُمُورِ، بِلَا قُدْرَةٍ مِنْهَا كَانَ ابْتِدَاءُ خَلْقِهَا، وَبِعَبْرِ امْتِنَاعِ مِنْهَا كَانَ فَنَائُهَا، وَلَوْ قَدَّرَتْ عَلَى الْاِمْتِنَاعِ لَدَامَ بَقَاؤُهَا.

When He made anything of the world, the making of it did not cause Him any difficulty, and the creation of anything which He created and formed did not fatigue Him. He did not create it to heighten His authority nor for fear of loss or harm, nor to seek its help against an overwhelming foe, nor to guard against any avenging opponent with its help, nor for the extension of His domain by its help, nor for boasting (over largeness of His possession) against a partner, nor because He felt lonely and desired to seek its company.

لَمْ يَتَكَأَدُهُ صُنْعُ شَيْءٍ مِنْهَا إِذْ صَنَعَهُ، وَلَمْ يَزُودُهُ مِنْهَا خَلْقُ مَا بَرَأَهُ وَخَلَقَهُ، وَلَمْ يُكْوِنِهَا لِتَشْدِيدِ سُلْطَانِ، وَلَا لِحُؤُوفٍ مِنْ زَوَالٍ وَنُقْصَانِ، وَلَا لِالِاسْتِعَانَةِ بِهَا عَلَى نِدَى مُكَاتَرَةٍ، وَلَا لِالِاخْتِرَازِ بِهَا مِنْ ضِدِّ مَثَاوِرٍ، وَلَا لِالِازْدِيَادِ بِهَا فِي مُلْكِهِ، وَلَا لِامْكَاتَرَةِ شَرِيكِ فِي شَرِكِهِ، وَلَا لَوْحْشَةِ كَانَتْ مِنْهُ، فَأَرَادَ أَنْ يَسْتَأْنِسَ إِلَيْهَا.

Then after its creation He will destroy it, but not because any worry has overcome Him in its upkeep and administration, or for any pleasure that will accrue to Him, or for the cumbrousness of anything over Him. The length of its life does not weary Him so as to induce Him to its quick destruction.

But Allah, the Glorified, has maintained it with His kindness, kept it intact with His command and perfected it with His power. Then after its destruction, He will resuscitate it, but not for any need of His own towards it, nor to seek the assistance of any of its things against it, nor to change over from the condition of loneliness to that of company, nor from the condition of ignorance and blindness to that of knowledge and search, nor from paucity and need towards needlessness and plenty, nor from disgrace and lowliness towards honour and prestige.

ثُمَّ هُوَ يُفْنِيهَا بَعْدَ تَكْوِينِهَا، لَا لِسَامٍ دَخَلَ عَلَيْهِ فِي تَصْرِيفِهَا وَتَدْبِيرِهَا، وَلَا لِارْحَاةٍ وَاصِلَةٍ إِلَيْهِ، وَلَا لِتَقْلٍ شَيْءٍ مِنْهَا عَلَيْهِ. لَا يَمْلَأُهُ طُولُ بَقَائِهَا فَيَدْعُوهُ إِلَى سُرْعَةِ إِفْنَائِهَا، لَكِنَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ دَبَّرَهَا بِلُطْفِهِ، وَأَمْسَكَهَا بِأَمْرِهِ، وَأَتَقَنَهَا بِقُدْرَتِهِ. ثُمَّ يُعِيدُهَا بَعْدَ الْفَنَاءِ مِنْ غَيْرِ حَاجَةٍ مِنْهُ إِلَيْهَا، وَلَا اسْتِعَانَةَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْهَا عَلَيْهَا، وَلَا لِانْصِرَافٍ مِنْ حَالٍ وَحْشَةٍ إِلَى حَالِ اسْتِنْسَانِ، وَلَا

مِنْ حَالٍ جَهْلٍ وَعَمَى إِلَى [حَالٍ] عِلْمٍ وَالْتِمَاسٍ، وَلَا مِنْ فَقْرٍ وَحَاجَةٍ إِلَى غِنَى وَكَثْرَةٍ، وَلَا مِنْ
دُلِّ وَضَعَةٍ إِلَى عِزٍّ وَقُدْرَةٍ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 186

- (1) *Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, I, 138;*
- (2) *al-Saduq, al-Tawhid, 96, 320, 324;*
- (3) *al-Saduq, al-'Amali, 205;*
- (4) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 131;*
- (5) *al-Mufid, al-'Ikhtisas, 236;*
- (6) *Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, Tadhkirah, 157;*
- (7) *al-Tabarsi, al-'Ihtijaj, I, 299;*
- (8) *al-Murtada, al-'Amali, I, 103.*

Notes

1. The meaning is that the sense for which the words "mundhu", "qad" and "lawla" have been formed is opposed to the attributes of "Ever", "Eternal" and "Perfect". Therefore, their application to anything would prove that they have come into existence from non-existence and are imperfect. For example, "mundhu" is used to denote time as is "qad wujida mundu kadha" (this thing is found since so-and-so). Here a time limit has been stated, and anything for which a limit of time can be described cannot exist from ever or for ever. The word "qad" shows (indicating the present perfect tense) the immediate past. This sense also can apply to a thing which is limited in time. The word "lawla" is used to denote the negation of something in another thing, as "ma ahsanahu wa akmalahu lawla annahu kadha" (how handsome and perfect it would be if it were so-and-so). Therefore, the thing for which this word is used would be in need of others in handsomeness and perfection, and would remain deficient by itself.

Sermon 187: May my father and my mother be sacrificed for those...

Regarding the vicissitudes of time (The mischiefs that are to occur and the absence of lawful ways of livelihood)

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

تختصّ بذكر الملاحم

May my father and my mother be sacrificed for those few whose names are well-known in the sky and not known on the earth. Beware, you should expect what is to befall you such as adversity in your affairs, severance of relations and the rising up of inferior people. This will happen when the blow of a sword will be easier for a believer than to secure one Dirham lawfully.

This will happen ¹ when the reward of the beggar is more than that of the giver. This will be when you are intoxicated, not by drinking, but with wealth and plenty, you are swearing without compulsion and are speaking lies without compulsion. This will be when troubles hurt you as the saddle hurts the hump of the camel. How long will these tribulations be and how distant the hope (for deliverance from them)?

أَلَا بِأَبِي وَأُمِّي، هُمْ مِنْ عِدَّةِ أَسْمَائِهِمْ فِي السَّمَاءِ مَعْرُوفَةٌ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ مَجْهُولَةٌ. أَلَا فَتَوَقَّعُوا مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ إِدْبَارِ أُمُورِكُمْ، وَانْقِطَاعِ وُصْلِكُمْ، وَاسْتِعْمَالِ صِعَارِكُمْ: ذَاكَ حَيْثُ تَكُونُ ضَرْبَةُ السَّيْفِ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِ أَهْوَنَ مِنَ الدَّرْهِمِ مِنْ حِلِّهِ! ذَاكَ حَيْثُ يَكُونُ الْمُعْطَى أَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا مِنَ الْمُعْطَى! ذَاكَ حَيْثُ تَسْكُرُونَ مِنْ غَيْرِ شَرَابٍ، بَلْ مِنَ النَّعْمَةِ وَالنَّعِيمِ، وَتَحْلِفُونَ مِنْ غَيْرِ اضْطِرَارٍ، وَتَكْذِبُونَ مِنْ غَيْرِ إِخْرَاجٍ. ذَاكَ إِذَا عَضَّكُمْ الْبَلَاءُ كَمَا يَعَضُّ الْقَتَبُ غَارِبَ الْبَعِيرِ. مَا أَطْوَلَ هَذَا الْعَنَاءَ، وَأَبْعَدَ هَذَا الرَّجَاءَ!

O people, throw away the reins of the horses who carry on their backs the weight of your hands (i.e. sins), do not cut away from your chief (Imam) otherwise you will blame yourself for your own doings. Do not jump in the fire which is in flames in front of you; keep away from its courses and leave the middle way for it. Because, by my life, the believer will die in its flames, and others will remain safe in it.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، أَلْقُوا هَذِهِ الْأَرْزِمَةَ الَّتِي تَحْمِلُ ظُهُورَهَا الْأَثْقَالَ مِنْ أَيْدِيكُمْ، وَلَا تَصَدَّعُوا عَلَى سُلْطَانِكُمْ فَتَدُّمُوا غَيْبَ فِعَالِكُمْ، وَلَا تَفْتَحُوا مَا اسْتَقْبَلْتُمْ مِنْ فَوْرِ نَارِ الْفِتْنَةِ، وَأَمِيطُوا عَنْ سَنَنِهَا، وَخَلُّوا قَصْدَ السَّبِيلِ لَهَا، فَقَدْ لَعَمْرِي يَهْلِكُ فِي لَهْبِهَا الْمُؤْمِنُ، وَيَسْلَمُ فِيهَا غَيْرُ الْمُسْلِمِ.

I am among you like a lamp in the darkness. Whoever enters by it will be lit from it. So listen, O men, preserve it and remain attentive with the ears of your hearts so that you may understand.

إِنَّمَا مَثَلِي بَيْنَكُمْ مَثَلُ السِّرَاجِ فِي الظُّلْمَةِ، يَسْتَضِيءُ بِهِ مَنْ وَجَّهَهَا. فَاسْمَعُوا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ وَعُوا،
وَأَحْضِرُوا آذَانَ قُلُوبِكُمْ تَفْهَمُوا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 187

(1) *Al-Mada'ini, Siffin, see `Abd al-Zahra', II, 478;*

(2) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, bab al-mal wa al-kasb.*

Notes

1. In that period the reward of the beggar who takes will be higher than that of the giver because the ways of earning livelihood of the rich will be unlawful, and whatever he will donate of it, its purpose will be showing himself, hypocrisy and seeking fame, for which he will not be entitled to any reward, while the poor who take it by force of their poverty and helplessness, and to spend it in the right manner, will deserve more reward and recompense.

The commentator, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written another meaning of it also, namely if the beggar does not take the wealth from the rich and it remains with him he will spend it on unlawful matters and enjoyments, and since his taking it from him prevents him from using it in unlawful manner; therefore, for this prevention of evil, the beggar will deserve more reward and recompense. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 13, p. 97)

Sermon 188: I advise you, O people, to fear Allah and to praise Him...

Allah's favours – counseling the people

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في الوصية بأمر

التقوى

I advise you, O people, to fear Allah and to praise Him profusely for His favours to you and His reward for you and His obligations on you. See how He chose you for favours and dealt with you with mercy. You sinned openly; He kept you covered. You behaved in a way to incur His punishment, but He gave you more time.

أوصيكم، أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، وَكَثْرَةَ حَمْدِهِ عَلَى آيَاتِهِ إِلَيْكُمْ، وَنِعْمَائِهِ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَبَلَايِهِ لَدَيْكُمْ. فَكُمْ حَصَّكُمْ بِنِعْمَةٍ، وَتَدَارَكُكُمْ بِرَحْمَةٍ! أَعْوَزْتُمْ لَهُ فَسَتَرَكُمْ، وَتَعَرَّضْتُمْ لِأَخْذِهِ فَأَمْهَلَكُمْ!

Condition of persons facing death

الموت

I also advise you to remember death and to lessen your heedlessness towards it. Why should you be heedless of Him Who is not heedless of you? Why expect from him (i.e., the angel of death) who will not give you time? The dead whom you have been watching suffice as preachers. They were carried to their graves, not riding themselves, and were placed in them but not of their own accord.

It seems as if they never lived in this world and as if the next world had always been their abode. They have made lonely the place where they were living, and are now living where they used to feel lonely. They remained busy about what they had to leave, and did not care for where they were to go. Now they cannot remove themselves from evil, nor add to their virtues. They were attached to the world and it deceived them. They trusted it and it overturned them.

وأوصيكم بِذِكْرِ الْمَوْتِ، وَإِفْلالِ الْعَقْلَةِ عَنْهُ، وَكَيْفَ عَقَلْتُمْ عَمَّا لَيْسَ يُعْفِلُكُمْ، وَطَمَعْتُمْ فِيمَنْ لَيْسَ يُمَهِّلُكُمْ؟! فَكَفَى وَعِظًا بِمَوْتِي عَايِنْتُمُوهُمْ، حُمِلُوا إِلَى قُبُورِهِمْ غَيْرَ رَاكِبِينَ، وَأُنزِلُوا فِيهَا غَيْرَ نَارِلِينَ، كَأَنَّهُمْ لَمْ يَكُونُوا لِلدُّنْيَا عُمَّارًا، وَكَأَنَّ الْآخِرَةَ لَمْ تَزَلْ لَهُمْ دَارًا، أَوْحَشُوا مَا كَانُوا يُوطِنُونَ، وَأَوْطِنُوا مَا كَانُوا يُوحِشُونَ، وَاشْتَغَلُوا بِمَا فَارَقُوا، وَأَضَاعُوا مَا إِلَيْهِ انْتَقَلُوا، لَا عَنْ قَبِيحٍ يَسْتَطِيعُونَ انْتِقَالَ، وَلَا فِي حَسَنٍ يَسْتَطِيعُونَ إِزْدِيَادًا، أَنْسُوا بِالْدُّنْيَا فَعَرَّتْهُمْ، وَوَنِعُوا بِهَا فَصَرَعَتْهُمْ.

Transience of this world

May Allah have pity on you. You should therefore hasten towards (the preparation of) houses which you have been commanded to populate, and towards which you have been called and invited. Seek the completion of Allah's favours on you by exercising endurance in His obedience and abstention from His disobedience, because tomorrow is close to today. How fast are the hours of the day, how fast are the days in the month, how fast are the months in the years and how fast the years in a life.

فَسَابِقُوا . رَحِمَكُمُ اللَّهُ . إِلَىٰ مَنَازِلِكُمْ الَّتِي أُمِرْتُمْ أَنْ تَعْمُرُوهَا ، وَالَّتِي رُغِبْتُمْ فِيهَا ، وَدُعِيتُمْ إِلَيْهَا .
وَاسْتَبْتُمُوا نِعَمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالصَّبْرِ عَلَىٰ طَاعَتِهِ ، وَالْمُجَانَبَةِ لِمَعْصِيَتِهِ ، فَإِنَّ عَدَاةَ مَنْ يَوْمٍ قَرِيبٌ .
مَا أَسْرَعَ السَّاعَاتِ فِي الْيَوْمِ ، وَأَسْرَعَ الْأَيَّامِ فِي الشَّهْرِ ، وَأَسْرَعَ الشُّهُورِ فِي السَّنَةِ ، وَأَسْرَعَ السِّنِينَ
فِي الْعُمُرِ !

Alternative Sources for Sermon 188

(1) Abu Mansur al-Tha`alibi, *al-'Ijaz wa al-'Ijaz*, 31.

Sermon 189: One belief is that which is firm and steadfast in hearts...

Steadfast and transient belief and the obligation of migration (hijrah)

ومن خطبته (عليه السلام)

في الايمان ووجوب الهجرة

One belief is that which is firm and steadfast in hearts, and one is that which remains temporarily in the heart and the breast up to a certain time. If you were to acquit (yourself) before any person, you should wait till death approaches him, for that is the time limit for being acquitted.

فَمِنَ الْاِيْمَانِ مَا يَكُوْنُ ثَابِتًا مُسْتَقِرًّا فِي الْقُلُوْبِ، وَمِنْهُ مَا يَكُوْنُ عَوَارِي بَيْنَ الْقُلُوْبِ وَالصُّدُوْرِ، اِلَى اَجَلٍ مَّعْلُوْمٍ، فَاِذَا كَانَتْ لَكُمْ بَرَاءَةٌ مِنْ اَحَدٍ فَقِفُوْهُ حَتَّى يَخْضُرَهُ الْمَوْتُ، فَعِنْدَ ذَلِكَ يَقَعُ حُدُّ الْبَرَاءَةِ.

The obligation of migration

وجوب الهجرة

And migration stands as its original position. Allah has no need towards him who secretly accepts belief or him who openly does so. Migration will not apply to any one unless he recognises the proof (of Allah) on the earth. Whoever recognises him and acknowledges him would be a muhajir (migrant). Istid'af (i.e. the state of being deemed weak and therefore free from the obligation of migration) does not apply to him to whom the proof (of Allah) reaches and who hears it and his heart preserves it. ¹

وَالْهِيْجْرَةُ قَائِمَةٌ عَلٰى حَدِّهَا الْاَوَّلِ، مَا كَانَ لِلّٰهِ تَعَالٰى فِيْ اَهْلِ الْاَرْضِ حَاجَةٌ مِنْ مُسْتَسِرِّ الْاُمَّةِ وَمُعْلِنِيْهَا، لَا يَقَعُ اسْمُ الْهِيْجْرَةِ عَلٰى اَحَدٍ اِلَّا بِمَعْرِفَةِ الْحُجَّةِ فِي الْاَرْضِ، فَمَنْ عَرَفَهَا وَاَقْرَبَهَا فَهِيَ مُهَاجِرٌ، وَلَا يَقَعُ اسْمُ الْاِسْتِضْعَافِ عَلٰى مَنْ بَلَغَتْهُ الْحُجَّةُ فَسَمِعَتْهَا اُذُنُهُ وَوَعَاَهَا قَلْبُهُ.

Arduousness of belief

صعوبة الايمان

Certainly, our case is difficult and complicated. No one can bear it except a believer whose heart Allah has tried with belief. Our traditions will not be preserved except by trustworthy hearts and (men of) solid understanding.

اِنَّ اَمْرَنَا صَعْبٌ مُسْتَصْعَبٌ، لَا يَحْتَمِلُهُ اِلَّا عَبْدٌ مُؤْمِنٌ اَمْتَحَنَ اللّٰهُ قَلْبَهُ لِلاِيْمَانِ، وَلَا يَعِي حَدِيْتَنَا اِلَّا صُدُوْرٌ اَمِيْنَةٌ، وَاَحْلَامٌ رَزِيْنَةٌ.

The knowledge of the successor (wasi), his challenge "Ask me before you miss me" and prophecy about the Umayyads

علم الوصي

O people! Ask me before you lose me, because certainly I am acquainted with the passages of the sky more than the passages of the earth,² and before that mischief springs upon its feet which would trample even the nosestring and destroy the wits of the people.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، سَلُونِي قَبْلَ أَنْ تَفْقِدُونِي، فَلَا نَا بِطُرُقِ السَّمَاءِ أَعْلَمُ مِنِّي بِطُرُقِ الْأَرْضِ، قَبْلَ أَنْ تَشْعَرَ بِرِجْلِهَا فِتْنَةً تَطَأُ فِي خِطَامِهَا وَتَذْهَبُ بِأَخْلَامِ قَوْمِهَا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 189

- (1) *Al-Tha`alibi, al-T`jaz, 32;*
- (2) *al-Saffar, Basa'ir, 31; on p. 202 from (3)*
- (3) *Mas`adah ibn Sadaqah, Khutab Amir al-Mu'minin (A);*
- (4) *al-Saduq, `Uyun, I, 164;*
- (5) *al-Saduq, al-Khisal, II, 164;*
- (6) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 80, narrated by (7)*
- (7) *al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak, II, 466;*
- (8) *Ibn `Abd al-Birr, Jami`, I, 114;*
- (9) *Ibn Hajar, al-'Isabah, II, 509;*
- (10) *al-Tabari, al-Riyad, 198;*
- (11) *al-Suyuti, Ta'rikh al-khulafa', 124;*
- (12) *Dahlan, al-Futuhah, II, 337;*
- (13) *al-Qunduzi, Yanabi` al-mawaddah, 224.*

Notes

1. This is the interpretation of the word "muhajir" and "mustad`af" as mentioned in the Holy Qur'an:

Verily those whom the angels take away (at death) while they are unjust to their (own) selves (in sin), they (the angels) shall ask (the sinning souls): "In what state were ye?" They shall reply, "Weakened (mustad`af - and oppressed) were we in the land;" They (angels) will say "Was not the land of Allah vast (enough) for you to immigrate therein?" So these (are those) whose refuge shall be Hell; and what a bad resort it is. Except the (really) weakened ones from among the men and the women and the children, who have not in their power the means (to escape from the unbelievers) and nor do they find the (right) way. So these, may be, Allah will pardon them; and Allah is the Clement, the Oft-forgiving. (4:97-99)

The meaning of Amir al-mu'minin here is that hijrah (migration) was not only obligatory during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, but it is a permanent obligation. This migration is even now obligatory for attaining the proof of Allah and the true religion. Therefore, if one has attained the proof of Allah and believed in it, even if he is in midst of the unbelievers of his locality, he is not duty bound to migrate.

The "mustad`af" (weakened) is one who is living among the unbelievers and is far from being informed of the proofs of Allah, and at the same time he is unable to migrate in order to attain the proofs of Allah.

2. Some people have explained this saying of Amir al-mu'minin to mean that by the passages of the earth he means matters of the world and by passages of the sky matters of religious law and that Amir al-mu'minin intends to say that he knows the matters of religious law and commandments more than the worldly matters. Thus, Ibn Maytham al-Bahrani writes (in Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 4, pp. 200-201):

It is related from al-`Allamah al-Wabari, that he said that Amir al-mu'minin's intention is to say that the scope of his religious knowledge is larger than his knowledge about matters of the world.

But taking the context into account, this explanation cannot be held to be correct because this sentence (which is the subject of explanation) has been used as the cause of the sentence "Ask me before you miss me", and after it, is the prophesy about revolt. In

between these two the occurrence of the sentence that "I know religious matters more than worldly matters", makes the whole utterance quite uncounted, because Amir al-mu'minin's challenge to ask whatever one likes is not confined to matters of religious law only so this sentence could be held as its cause. Then, after that, the prophesy of the rising up of the revolt has nothing to do with matters of religious law, so that it could be put forth as a proof of more knowledge of religious matters. To ignore the clear import of the words and to interpret them in a way which does not suit the occasion, does not exhibit a correct spirit, when from the context also the same meaning accrues which the words openly convey. Thus, it is to give a warning about the Umayyad's mischief that Amir al-mu'minin uttered the words: "Ask me whatever you like"; because I know the paths and courses of divine destiny more than the passages of the earth. So, even if you ask me about matters which are recorded in the 'preserved tablet' and concern divine destiny I can tell you, and a serious mischief is to rise against me in those matters in which you should have doubt, because my eyes are more acquainted with those ethereal lines which concern the occurrence of events and mischiefs than, with what I know about live appearing on the earth. The occurrence of this mischief is as certain as an object seen with eyes. You should therefore ask me its details and the way to keep safe from it, so that you may be able to manage your defence when the times comes." This meaning is supported by the successive sayings of Amir al-mu'minin which he uttered in connection with the unknown, and to which the future testified. Thus, Ibn Abi'l Hadid comments on this claim of Amir al-mu'minin as follows:

Amir al-mu'minin's claim is also supported by his sayings about future events which he uttered not once or a hundred times but continuously and successively, from which there remains no doubt that whatever he spoke was on the basis of knowledge and certainly and not in the way of chance. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 13, p. 106)

In connection with this saying of Amir al-mu'minin it has already been shown and explained (in Sermon 92, Foot-note No. 2) that no one else dared advance such a claim, and those who made such a claim had to face only disgrace and humility. About the prophecies made by Amir al-mu'minin see Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 7, pp. 47-51; al-Qadi Nuru'l-Lah al-Mar'ashi, Ihqaq al-haqq (New ed.), vol. 8, pp. 87-182.

Sermon 190: I praise Him out of gratefulness for His reward...

Importance of fear of Allah, desolateless of the grave, and about the death of the lover of Ahlul Bayt being like that of a martyr

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)
يحمد الله ويثني على نبيّه ويعظ بالتقوى

Praise of Allah

حمد الله

I praise Him out of gratefulness for His reward, and I seek His assistance in fulfilling His rights. He has a strong army. His dignity is grand.

أَحْمَدُهُ شُكْرًا لِإِنْعَامِهِ، وَأَسْتَعِينُهُ عَلَى وَطَائِفِ حُقُوقِهِ، عَزِيرَ الْجُنْدِ، عَظِيمَ الْمَجْدِ.

The Prophet's Character

الثناء على النبي

I stand witness that Muhammad - peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his progeny - is His slave and His Prophet. He called (people) to His obedience and overpowered His enemies by fighting for the sake of His religion. People's joining together to falsify him and their attempt to extinguish His light did not prevent him from it.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، دَعَا إِلَى طَاعَتِهِ، وَقَاهَرَ أَعْدَاءَهُ جِهَادًا عَنِ دِينِهِ، لَا يُثْنِيهِ عَنِ ذَلِكَ اجْتِمَاعٌ عَلَى تَكْذِيبِهِ، وَالْتِمَاسٌ لِإِطْفَاءِ نُورِهِ.

Counselling piety

العظة بالتقوى

You should therefore exercise fear of Allah because it has a rope whose twist is strong and its pinnacle is lofty and invulnerable. Hasten toward death in its pangs (by doing good acts) and be prepared for it before its approach, because the ultimate end is the Day of Judgement. This is enough preaching for one who understands and enough of a lesson for one who does not know.

What idea do you have, before reaching that end, of the narrowness of grave, the hardship of loneliness, fear of the passage towards the next world, the pangs of fear, the shifting of ribs here and there (due to narrowing of the grave), the deafness of ears, the darkness of the grave, fear of the promised punishment, the closing of the receptacle of the grave and the laying of stones?

فَاعْتَصِمُوا بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّ لَهَا حَبْلًا وَثِيقًا عُرْوَتُهُ، وَمَعْقَلًا مَنِيعًا ذُرْوَتُهُ، وَبَادِرُوا الْمَوْتَ وَعَمْرَاتِهِ، وَأَمْهَدُوا لَهُ قَبْلَ حُلُولِهِ، وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُ قَبْلَ نُزُولِهِ، فَإِنَّ الْعَايَةَ الْقِيَامَةَ، وَكَفَى بِذَلِكَ وَعِظًا

لِمَنْ عَقَلَ، وَمُعْتَبَرًا لِمَنْ جَهِلَ! وَقَبْلَ بُلُوغِ الْعَايَةِ مَا تَعْلَمُونَ مِنْ ضَيْقِ الْأَرْمَاسِ، وَشِدَّةِ الْأَبْلَاسِ، وَهَوْلِ الْمُطَّلَعِ، وَرَوْعَاتِ الْفَرْعِ، وَاجْتِلَافِ الْأَضْلَاحِ، وَاسْتِكَائِ الْأَسْمَاعِ، وَظُلْمَةِ اللَّحْدِ، وَخَيْفَةِ الْوَعْدِ، وَغَمِّ الضَّرِيحِ، وَرَدَمِ الصَّوْبِ.

Therefore, (fear) Allah, (fear) Allah, O creatures of Allah, because the world is behaving with you in the usual way and you and the Day of Judgement are in the same rope (close to each other). As though it has come with its signs, has approached with its pleas and has made you stand in its way; and as though it has come forward with all its quakings and has settled down with its chest on the ground while the world has parted from its people and has turned them out of its lap. It was like a day that has passed or a month that has gone by. Its new things have become old and the fat ones have become thin.

قَالَ اللَّهُ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ! فَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا مَا ضَيَّعْتُمْ بِكُمْ عَلَى سَنَنِ، وَأَنْتُمْ وَالسَّاعَةُ فِي قَرْنٍ، وَكَأَنَّهَا قَدْ جَاءَتْ بِأَشْرَاطِهَا، وَأَزْفَتْ بِأَفْرَاطِهَا، وَوَقَفَتْ بِكُمْ عَلَى سِرَاطِهَا، وَكَأَنَّهَا قَدْ أَشْرَفَتْ بِرِزَالِهَا، وَأَنَاخَتْ بِكَلَالِهَا، وَأَنْصَرَمَتْ الدُّنْيَا بِأَهْلِهَا، وَأَخْرَجَتْهُمْ مِنْ حِضْنِهَا، فَكَانَتْ كَيَوْمِ مَضَى وَشَهْرٍ انْقَضَى، وَصَارَ جَدِيدُهَا رَتْئًا، وَسَمِينُهَا عَثًّا

They are in a narrow place, in very complicated affairs and in a fire whose pain is sharp, cries are loud, flames are rising, sound is trembling, burning is severe, abatement is remote; its fuel is burning, its threats are fearful, its hollows are hidden, its sides are dark, its vessels are aflame, and everything about it is abominable.

فِي مَوْقِفِ صَنْكِ الْمَقَامِ، وَأُمُورٍ مُشْتَبِهَةٍ عِظَامٍ، وَنَارٍ شَدِيدِ كَلْبِهَا، غَالٍ جَبْهَتِهَا، سَاطِعٍ لَهْبِهَا، مُتَعَيِّظٍ زَفِيرِهَا، مُتَأَجِّجٍ سَعِيرِهَا، بَعِيدِ حُمُودِهَا، ذَاكٍ وَفُودِهَا، مَخُوفٍ وَعَيْدِهَا، عَمٍ قَرَارِهَا، مُظْلَمَةِ أَفْطَارِهَا، حَامِيَةِ قُدُورِهَا، فَطِيْعَةِ أُمُورِهَا.

Those who are wary of their Lord will be led to paradise in throngs. . . (Qur'an. 39:73)

They are safe from chastisement, away from punishment, and kept aloof from fire. Their abode will be peaceful and they will be pleased with their longing and their place of stay. These are the people whose acts in this world were chaste, their eyes were tearful, their nights in this world were like days because of fearing and seeking forgiveness, and their days were like nights because of feeling of loneliness and separation. Therefore, Allah made Paradise the place of their (eventual) return and a reward in recompense.... They were most eligible and suitable for it;... (Qur'an, 48:26) in the eternal domain and everlasting favours.

(وَسَبَقَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا رَبَّهُمْ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ زُمَرًا)، قَدْ أُمِنَ الْعَذَابُ، وَأَنْقَطَعَ الْعِتَابُ، وَرُخِزُوا عَنِ النَّارِ، وَأَطْمَأْنَنْتْ بِهِمُ الدَّارُ، وَرَضُوا الْمَثْوَى وَالْقَرَارَ، الَّذِينَ كَانَتْ أَعْمَالُهُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا زَاكِيَةً، وَأَعْيُنُهُمْ بَاكِيَةً، وَكَانَ لَيْلُهُمْ فِي دُنْيَاهُمْ نَهَارًا، تَخَشُّعًا وَاسْتِعْفَارًا، وَكَانَ نَهَارُهُمْ لَيْلًا، تَوْحُشًا

وَأَتَقِطَاعًا، فَجَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَهُمُ الْجَنَّةَ مَأْبَأً، وَالْجَزَاءَ ثَوَابًا، (وَكُنَّا نُوَاقِحُ بِهَا وَأَهْلَهَا) فِي مُلْكِ دَائِمٍ،
وَنَعِيمٍ قَائِمٍ.

Therefore, O creatures of Allah, pay regard to all that by being regardful of which one will succeed and by ignoring which one will incur loss, and hasten towards your death by means of your (good) acts, because you are bound by what you have done in the past and you have to your credit only what (good acts) you have sent forward. (Behave in such a way) as though the feared event (death) has come upon you, so that you cannot return (to do good acts) nor can you be cleared of evil acts. May Allah prompt us and you for His obedience and obedience of His Prophet, and forgive us and you by His great mercy.

فَارْعَوْا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ مَا بَرِعَائِيهِ يُفُوزُ فَائِزُهُمْ، وَبِإِضَاعَتِهِ يَخْسِرُ مُبْطِلُهُمْ، وَبَادِرُوا آجَالَكُمْ
بَأَعْمَالِكُمْ، فَإِنَّكُمْ مُرْتَهِنُونَ بِمَا أَسْلَفْتُمْ، وَمَدِينُونَ بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمْ، وَكَأَنَّ قَدْ نَزَلَ بِكُمْ الْمَخُوفُ، فَلَا
رَجْعَةَ تَنَالُونَ، وَلَا عَشْرَةَ تُقَالُونَ.

اسْتَعْمَلْنَا اللَّهَ وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِطَاعَتِهِ وَطَاعَةِ رَسُولِهِ، وَعَقًّا عَنَّا وَعَنْكُمْ بِفَضْلِ رَحْمَتِهِ.

Remain firm in your places, keep patient in trials, do not move your hands and swords after the liking of your tongues, and do not make haste in matters in which Allah has not asked for haste because any one of you who dies in his bed while he had knowledge of the rights of Allah and the rights of His Prophet and members of the Prophet's house, will die as martyr. His reward is incumbent on Allah. He is also eligible to the recompense of the good acts he has intended to do, since his intention takes the place of drawing his sword. Certainly, for every thing there is a time and a limit.

الزُّمُوا الْأَرْضَ، وَاصْبِرُوا عَلَى الْبَلَاءِ، وَلَا تُحَرِّكُوا بِأَيْدِيكُمْ وَسُيُوفِكُمْ [فِي] هَوَى الْأَسْتِكْمِ، وَلَا
تَسْتَعْجِلُوا بِمَا لَمْ يُعَجِّلْهُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ، فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ مَاتَ مِنْكُمْ عَلَى فِرَاشِهِ وَهُوَ عَلَى مَعْرِفَةِ حَقِّ رَبِّهِ
عَزَّوَجَلَّ وَحَقِّ رَسُولِهِ وَأَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَيْهِمْ مَاتَ شَهِيدًا، وَوَقَعَ أَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ،
وَاسْتَوْجِبَ ثَوَابَ مَا نَوَى مِنْ صَالِحِ عَمَلِهِ، وَقَامَتِ الْبَيْتَةُ مَقَامَ إِصْلَاتِهِ لِسَيْفِهِ، فَإِنَّ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ
مُدَّةً وَأَجَلًا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 190

(1) Ibn Nubatah (d. 374/984) narrated this khutbah, see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, *Sharh*, III, 220;

(2) al-'Amidi, *Ghurar*, 20, 108.

Sermon 191: Praise be to Allah Whose praise is wide-spread...

Praise of Allah

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام

يحمد الله ويثني على نبيه ويوصي بالزهد والتقوى

Praise be to Allah Whose praise is wide-spread, Whose army is overpowering and Whose dignity is grand. I praise Him for His successive favours and His great gifts. His forbearance is high so that He forgives and is just in whatever He decides. He knows what is going on and what has already passed.

He crafted all creation by His knowledge and produced it by His intelligence without limitation, without learning, without following the example of any intelligent producer, without committing any mistake and without the availability of any group (for help); I stand witness that Muhammad - the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants - is His slave and His messenger whom He deputed (at a time) when people were collecting in the abyss and moving in bewilderment. The reins of destruction were dragging them, and the locks of misguidance and deviation lay fixed on their hearts.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْفَاشِي حَمْدُهُ، وَالْغَالِبِ جُنْدُهُ، وَالْمُتَعَالِي جَدُّهُ. أَحْمَدُهُ عَلَى نِعْمِهِ التَّوَامِ، وَالْأَلَانِيَةِ الْعِظَامِ، الَّذِي عَظَّمَ حِلْمُهُ فَعَفَا، وَعَدَلَ فِي كُلِّ مَا قَضَى، وَعَلِمَ مَا يَمْضِي وَمَا مَضَى، مُبْتَدِعِ الْخَلْقِ بِلِعْمِهِ، وَمُنْشِئِهِمْ بِحُكْمِهِ، بِلَا اِقْتِدَاءٍ وَلَا تَعْلِيمِ، وَلَا اِحْتِدَاءٍ لِمِثَالِ صَانِعِ حَكِيمِ، وَلَا إِصَابَةِ خَطَأٍ، وَلَا حَضْرَةَ مَلَأَ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، اِبْتَعَثَهُ وَالنَّاسُ يَضْرِبُونَ فِي غَمْرَةٍ، وَيَمْوَجُونَ فِي حَيْرَةٍ، فَذَقَاتُهُمْ أَرْزَمَةُ الْحَيْنِ، وَاسْتَعْلَقَتْ عَلَى أَفْعَادِهِمْ أَفْقَالُ الرَّثِينِ.

Advice about fear of Allah and an account of this world and its people

الوصية بالزهد والتقوى

I advise you, O creatures of Allah, that you should have fear of Allah because it is a right of Allah over you and it creates your right over Allah, and that you should seek Allah's help in it, and its help in (meeting) Allah. Certainly, for today fear of Allah is a protection and a shield, and for tomorrow (the Day of Judgement) it is the road to Paradise. Its way is clear and he who treads it is the gainer.

Whoever holds it, guards it. It has presented itself to the people who have already passed and to those coming from behind, because they will need it tomorrow (on the Day of Judgement) when Allah will revive His creation again, take back what He has given and take account of what He has bestowed. How few will be those who accept it and practise it as it ought to be practised. They will be very few in number, and they are the people who correspond to the description given by Allah, the Glorified, when He says:

... And very few of My creatures are grateful! (Qur'an. 34:13)
 أُوصِيكُمْ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّهَا حَقُّ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَالْمُوجِبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ حَقِّكُمْ، وَأَنْ
 تَسْتَعِينُوا عَلَيْهِ بِاللَّهِ، وَتَسْتَعِينُوا بِهَا عَلَى اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّ التَّقْوَى فِي الْيَوْمِ الْحَزْرُ وَالْجَنَّةُ، وَفِي عَدِ
 الطَّرِيقِ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، مَسَلِكُهَا وَاصِحٌّ، وَسَالِكُهَا رَابِحٌ، وَمُسْتَوْدَعُهَا حَافِظٌ، لَمْ تَبْرَحْ عَارِضَةً
 نَفْسَهَا عَلَى الْأُمَمِ الْمَاضِينَ وَالْعَايِرِينَ لِحَاجَتِهِمْ إِلَيْهَا عَدَاءً، إِذَا أَعَادَ اللَّهُ مَا أَبَدَى، وَأَخَذَ مَا
 أَعْطَى، وَسَأَلَ عَمَّا أَسَدَى. فَمَا أَقَلَّ مَنْ قَبِلَهَا، وَحَمَلَهَا حَقَّ حَمْلَهَا! أَوْلَيْكَ الْأَقْلُونَ عَدْدَاءً،
 وَهُمْ أَهْلُ صِفَةِ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ إِذْ يَقُولُ: (وَقَلِيلٌ مِنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّاكِرُونَ)

Therefore, hasten with your ears towards it and intensify your efforts for it. Make it a substitute for all your past (short-comings) to take their place as a successor, and make it your supporter against every opponent. Turn your sleep into wakefulness by its help, and pass your days with it. Make it the equipment of your hearts, wash your sins with it, treat your ailments with it and hasten towards your death with it. Take a lesson from him who neglects it, so that others who follow it should not take a lesson from you (i.e., from your neglecting it). Beware, therefore; you should take care of it and should take care of yourselves through it.

فَأَهْطِعُوا بِأَسْمَاعِكُمْ إِلَيْهَا، وَأَكْطُوا بِجِدِّكُمْ عَلَيْهَا، وَاعْتَاضُوهَا مِنْ كُلِّ سَلْفٍ خَلْفًا، وَمِنْ
 كُلِّ مُخَالِفٍ مُوَافِقًا. أَتَيْطُوا بِهَا نَوْمَكُمْ، وَاقْطَعُوا بِهَا يَوْمَكُمْ، وَأَشْعِرُوهَا قُلُوبَكُمْ، وَارْحَضُوا بِهَا
 دُؤُوبَكُمْ، وَدَاوُوا بِهَا الْأَسْقَامَ، وَبَادِرُوا بِهَا الْحِمَامَ، وَاعْتَبِرُوا بِمَنْ أَضَاعَهَا، وَلَا يَغْتَبِرَنَّ بِكُمْ مَنْ
 أَطَاعَهَا. أَلَا وَصُونُوهَا وَتَصَوَّنُوا بِهَا،

Keep away from this world and proceed towards the next world infatuatedly. Do not regard humble he whom fear of Allah has given a high position, and do not accord a high position to him whom this world has given a high position. Do not keep your eyes on the shining clouds of the world, do not listen to him who speaks of it, do not respond to him who calls towards it, do not seek light from its glare, and do not die in its precious things, because its brightness is deceitful, its words are false, its wealth is liable to be looted, and its precious thing are to be taken away.

وَكُونُوا عَنِ الدُّنْيَا نُرَاهَا، وَإِلَى الْأَخْرَةِ وُلَاهَا وَلَا تَصْعُوا مَنْ رَفَعْتَهُ التَّقْوَى، وَلَا تَرْفَعُوا مَنْ
 رَفَعْتَهُ الدُّنْيَا، وَلَا تَشْبِيهُوا بَارِقَهَا، وَلَا تَسْمَعُوا نَاطِقَهَا، وَلَا تُجِيبُوا نَاعِمَهَا، وَلَا تَسْتَضِيئُوا
 بِإِشْرَاقِهَا، وَلَا تُفْتِنُوا بِأَعْلَاقِهَا، فَإِنَّ بَرَقَهَا خَالِبٌ، وَنُطْقَهَا كَاذِبٌ، وَأَمْوَالُهَا مَحْرُوبَةٌ، وَأَعْلَاقُهَا
 مَسْلُوبَةٌ.

Beware, this world attracts and then turns away. It is stubborn, refusing to go ahead. It speaks lies and misappropriates. It disowns and is ungrateful. It is malicious and abandons (its lovers). It attracts but causes trouble. Its condition is changing, its step shaking, its honour disgrace, its seriousness jest, and its height lowliness. It is a place of plunder and pillage, and ruin and destruction. Its people are ready with their feet to drive, to overtake and

to depart. Its routes are bewildering, its exits are baffling, and its schemes end in disappointment. Consequently, strongholds betray them, houses throw them out and cunning fails them.

أَلَا وَهِيَ الْمُتَصَدِّيقَةُ الْعُنُونُ، وَالْجَائِحَةُ الْحُرُونُ، وَالْمَائِنَةُ الْحُأُونُ، وَالْجُحُودُ الْكَنُودُ، وَالْعُنُودُ الصَّدُودُ، وَالْحَيُودُ الْمَيُودُ. حَالُهَا انْتِقَالٌ، وَوُطْأَتُهَا زَلْزَالٌ، وَعِزُّهَا ذُلٌّ، وَجِدُّهَا هَزْلٌ، وَعُلُوقُهَا سُفْلٌ، دَارُ حَرْبٍ وَسَلْبٍ، وَنَهَبٌ وَعَطْبٌ، أَهْلُهَا عَلَى سَاقٍ وَسِيَّاقٍ، وَلِحَاقٍ وَفِرَاقٍ. قَدْ تَحَيَّرَتْ مَذَاهِبُهَا، وَأَعْجَزَتْ مَهَارِبُهَا، وَخَابَتْ مَطَالِبُهَا، فَأَسْلَمَتْهُمْ الْمَعَاقِلُ، وَلَفْظَتْهُمْ الْمَنَازِلُ، وَأَعْيَتْهُمْ الْمَحَاوِلُ

Some of them are like hocked camel, some like butchered meat, some like severed limbs, some like spilt blood, some are biting their hands (in pain) some are rubbing their palms (in remorse), some are holding their cheeks on their hands (in anxiety), some are cursing their own views and some are retreating from their determination. But the time for action has gone away and the hour of calamity has approached, while (there was no longer) the time to escape (Qur'an, 38:3). Alas! Alas! What has been lost is lost! What has gone is gone! The world has passed in its usual manner.

So wept not on them the heavens and the earth nor were they respited. (Qur'an, 44:29)

فَمِنْ نَاجٍ مَعْفُورٍ، وَحَمٍّ مَجْزُورٍ، وَشَلْوٍ مَذْبُوحٍ، وَدَمٍ مَسْفُوحٍ، وَعَاضٍ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ، وَصَافِقٍ لِكَفِّهِ، وَمُرْتَفِقٍ بِحَدِيدِهِ، وَزَارٍ عَلَى رَأْيِهِ، وَرَاجِعٍ عَنِ عَزْمِهِ، وَقَدْ أَدْبَرَتِ الْحَيْلَةَ، وَأَقْبَلَتِ الْغَيْلَةَ، (وَلَاتٍ حِينَ مَنَاصٍ) هَيْهَاتَ هَيْهَاتَ! قَدْ فَاتَ مَا فَاتَ، وَدَهَبَ مَا دَهَبَ، وَمَضَّتِ الدُّنْيَا لِحَالٍ بَالِهَا (فَمَا بَكَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّمَاءُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَا كَانُوا مُنظَرِينَ).

Alternative Sources for Sermon 191

(1) Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 87, 180, 245;

(2) Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh, see 'Abd al-Zahra', III, 28.

Sermon 192: Praise be to Allah who wears the apparel of Honour and Dignity...

Known as "al-Khutbah al-Qasi`ah" (Sermon of Disparagement).

It comprises disparagement of Satan [Iblis] for his vanity and his refusing to prostrate before Adam [pbuh], and his being the first to display bigotry and to act through vanity; it comprises a warning to people treading in Satan's path

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

ومن الناس من يسمي هذه الخطبة القاصعة

وهي تتضمن ذم إبليس، على استكباره، وتركه السجود لادم (عليه السلام)، وأنه أول من أظهر العصبية وتبع الحمية، وتحذير الناس من سلوك طريقته.

Praise be to Allah who wears the apparel of Honour and Dignity and has chosen them for Himself instead of for His creation. He has made them inaccessible and unlawful for others. He has selected them for His own great self, and has hurled a curse on him who contests with Him concerning them.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَبَسَ الْعِزَّ وَالْكَرِيَامَةَ، وَاخْتَارَهُمَا لِنَفْسِهِ دُونَ خَلْقِهِ، وَجَعَلَهُمَا حِمِيٍّ وَحَرَمًا عَلَى غَيْرِهِ، وَاصْطَفَاهُمَا لِجَلَالِهِ. وَجَعَلَ اللَّعْنَةَ عَلَى مَنْ نَارَعَهُ فِيهِمَا مِنْ عِبَادِهِ،

Allah's trial and the vanity of Iblis

رأس العصيان

Then He put His angels on trial concerning these attributes in order to distinguish those who are modest from those who are vain. Therefore, Allah, who is aware of whatever is hidden in the hearts and whatever lies behind the unseen said:

. . . "Verily I am about to create man from clay," And when I have completed and have breathed into him of My spirit, then fall ye prostrating in obeisance unto him. And did fall prostrating in obeisance the angels all together, Save Iblis;... (Qur'an. 38:71-74)

ثُمَّ اخْتَبَرَ بِذَلِكَ مَلَائِكَتَهُ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ، لِيُمَيِّزَ الْمَتَوَاضِعِينَ مِنْهُمْ مِنَ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ، فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَهُوَ الْعَالِمُ بِمُضْمَرَاتِ الْقُلُوبِ، وَخَجُوبَاتِ الْعُيُوبِ: (إِنِّي خَالِقٌ بَشَرًا مِنْ طِينٍ * فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ * فَسَجَدَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ * إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ)

His vanity stood in his way. Consequently, he felt proud over Adam by virtue of his creation and boasted over him on account of his origin. Thus, this enemy of Allah is the leader of those who boast, and the fore-runner of the vain. It is he who laid the foundation of factionalism, quarreled with Allah about the robe of greatness, put on the dress of haughtiness and took off the covering of humility. Do you not see how Allah made him low on account of his vanity and humiliated him for his feigning to be high? He

discarded him in this world and provided for him burning fire in the next world.

اغْتَرَضْتُهُ الْحَمِيَّةُ، فَافْتَحَرَ عَلَى آدَمَ بِخَلْقِهِ، وَتَعَصَّبَ عَلَيْهِ لِإِصْلِهِ. فَعَدُوُ اللَّهِ إِمَامُ الْمُتَعَصِّبِينَ، وَسَلَفُ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ، الَّذِي وَضَعَ أَسَاسَ الْعَصِيَّةِ، وَنَارَ اللَّهِ رِذَاءَ الْجَبْرِيَّةِ، وَأَدْرَعَ لِيَّاسَ التَّعَزُّزِ، وَخَلَعَ فِنَاعَ التَّدَلُّلِ. أَلَا تَرَوْنَ كَيْفَ صَعَّرَهُ اللَّهُ بِتَكْبَرِهِ، وَوَضَعَهُ بِتَرْفَعِهِ، فَجَعَلَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا مَذْخُورًا، وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ سَعِيرًا؟!

Allah's trial of His creatures

ابتلاء الله لخلق

If Allah had wanted to create Adam from a light whose glare would have dazzled the eyes, whose handsomeness would have amazed the wits and whose fragrance would have caught the breath, He could have done so; and if He had done so, people would have bowed to him in humility and the trial of the angels through him would have become easier. But Allah, the Glorified, tries His creatures by means of those things whose real nature they do not know in order to distinguish (good and bad) for them through the trial, and to remove vanity from them and keep them and keep them aloof from pride and self-admiration.

وَلَوْ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَخْلُقَ آدَمَ مِنْ نُورٍ يَخْطَفُ الْأَبْصَارَ ضِيَاؤُهُ، وَيَبْهَرُ الْعُقُولَ رُؤُؤُهُ، وَطِيبٌ يَأْخُذُ الْأَنْفَاسَ عَرْفُهُ، لَفَعَلَ، وَلَوْ فَعَلَ لَطَلَّتْ لَهُ الْأَعْنَاقُ خَاضِعَةً، وَحَقَّتِ الْبُلُوى فِيهِ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ. وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ يَبْتَلِي خَلْقَهُ بِبَعْضِ مَا يَجْهَلُونَ أَصْلَهُ، تَمْيِيزًا بِالِاخْتِبَارِ لَهُمْ، وَتُعْيَا لِلْأَسْتِكْبَارِ عَنْهُمْ، وَإِعَادًا لِلْخِيَلَاءِ مِنْهُمْ.

You should take a lesson from what Allah did with Satan; namely He nullified his great acts and extensive efforts on account of the vanity of one moment, although Satan had worshipped Allah for six thousand years - whether by the reckoning of this world or of the next world is not known. Who now can remain safe from Allah after Satan by committing a similar disobedience? None at all.

Allah, the Glorified, cannot let a human being enter Paradise if he does the same thing for which Allah turned out from it an angel. His command for the inhabitants in the sky and of the earth is the same. There is no friendship between Allah and any individual out of His creation so as to give him license for an undesirable thing which He has held unlawful for all the worlds.

فَاعْتَبِرُوا بِمَا كَانَ مِنْ فِعْلِ اللَّهِ بِإِبْلِيسَ، إِذْ أَحْبَطَ عَمَلَهُ الطَّوِيلَ، وَجَهَدَهُ الْجَهِيدَ، وَكَانَ قَدْ عَبَدَ اللَّهَ سِتَّةَ آلَافِ سَنَةٍ، لَا يُدْرَى أَمِنْ سِنِي الدُّنْيَا أَمْ مِنْ سِنِي الْآخِرَةِ، عَنْ كِبَرِ سَاعَةِ وَاحِدَةٍ. فَمَنْ بَعَدَ إِبْلِيسَ يَسَلِّمُ عَلَى اللَّهِ بِمِثْلِ مَعْصِيَتِهِ؟ كَلَّا، مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ لِيُدْخِلَ الْجَنَّةَ

بَشْرًا بِأَمْرٍ أَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنْهَا مَلَكًا، إِنَّ حُكْمَهُ فِي أَهْلِ السَّمَاءِ وَأَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ لَوَاحِدٌ، وَمَا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَبَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ هَوَادَةٌ فِي إِبَاحَةِ حَمِيٍّ حَرَّمَهُ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ.

Warning against Satan

التحذير من الشيطان

Therefore, you should fear lest the enemy of Allah (Satan) infects you with his disease, or 'leads you astray through his call, or marches on you with his horsemen and footmen', (ref. 17:64) because, by my life, he has put the menacing arrow in the bow for you, has stretched the bow strongly, and has aimed at you from a nearby position, and:

He (Satan) said:

"My Lord! Because Thou hast left me to stray, certainly will I adorn unto them the path of error, and certainly will I cause them all to go astray."
(Qur'an, 15:39)

فَاخْذَرُوا عَدُوَّ اللَّهِ أَنْ يُعَدِّيَكُمْ بَدَائِهِ، وَأَنْ يَسْتَفْرِزَكُمْ [بِنِدَائِهِ، وَأَنْ يُجْلِبَ عَلَيْكُمْ] بِحِيَلِهِ وَرَجْلِهِ. فَلَعَمْرِي لَقَدْ فَوَّقَ لَكُمْ سَهْمَ الْوَعِيدِ، وَأَغْرَقَ لَكُمْ بِالنَّزْعِ الشَّدِيدِ، وَرَمَاكُمْ مِنْ مَكَانٍ قَرِيبٍ، وَ (قَالَ رَبِّ بِمَا أَغْوَيْتَنِي لِأَزَيِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا أَعْوِينَتَهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ)

Although he (Satan) had said so only by guessing about the unknown future and by wrong conjecturing, yet the sons of vanity, the brothers of haughtiness and the horsemen of pride and intolerance proved him to be true, so much so that when disobedient persons from among you bowed before him, and his greed about you gained strength; and what was a hidden secret turned into a clear fact, he spread his full control over you and marched with his forces towards you.

قَدْفَأَ بَعِيبَ بَعِيدٍ، وَرَجْمًا بَظَنِّ غَيْرِ مُصِيبٍ، صَدَفَهُ بِهِ أَبْنَاءُ الْحَمِيَّةِ، وَإِخْوَانُ الْعَصَبِيَّةِ، وَفُرْسَانُ الْكِبْرِ وَالْجَاهِلِيَّةِ. حَتَّى إِذَا انْقَادَتْ لَهُ الْجَاهِلِيَّةُ مِنْكُمْ، وَاسْتَحْكَمَتِ الطَّمَاعِيَّةُ مِنْهُ فَيَكُمُ، فَتَنَجَمَتِ الْحَالُ مِنَ السِّرِّ الْحَقِيقِيِّ إِلَى الْأَمْرِ الْجَلْبِيِّ، اسْتَفْحَلَ سُلْطَانُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَذَلَفَ بِجُنُودِهِ نَحْوَكُمْ،

Then they pushed you into the hollows of disgrace, threw you into the whirlpools of slaughter, and trampled you, wounding you by striking your eyes with spears, cutting your throats, tearing your nostrils, breaking your limbs and taking you in ropes of control towards the fire already prepared. In this way he became more harmful to your religion and a greater kindler of flames (of mischief) about your worldly matters than the enemies against whom you showed open opposition and against whom you marched your forces.

فَأَقْحَمُوكُمْ وَجَلَاتِ الدُّلَى، وَأَحْلُوكُمْ وَرَطَّاتِ الْقَتْلِ، وَأَوْطَأُوكُمْ إِثْحَانَ الْجِرَاحَةِ، طَعْنَا فِي عُيُونِكُمْ، وَحَزَّأَ فِي خُلُوقِكُمْ، وَدَقَّأَ لِمَنَاخِرِكُمْ، وَقَصَدَّأَ لِمَقَاتِلِكُمْ، وَسَوْفَأَ بِحَزَائِمِ الْقَهْرِ إِلَى النَّارِ

المَعْدَّة لَكُمْ، فَأَصْبَحَ أَعْظَمَ فِي دِينِكُمْ جَرْحاً، وَأُورِنِي دُنْيَاكُمْ قَدْحاً، مِنْ الَّذِينَ أَصْبَحْتُمْ لَهُمْ مُنَاصِبِينَ، وَعَلَيْهِمْ مُتَأَلِّينَ .

You should therefore spend all your force against him, and all your efforts against him, because, by Allah, he boasted over your (i.e., Adam's) origin, questioned your position and spoke lightly of your lineage. He advanced on you with his army, and brought his footmen towards your path. They are chasing you from every place, and they are hitting you at every finger joint. You are not able to defend by any means, nor can you repulse them by any determination. You are in the thick of disgrace, the ring of straitness, the field of death and the way of distress.

فَاجْعَلُوا عَلَيْهِ حَدَّكُمْ، وَلَهُ جَدُّكُمْ، فَلَعَمْرُ اللَّهِ لَقَدْ فَخَرَ عَلَى أَصْلِكُمْ، وَوَقَعَ فِي حَسْبِكُمْ، وَدَفَعَ فِي نَسْبِكُمْ، وَأَجْلَبَ بِحَيْلِهِ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَقَصَدَ بِرِجْلِهِ سَبِيلَكُمْ، يَفْتَتِنُوكُمْ بِكُلِّ مَكَانٍ، وَيَصْرِيُونَ مِنْكُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ، لَا تَمْتَنِعُونَ بِحَيْلَةٍ، وَلَا تَدْفَعُونَ بِعَرِيْمَةٍ، فِي حَوْمَةِ ذُلٍّ، وَخَلْقَةِ ضَيْقٍ، وَعَرَصَةِ مَوْتٍ، وَجَوْلَةِ بَلَاءٍ.

You should therefore put out the fires of haughtiness and the flames of intolerance that are hidden in your hearts. This vanity can exist in a Muslim only by the machinations of Satan, his haughtiness, mischief and whisperings. Make up your mind to have humility over your heads, to trample self-pride under your feet and to cast off vanity from your necks. Adopt humility as the weapon between you and your enemy, Satan and his forces. He certainly has, from every people, fighters, helpers, footmen and horsemen. Do not be like him who feigned superiority over the son of his own mother without any distinction given to him by Allah except the feeling of envy which his feeling of greatness created in him and the fire of anger that vanity kindled in his heart. Satan blew into his nose his own vanity, after which Allah gave him remorse and made him responsible for the sins of all killers up to the Day of Judgement.

فَأُطْفِئُوا مَا كَمَنَّ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ مِنْ نِيرَانِ الْعَصَبِيَّةِ، وَأَحْقَادِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ، وَإِنَّمَا تِلْكَ الْحَمِيَّةُ تَكُونُ فِي الْمُسْلِمِ مِنْ خَطَرَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ وَنَحْوَاتِهِ، وَنَزَعَاتِهِ وَنَفَقَاتِهِ. وَاعْتَمِدُوا وَضَعَ التَّدَلِّي عَلَى رُؤُوسِكُمْ، وَالْقَاءِ التَّعَزُّزِ تَحْتَ أَقْدَامِكُمْ، وَخَلَعَ التَّكَبُّرِ مِنْ أَعْنَاقِكُمْ. وَاتَّخِذُوا التَّوَاضُعَ مَسْلِحَةً بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ عَدُوِّكُمْ إِبْلِيسَ وَجُنُودِهِ، فَإِنَّ لَهُ مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جُنُوداً وَأَعْوَاناً، وَرَجَلاً وَفُرْسَاناً، وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالْمُتَكَبِّرِ عَلَى ابْنِ أُمِّهِ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَا فَضَّلَ جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ فِيهِ سِوَى مَا أَحَقَّتِ الْعِظَمَةُ بِنَفْسِهِ مِنْ عِدَاوَةِ الْحَسَدِ، وَقَدَحَتِ الْحَمِيَّةُ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِنْ نَارِ الْعِظَبِ، وَنَفَخَ الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أَنْفِهِ مِنْ رِيحِ الْكِبْرِ الَّذِي أَعْقَبَهُ اللَّهُ بِهِ النَّدَامَةَ، وَالزَّمَةَ آثَامَ الْقَاتِلِينَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ.

Caution against vanity and boasting about ignorance

التحذير من الكبر

Beware! You strove hard in revolting and created mischief on the earth in open opposition to Allah and in challenging the believers over fighting. (You should fear) Allah! Allah! in feeling proud of your vanity and boasting over ignorance, because this is the root of enmity and the design of Satan wherewith he has been deceiving past people and bygone ages, with the result that they fell into the gloom of his ignorance and the hollows of his misguidance, submitting to his driving and accepting his leadership. In this matter the hearts of all the people were similar, and centuries passed by, one after the other, in just the same way, and there was vanity with which chests were tightened.

أَلَا وَقَدْ أَمَعْنْتُمْ فِي الْبَعْثِ، وَأَفْسَدْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ، مُصَارِحَةً لِّلَّهِ بِالْمَنَاصِبَةِ، وَمُبَارَزَةً لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِالْمَحَارِبَةِ. فَاللَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي كِبَرِ الْحَمِيَّةِ، وَفَخْرِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ! فَإِنَّهُ مَلَاقِيحُ الشَّنَّانِ وَمَنَافِيحُ الشَّيْطَانِ، اللَّاتِي خَدَعَ بِهَا الْأَمَمَ الْمَاضِيَّةَ، وَالْقُرُونَ الْحَالِيَّةَ، حَتَّى أَعْنَفُوا فِي حَنَادِسِ جَهَالَتِهِ، وَمَهَاوِي ضَلَالَتِهِ، دُلَالًا عَنِ سِيَاقِهِ، سُلْسًا فِي قِيَادِهِ، أَمْرًا تَشَابَهَتْ الْقُلُوبُ فِيهِ، وَتَتَابَعَتْ الْقُرُونُ عَلَيْهِ، وَكِبْرًا تَضَابَعَتْ الصُّدُورُ بِهِ.

Caution against obeying haughty leaders and elders

التحذير من طاعة الكبراء

Beware! Beware of obeying your leaders and elders who felt proud of their achievements and boasted about their lineage. They hurled the (liability for) things on Allah and quarrelled with Allah in what He did with them, contesting His decree and disputing His favours. Certainly, they are the main foundation of obstinacy, the chief pillars of mischief and the swords of pre-Islamic boasting over forefathers. Therefore, fear Allah, do not become antagonistic to His favours on you, nor jealous of His bounty over you ¹ and do not obey the claimants (of Islam) whose dirty water you drink along with your clean one, whose ailments you mix with your healthiness and whose wrongs you allow to enter into your rightful matters.

أَلَا فَالْحَذَرَ الْحَذَرَ مِنْ طَاعَةِ سَادَاتِكُمْ وَكِبَرَائِكُمْ! الَّذِينَ تَكَبَّرُوا عَنْ حَسَبِهِمْ، وَتَرَفَّعُوا فَوْقَ نَسَبِهِمْ، وَأَلْفَوْا الْهَجِينَةَ عَلَى رَبِّهِمْ، وَجَاحَدُوا اللَّهَ مَا صَنَعَ بِهِمْ، مُكَابِرَةً لِّقَضَائِهِ، وَمُعَالَبَةً لِإِلَازِمِهِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ قَوَاعِدُ أَسَاسِ الْعَصَبِيَّةِ، وَدَعَائِمُ أَرْكَانِ الْفِتْنَةِ، وَسُيُوفُ إِعْتِرَازِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا لِنَعْمِهِ عَلَيْكُمْ أَضْدَادًا، وَلَا لِفُضْلِهِ عِنْدَكُمْ حُسَادًا، وَلَا تُطِيعُوا الْأَدْعِيَاءَ الَّذِينَ شَرِبْتُمْ بِصَفْوَتِهِمْ كَدْرَهُمْ، وَخَلَطْتُمْ بِصَحْتِكُمْ مَرَضَهُمْ، وَأَدَخَلْتُمْ فِي حَقِّكُمْ بَاطِلَهُمْ،

They are the foundation of vice and the linings of disobedience. Satan has made them carriers of misguidance and the soldiers with whom he attacks men. They are interpreters through whom he speaks in order to steal away your wits, enter into your eyes and blow into your ears. In this way he makes you the victim of his arrows, the treading ground of his footsteps and source of strength for his hands.

وَهُمْ أَسَاسُ الْفُسُوقِ، وَأَخْلَاسُ الْعُقُوقِ، اتَّخَذَهُمْ إِنْ لَيْسَ مَطَايَا ضَلَالٍ، وَجُنْدًا يَهْمُ يَصُولُ عَلَى النَّاسِ، وَتَرَاجِمَةً يَنْطِقُ عَلَى أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ، اسْتِرَاقًا لِعُقُولِكُمْ، وَدُخُولًا فِي عُيُونِكُمْ، وَنَفْثًا فِي أَسْمَاعِكُمْ، فَجَعَلَكُمْ مَرْمَى نَبِيلِهِ، وَمَوْطِيءَ قَدَمِهِ، وَمَأْخَذَ يَدِهِ.

Taking lessons from the past peoples

العبرة بالماضين

Take instruction from how Allah's wrath, violence, chastisement and punishment fell upon the arrogant nations before you. Take admonition from the resting places of their cheeks and their bodies, and seek Allah's protection from the dangers of pride, as you seek His protection from calamities. Certainly, if Allah were to allow anyone to indulge in pride He would have allowed it to his selected prophets and vicegerents.

But Allah, the Sublime, disliked vanity for them and liked humbleness for them. Therefore, they laid their cheeks on the ground, smeared their faces with dust, bent themselves down for the believers and remained humble people. Allah tried them with hunger, afflicted them with difficulty, tested them with fear, and upset them with troubles. Therefore, do not regard wealth and progeny the criterion for Allah's pleasure and displeasure, as you are not aware of the chances of mischief and trials during richness and power as Allah, the Glorified, the Sublime, has said:

What! Think they that what We aid them with of wealth and children, We are hastening unto them the good things? Nay! They (only) perceive not. (Qur'an, 23:55-56)

Certainly, Allah the Glorified, tries His creatures who are vain about themselves through His beloved persons who are humble in their eyes.

فَاعْتَبِرُوا بِمَا أَصَابَ الْأُمَّمَ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مِنْ بَأْسِ اللَّهِ وَصَوْلَاتِهِ، وَوَقَائِعِهِ وَمَثَلَاتِهِ، وَاتَّعَظُوا بِمَتَاوِي حُدُودِهِمْ، وَمَصَارِعِ جُنُوبِهِمْ، وَاسْتَعِيدُوا بِاللَّهِ مِنْ لُؤَافِحِ الْكِبْرِ، كَمَا تَسْتَعِيدُونَهُ مِنْ طَوَارِقِ الدَّهْرِ، فَلَوْ رَحَّصَ اللَّهُ فِي الْكِبْرِ لِأَحَدٍ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ لَرَحَّصَ فِيهِ لِحَاصَةِ أَنْبِيَائِهِ [وَأَوْلِيَائِهِ]، وَلَكِنَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ كَرَّةً إِلَيْهِمُ التَّكَايُورُ، وَرَضِيَ لَهُمُ التَّوَاضُّعُ، فَأَلْصَقُوا بِالْأَرْضِ حُدُودَهُمْ، وَعَقَرُوا فِي التُّرَابِ وُجُوهَهُمْ، وَخَفَضُوا أَجْنِحَتَهُمْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ، قَدْ احْتَبَرَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِالْمَحْمَصَةِ، وَابْتَلَاهُمُ بِالْمَجْهَدَةِ، وَامْتَحَنَهُمُ بِالْمَحَاوِفِ، وَخَخَّضَهُمُ بِالْمَكَارِهِ، فَلَا تَعْتَبِرُوا الرِّضَى وَالسُّحْطَ بِالْمَالِ وَالْوَلَدِ جَهْلًا بِمَوَاقِعِ لِفْتِنَتِهِ، وَالْأَخْتِبَارِ فِي مَوَاضِعِ الْغِنَى وَالْإِفْتِقَارِ، فَقَدْ قَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ: (أَيَسْبُونَ أَنَّ مَا مُدُّهُمْ بِهِ مِنْ مَالٍ وَبَنِينَ * نَسَارِعُ لَهُمْ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ بَلْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ)، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ يَخْتَبِرُ عِبَادَهُ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ بِأَوْلِيَائِهِ الْمُسْتَضْعَفِينَ فِي أَعْيُنِهِمْ.

The humility of the Prophets (peace be on them)

تواضع الانبياء (عليهم السلام)

When Musa son of `Imran went to Pharaoh along with his brother Harun (Aaron) wearing (coarse) shirts of wool and holding sticks in their hands, they guaranteed him retention of his country and continuity of his honour if he submitted; but he said: "Do you not wonder at these two men guaranteeing me the continuity of my honour and the retention of my country although you see their poverty and lowliness. Otherwise, why do they not have gold bangles on their wrists?" He said so feeling proud of his gold and collected possessions, and considering wool and its cloth as nothing.

وَلَقَدْ دَخَلَ مُوسَىٰ بَنُ عِمْرَانَ وَمَعَهُ أَخُوهُ هَارُونُ (عليهما السلام) عَلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ، وَعَلَيْهِمَا مَدَارِغُ الصُّوفِ، وَبِأَيْدِيهِمَا الْعِصِيُّ، فَشَرَطَا لَهُ . إِنَّ أَسْلَمَ . بَقَاءَ مُلْكِهِ، وَدَوَامَ عِزِّهِ، فَقَالَ: أَلَا تَعْجَبُونَ مِنْ هَذَيْنِ يَشْرِطَانِ لِي دَوَامَ الْعِزِّ، وَبَقَاءَ الْمُلْكِ، وَهُمَا بِمَا تَرَوْنَ مِنْ حَالِ الْفَقْرِ وَالذُّلِّ، فَهَلَا أُتِّيَ عَلَيْهِمَا أَسَاوِرَةٌ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ؟ إِعْظَامًا لِلذَّهَبِ وَجَمْعِهِ، وَاحْتِقَارًا لِلصُّوفِ وَلُبْسِهِ!

When Allah, the Glorified, deputed His prophets, if He had wished to open for them treasures and mines of gold and (surround them with) planted gardens and to collect around them birds of the skies and beasts of the earth, He could have done so. If He had done so then there would have been no trial, nor recompense and no tidings (about the affairs of the next world).

Those who accepted (His message) could not be given the recompense falling due after trial and the believers could not deserve the reward for good acts, and all these words² would not have retained their meanings. But Allah, the Glorified, makes His Prophets firm in their determination and gives them weakness of appearance as seen from the eyes, along with contentment that fills the hearts and eyes resulting from care-freeness, and with want that pains the eyes and ears.

وَلَوْ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ بِأَنْبِيَائِهِ حَيْثُ بَعَثَهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتَحَ لَهُمْ كُنُوزَ الدِّهْبَانِ، وَمَعَادِنَ الْعِزْيَانِ، وَمَعَارِسَ الْجِنَانِ، وَأَنْ يَخْشُرَ مَعَهُمْ طَيْرَ السَّمَاءِ وَوُحُوشَ الْأَرْضِينَ لَفَعَلَ، وَلَوْ فَعَلَ لَسَقَطَ الْبَلَاءُ، وَبَطَلَ الْجَزَاءُ، وَاضْمَحَلَّتِ الْأَنْبَاءُ، وَلَمَا وَجَبَ لِلْقَابِلِينَ أُجُورُ الْمُبْتَلِينَ، وَلَا اسْتَحَقَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ثَوَابَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ، وَلَا لَزِمَتِ الْأَسْمَاءُ مَعَانِيَهَا، وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ جَعَلَ رُسُلَهُ أُولِي قُوَّةٍ فِي عَزَائِمِهِمْ، وَضَعَفَةً فِيمَا تَرَى الْأَعْيُنُ مِنْ حَالَاتِهِمْ، مَعَ فَنَاعَةِ تَمَلُّ الْقُلُوبِ وَالْعُيُونَ غِيًى، وَخَصَاصَةِ تَمَلُّ الْأَبْصَارِ وَالْأَسْمَاعِ أَذَى.

If the prophets possessed authority that could not be assaulted, or honour that could not be damaged or domain towards which the necks of people would turn and the saddles of mounts could be set, it would have been very easy for people to seek lessons and quite difficult to feel vanity.

They would have then accepted belief out of fear felt by them or inclination attracting them, and the intention of them all would have been the same, although their actions would have been different. Therefore, Allah, the Glorified decided that people should follow His prophets, acknowledge His books, remain humble before His face, obey His command and accept His obedience with sincerity in which there should not

be an iota of anything else; and as the trial and tribulation would be stiffer the reward and recompense too should be larger.

وَلَوْ كَانَتِ الْأَنْبِيَاءُ أَهْلَ قُوَّةٍ لَأُتْرَافُوا، وَعِزَّةٍ لَأُتْصَامُوا، وَمُلْكٍ لَمُدُّ نُحُوهُ أَعْنَاقَ الرِّجَالِ، وَتُشَدُّ إِلَيْهِ عُقَدُ الرِّجَالِ، لَكَانَ ذَلِكَ أَهْوَنَ عَلَى الْخَلْقِ فِي الْأَعْتَابِ، وَأَبْعَدَ لَهُمْ مِنَ الْأَسْتِكْبَارِ، وَلَا مَنُوا عَنْ رَهْبَةِ قَاهِرَةٍ لَهُمْ، أَوْ رَغْبَةِ مَائِلَةٍ بِهِمْ، فَكَانَتِ النَّبِيَّاتُ مُشْتَرَكَةً، وَالْحَسَنَاتُ مُفْتَسِمَةً. وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَكُونَ الْأَتْبَاعُ لِرُسُلِهِ، وَالتَّصَدِيقُ بِكُتُبِهِ، وَالْحُشُوعُ لَوَجْهِهِ، وَالْأَسْتِكَانَةُ لِإِمْرِهِ، وَالْأَسْتِسْلَامُ لِطَاعَتِهِ، أُمُورًا لَهُ خَاصَّةً، لَا تَشُوبُهَا مِنْ غَيْرِهَا شَائِئَةٌ، وَكُلَّمَا كَانَتِ الْبُلُوى وَالْأَحْتِبَارُ أَعْظَمَ كَانَتِ الْمَثُوبَةُ وَالْجَزَاءُ أَجْزَلَ.

The Holy Ka`bah

الكعبة المقدسة

Do you not see that Allah, the Glorified, has tried all the people among those who came before, beginning with Adam, upto the last ones in this world with stones which yield neither benefit nor harm, which neither see nor hear. He made those stones into His sacred house which He made a standby for the people. He placed it in the most rugged stony part of the earth and on a highland with least soil thereon, among the most narrow valleys between rough mountains. soft sandy plains, springs of scanty water and scattered habitants, where neither camels nor horses nor cows and sheep can prosper.

أَلَا تَرَوْنَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ، اخْتَبَرَ الْأَوَّلِينَ مِنْ لَدُنْ آدَمَ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ، إِلَى الْآخِرِينَ مِنْ هَذَا الْعَالَمِ، بِأَحْجَارٍ لَا تَضُرُّ وَلَا تَنْفَعُ، وَلَا تُبْصِرُ وَلَا تَسْمَعُ، فَعَجَلَهَا بَيْنَهُ الْحَرَامَ الَّذِي جَعَلَهُ لِلنَّاسِ قِيَامًا. ثُمَّ وَضَعَهُ بِأَوْعَرِ بَقَاعِ الْأَرْضِ حَجْرًا، وَأَقْلَ نَتَائِقِ الدُّنْيَا مَدْرًا، وَأَصْبِقَ بَطُونِ الْأَوْدِيَةِ قُطْرًا، بَيْنَ جِبَالٍ حَشِينَةٍ، وَرِمَالٍ دَمِثَةٍ، وَعَيْوُنٍ وَشَلَّةٍ، وَفُرَى مُنْقَطِعَةٍ، لَا يَرْتَكُو بِهَا حُفٌّ وَلَا حَافِرٌ وَلَا ظِلْفٌ

Then He commanded Adam and his sons to turn their attention towards it. In this way it became the centre of their journey in seeking pastures and the rendezvous for meeting of their carrier-beasts, so that human spirits hasten towards it from distant waterless deserts, deep and low lying valleys and scattered islands in the seas. They shake their shoulders in humbleness, recite the slogan of having reached His audience, march with swift feet, and have dishevelled hair and dusted faces. They throw their pieces of cloth on their backs, they have marred the beauty of their faces by leaving the hair uncut as a matter of great test, severe tribulation, open trial, and extreme refining. Allah has made it a means to His mercy and an approach to His Paradise.

ثُمَّ أَمَرَ آدَمَ وَوَلَدَهُ أَنْ يَتْنُوا أَعْطَافَهُمْ نُحُوهُ، فَصَارَ مَثَابَةً لِمُنْتَجِعِ أَسْفَارِهِمْ، وَغَايَةً لِمُلْمَى رِحَالِهِمْ، تَهْوِي إِلَيْهِ ثَمَارُ الْأَفِيدَةِ مِنْ مَفَاوِزِ قِفَارٍ سَحِيقَةٍ، وَمَهَاوِي فِجَاجِ عَمِيقَةٍ، وَجَزَائِرِ بَحَارِ

مَنْقَطَعَةً، حَتَّى يَهْزُوا مَنَاكِبَهُمْ ذُلًّا يَهْلِلُونَ لِلَّهِ حَوْلَهُ، وَيَرْمُلُونَ عَلَى أَقْدَامِهِمْ شِعْنًا غَيْرًا لَهُ، قَدْ نَبَذُوا السَّرَابِيلَ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ، وَشَوَّهُوا بِإِعْقَاءِ الشُّعُورِ مَحَاسِنَ خَلْقِهِمْ، ائْتِلَاءً عَظِيمًا، وَافْتِحَانًا شَدِيدًا، وَاخْتِبَارًا مُبِينًا، وَتَمَحِيصًا بَلِيغًا، جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى سَبَبًا لِرَحْمَتِهِ، وَوَصْلَةً إِلَى جَنَّتِهِ.

If Allah, the Glorified, had placed His sacred House and His great signs among plantations, streams, soft and level plains, plenty of trees, an abundance of fruits, a thick population, close habitats, golden wheat, lush gardens, green land, watered plains, thriving orchards and crowded streets, the amount of recompense would have decreased because of the lightness of the trial. If the foundation on which the House is borne and the stones with which it has been raised had been of green emerald and red rubies, and there had been brightness and effulgence, then this would have lessened the action of doubts in the breasts, would have dismissed the effect of Satan's activity from the hearts, and would have stopped the surging of misgivings in people. But Allah tries His creatures by means of different troubles, wants them to render worship through hardships and involves them in distresses, all in order to extract out vanity from their hearts, to settle down humbleness in their spirits and to make all this an open door for His favours and an easy means for His forgiveness (for their sins).

وَلَوْ أَرَادَ سُبْحَانُهُ أَنْ يَضَعَ بَيْتَهُ الْحَرَامَ، وَمَشَاعِرَهُ الْعِظَامَ، بَيْنَ جَنَّتٍ وَأَنْهَارٍ، وَسَهْلٍ وَقَرَارٍ، جَمَّ الْأَشْجَارِ، دَانِي الثَّمَارِ، مُلْتَفِّ الثُّبِيِّ، مُتَّصِلِ الْقُرَى، بَيْنَ بُرَّةٍ سَمْرَاءَ، وَرَوْضَةٍ خَضْرَاءَ، وَأَرْيَافٍ مُخْدِقَةٍ، وَعِرَاصٍ مُعَدِقَةٍ، وَرُزُوعٍ نَاصِرَةٍ، وَطُرُقٍ عَامِرَةٍ، لَكَانَ قَدْ صَعَرَ قَدْرُ الْجَزَاءِ عَلَى حَسَبِ ضَعْفِ الْبَلَاءِ. وَلَوْ كَانَ الْأَسَاسُ الْمَحْمُولُ عَلَيْهَا، وَالْأَحْجَارُ الْمَرْفُوعُ بِهَا، بَيْنَ زُمْرَةٍ خَضْرَاءَ، وَبِأَفْوَتَةٍ حَمْرَاءَ، وَنُورٍ وَضِيَاءَ، لَخَفَّ ذَلِكَ مُضَارَعَةَ الشَّكِّ فِي الصُّدُورِ، وَلَوْضَعَ مُجَاهِدَةً إِبْلِيسَ عَنِ الْقُلُوبِ، وَلَنَفَى مُعْتَلَجَ الرَّيْبِ مِنَ النَّاسِ. وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ يَخْتَبِرُ عِبَادَهُ بِأَنْوَاعِ الشَّدَائِدِ، وَيَتَعَبَّدُهُمْ بِالْوَانِ الْمَجَاهِدِ، وَيَبْتَلِيهِمْ بِضُرُوبِ الْمَكَارِهِ، إِخْرَاجًا لِلتَّكْبُرِ مِنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ، وَإِسْكَانًا لِلتَّنَدُّلِ فِي نُفُوسِهِمْ، وَلِيَجْعَلَ ذَلِكَ أَبْوَابًا فَتْحًا إِلَى فَضْلِهِ، وَأَسْبَابًا ذُلًّا لِعَفْوِهِ.

Caution against rebellion and oppressiveness

عود إلى التحذير

(Fear) Allah! Allah! from the immediate consequence of rebellion (to accrue in this world), and the eventual consequence of weighty oppressiveness (to accrue in the next world), and from the evil result of vanity, because it is the great trap of Satan and his big deceit which enters the hearts of the people like a fatal poison. It never goes waste, nor misses anyone - neither the learned because of his knowledge, nor the destitute³ in his rags.

فَاللَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي عَاجِلِ الْبُعْيِ، وَأَجَلِ وَحَامَةِ الظُّلْمِ، وَسُوءِ عَاقِبَةِ الْكِبْرِ، فَإِنَّهَا مَصِيدَةٌ إِبْلِيسَ الْعُظْمَى، وَمَكِيدَتُهُ الْكُبْرَى، الَّتِي تُسَاوِرُ قُلُوبَ الرِّجَالِ مُسَاوِرَةَ السُّمُومِ الْقَاتِلَةَ، فَمَا تُكْذِرُ أَبَدًا، وَلَا تُشْوِي أَحَدًا، لَا عَالِمًا لِعِلْمِهِ، وَلَا مُقْلًا فِي طَمْرِهِ.

The Benefits of Religious duties

ثل الفرائض فضا

This is the thing against which Allah has protected His creatures who are believers by means of prayers, and alms-giving, and suffering the hardship of fasting in the days in which it has been made obligatory, in order to give their limbs peacefulness, to cast fear in their eyes, to make their spirits humble, to give their hearts humility and to remove haughtiness from them.

All this is achieved through the covering of their delicate cheeks with dust in humility, prostrating their main limbs on the ground in humbleness, and retracting of their bellies so as to reach to their backs due to fasting by way of lowliness (before Allah), besides giving all sorts of products of the earth to the needy and the destitute by way of alms. Look what there is in these acts by way of curbing the appearance of pride and suppressing the traces of vanity.

وَعَنْ ذَلِكَ مَا حَرَسَ اللَّهُ عِبَادَهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِالصَّلَوَاتِ وَالزَّكَاةِ، وَمُجَاهَدَةِ الصِّيَامِ فِي الْأَيَّامِ الْمَفْرُوضَاتِ، تَسْكِينًا لِأَطْرَافِهِمْ، وَتَخْشِيعًا لِأَبْصَارِهِمْ، وَتَذَلِيلًا لِنُفُوسِهِمْ، وَتَخْفِيزًا لِقُلُوبِهِمْ، وَإِذْهَابًا لِلْحَيْلَاءِ عَنْهُمْ، لِمَا فِي ذَلِكَ مِنْ تَغْيِيرِ عِتَاقِ الْوُجُوهِ بِالْتَّرَابِ تَوَاضِعًا، وَالتَّصَاقِ كَرَامِ الْجَوَارِحِ بِالْأَرْضِ تَصَاغُرًا، وَالْحُقُوقِ الْبُطُونِ بِالْمَتُونِ مِنَ الصِّيَامِ تَذَلُّلًا، مَعَ مَا فِي الرِّكَاتِ مِنْ صَرْفِ تَمَرَاتِ الْأَرْضِ وَعَيْرِ ذَلِكَ إِلَى أَهْلِ الْمَسْكِنَةِ وَالْفَقِيرِ. انظُرُوا إِلَى مَا فِي هَذِهِ الْأَفْعَالِ مِنْ قَمْعِ نَوَاجِمِ الْفَخْرِ، وَقَدْحِ طَوَالِعِ الْكِبْرِ!

Undue prejudice and vanity

العصبية

I cast my glance and noticed that no one in the world, except you, feels vanity for anything without a cause which may appeal to the ignorant, or a reason which may cling to the minds of the foolish, because you feel vanity for something for which no reason is discernible, nor any ground. As for Satan, he felt proud over Adam because of his origin and taunted at him about his creation, since he said "I am of fire while you are of clay."

وَلَقَدْ نَظَرْتُ فَمَا وَجَدْتُ أَحَدًا مِنَ الْعَالَمِينَ يَتَعَصَّبُ لِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ إِلَّا عَنْ عِلَّةٍ تَحْتَمِلُ تَمْوِيَةَ الْجُهْلَاءِ، أَوْ حُجَّةَ تَلِيظُ بِعُقُولِ السُّفَهَاءِ غَيْرِكُمْ، فَإِنَّكُمْ تَتَعَصَّبُونَ لِأَمْرٍ مَا يُعْرَفُ لَهُ سَبَبٌ وَلَا عِلَّةٌ. أَمَا إِبْلِيسُ فَتَعَصَّبَ عَلَى آدَمَ لِأَصْلِهِ، وَطَعَنَ عَلَيْهِ فِي خَلْقَتِهِ، فَقَالَ: أَنَا نَارِي وَأَنْتَ طِينِي.

In the same way the rich among the prosperous communities have been feeling vanity because of their riches, as (Allah) said: And said they: "We are more (than you) in wealth and in children, and we shall not be chastised." (Qur'an, 34:35)

وَأَمَّا الْأَغْنِيَاءُ مِنْ مُتْرَفَةِ الْأُمَمِ، فَتَعَصَّبُوا لِإِثَارِ مَوَاقِعِ التَّعَمِّ، وَ (قَالُوا نَحْنُ أَكْثَرُ أَمْوَالاً وَأَوْلَاداً وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ)

Enthusiasm for attractive manners, respectable position, and taking lessons from the past

In case you cannot avoid vanity, your vanity should be for good qualities, praiseworthy acts, and admirable matters with which the dignified and noble chiefs of the Arab families distinguished themselves, as attractive manners, high thinking, respectable position and good performances. You too should show vanity in praiseworthy habits like the protection of the neighbour, the fulfilment of agreements, obedience to the virtuous, opposition to the haughty, extending generosity to others, abstention from rebellion, keeping aloof from blood-shed, doing justice to people, suppressing anger and avoiding trouble on the earth. You should also fear what calamities befell peoples before you on account of their evil deeds and detestable actions. Remember, during good or bad circumstances, what happened to them, and be cautious that you do not become like them.

فَإِنْ كَانَ لَا بُدَّ مِنَ الْعَصَبِيَّةِ، فَلْيَكُنْ تَعَصُّبُهُمْ لِمَكَارِمِ الْحِصَالِ، وَمَحَامِدِ الْأَفْعَالِ، وَمَحَاسِنِ الْأُمُورِ، الَّتِي تَفَاضَلَتْ فِيهَا الْمُجْدَاءُ وَالنُّجْدَاءُ مِنْ بَيُوتَاتِ الْعَرَبِ وَيَعَاسِبِ الْقَبَائِلِ، بِالْأَخْلَاقِ الرَّغِيْبَةِ، وَالْأَخْلَامِ الْعَظِيْمَةِ، وَالْأَخْطَارِ الْجَلِيْلَةِ، وَالْإِثَارِ الْمَحْمُودَةِ. فَتَعَصَّبُوا لِخِلَالِ الْحَمْدِ مِنَ الْحَفِظِ لِلْجَوَارِ، وَالْوَفَاءِ بِالذِّمَامِ، وَالطَّاعَةِ لِلذِّبْرِ، وَالْمَعْصِيَةِ لِلْكَبْرِ، وَالْأَخْذِ بِالْفَضْلِ، وَالْكَفِّ عَنِ الْبَغْيِ، وَالْأَعْظَامِ لِلْقَتْلِ، وَالْإِنْصَافِ لِلْخَلْقِ، وَالْكَظْمِ لِلْعَيْظِ، وَاجْتِنَابِ الْفُسَادِ فِي الْأَرْضِ. وَاحْذَرُوا مَا نَزَلَ بِالْأُمَمِ قَبْلَكُمْ مِنَ الْمَثَلَاتِ بِسُوءِ الْأَفْعَالِ، وَدَمِيمِ الْأَعْمَالِ، فَتَدَكَّرُوا فِي الْخَيْرِ وَالشَّرِّ أَحْوَاهُمْ، وَاحْذَرُوا أَنْ تَكُونُوا أَمْثَالَهُمْ.

After you have thought over both the conditions of these people, attach yourself to everything with which their position became honourable, on account of which enemies remained away from them through which safety spread over them, by reason of which riches bowed before them and as a result of which distinction connected itself with their rope. These things were abstention from division, sticking to unity, calling each other to it and advising each other about it. You avoid everything which broke their backbone and weakened their power, such as malice in the heart, hatred in the chest, turning away (from each other's help) and withholding the hand from one another's assistance.

فَإِذَا تَفَكَّرْتُمْ فِي تَفَاوُتِ حَالِيهِمْ، فَالزَّمُوا كُلَّ أَمْرٍ لَزِمَتِ الْعِرَّةُ بِهِ حَالَهُمْ، وَزَاحَتِ الْأَعْدَاءُ لَهُ عَنْهُمْ، وَمُدَّتِ الْعَافِيَةُ فِيهِ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَانْقَادَتِ النِّعْمَةُ لَهُ مَعَهُمْ، وَوَصَلَتِ الْكِرَامَةُ عَلَيْهِ حَبْلُهُمْ:

مِنَ الْأَجْتِنَابِ لِلْفُرْقَةِ، وَاللُّزُومِ لِلْأَلْفَةِ، وَالتَّحَاضِرِ عَلَيْهَا، وَالتَّوَاصِي بِهَا. وَاجْتَبُوا كُلَّ أَمْرٍ كَسَرَ
فَقَرَّتْهُمْ، وَأَوْهَنَ مُنْتَهُمُ: مِنْ تَضَاعُنِ الْقُلُوبِ، وَتَشَاخُنِ الصُّدُورِ، وَتَدَابُرِ النُّفُوسِ، وَتَخَادُلِ
الْأَيْدِي.

Think about the condition of people from among the believers who passed before you. What distresses and trials they were in! Were they not the most over-burdened among all the people and in the most straitened circumstances in the whole world? The Pharaohs took them as slaves. They inflicted on them the worst punishments and bitter sufferings. They continuously remained in this state of ruinous disgrace and severe subjugation. They found no method for escape and no way for protection. Till when Allah, the Glorified, noticed that they were enduring troubles in His love and bearing distresses out of fear for Him, He provided escape from the distress of trials. So, He changed their disgrace into honour and fear into safety. Consequently, they became ruling kings and conspicuous leaders and Allah's favours over them reached limits to which their own wishes had not reached.

وَتَدَبَّرُوا أَحْوَالَ الْمَاضِينَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ قَبْلَكُمْ، كَيْفَ كَانُوا فِي حَالِ التَّمَحِيصِ وَالْبَلَاءِ؟ أَلَمْ
يَكُونُوا أَثْقَلَ الْخَلَائِقِ أَعْبَاءً، وَأَجْهَدَ الْعِبَادِ بَلَاءً، وَأَضْيَقَ أَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا حَالاً؟! اتَّخَذَتْهُمْ الْفِرَاعِنَةُ
عَبِيداً فَسَامُوهُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ، وَجَرَّعُوهُمْ الْمُرَارَ، فَلَمْ تَبْرَحِ الْحَالُ بِهِمْ فِي ذُلِّ الْهَلَكَةِ وَقَهْرِ
الْعَلْبَةِ، لَا يَجِدُونَ حِيلَةً فِي امْتِنَاعِ، وَلَا سَبِيلاً إِلَى دِفَاعِ، حَتَّى إِذَا رَأَى اللَّهُ جِدَّ الصَّبْرِ مِنْهُمْ عَلَى
الْأَذَى فِي مَحَبَّتِهِ، وَالْإِحْتِمَالَ لِلْمَكْرُوهِ مِنْ خَوْفِهِ، جَعَلَ لَهُمْ مِنْ مَصَائِقِ الْبَلَاءِ فَرَجاً، فَأَبْدَلَهُمْ
الْعِزَّ مَكَانَ الدُّلِّ، وَالْأَمْنَ مَكَانَ الْخَوْفِ، فَصَارُوا مُلُوكاً حُكَّاماً، وَأَيْمَةً أَعْلَاماً، وَبَلَغَتِ الْكِرَامَةُ
مِنَ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ مَا لَمْ تَذْهَبِ الْأَمْالُ إِلَيْهِ بِهِمْ.

Look, how they were when their groups were united, their views were unanimous, their hearts were moderate, their hands used to help one another, their swords were intended for assisting one another, their eyes were sharp and their aims were the same. Did they not become masters of the corners of the earth and rulers over the neck of all the worlds? Thereafter, also see what happened to them towards the end when division overtook them, unity became fractured, and differences arose between their words and their hearts. They divided into various groups and were scattered fighting among themselves. Then Allah took away from them the apparel of His honour and deprived them of the prosperity produced by His favours. Only their stories have remained among you for the guidance of those who may learn the lesson from them.

فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانُوا حَيْثُ كَانَتِ الْأَمْالُ مُجْتَمِعَةً، وَالْأَهْوَاءُ مُؤْتَلِفَةً، وَالْقُلُوبُ مُعْتَدِلَةً،
وَالْأَيْدِي مُتَرَادِفَةً، وَالسُّيُوفُ مُتَنَاصِرَةً، وَالْبَصَائِرُ نَافِدَةً، وَالْعَزَائِمُ وَاحِدَةً، أَلَمْ يَكُونُوا أَرْبَاباً فِي
أَفْطَارِ الْأَرْضِينَ، وَمُلُوكاً عَلَى رِقَابِ الْعَالَمِينَ؟

فَانظُرُوا إِلَى مَا صَارُوا إِلَيْهِ فِي آخِرِ أُمُورِهِمْ، حِينَ وَقَعَتِ الْفُرْقَةُ، وَتَشَتَّتَتِ الْأَلْفَةُ، وَاخْتَلَفَتِ
الْكَلِمَةُ وَالْأَفْبَدَةُ، وَتَشَعَّبُوا مُخْتَلِفِينَ، وَتَفَرَّقُوا مُتَحَارِبِينَ، قَدْ خَلَعَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ لِيَاسَ كَرَامَتِهِ،
وَسَلَبَهُمْ غَضَارَةَ نِعْمَتِهِ، وَبَقِيَ قَصَصَ أَخْبَارِهِمْ فِيكُمْ عِبْرًا لِلْمُعْتَبِرِينَ.

Learning lessons from the past nations

الاعتبار بالامم

You should take a lesson from the fate of the progeny of Ismael, the children of Isaac and the children of Israel. How similar are their affairs and how akin are their examples. In connection with the details of their division and disunity, think of the days when Kisras of Persia and the Caesars of Rome had become their masters. ⁴ They turned them out from the pastures of their lands, the rivers of Iraq and the fertility of the world, towards thorny forests, the passages of (hot) winds and hardships in livelihood. In this way they turned them into just herders of camels. Their houses were the worst in the world and their places of stay were the most drought-stricken. There was not one voice towards which they could turn for protection, nor any shade of affection on whose strength they could repose trust.

فَاعْتَبِرُوا بِحَالِ وُلْدِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَبَنِي إِسْحَاقَ وَبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ (عليهم السلام)، فَمَا أَشَدَّ اعْتِدَالَ
الْأَحْوَالِ، وَأَقْرَبَ اشْتِبَاءِ الْأَمْثَالِ! تَأَمَّلُوا أَمْرَهُمْ فِي حَالِ تَشْتُّبِهِمْ، وَتَفَرُّقِهِمْ، لِيَالِي كَانَتْ
الْأَكَاسِرَةُ وَالْقِيَاصِرَةُ أَرْبَابًا لَهُمْ، يَخْتَارُونَ عَنْ رِيفِ الْأَفَاقِ، وَبَحْرِ الْعِرَاقِ، وَخُصْرَةِ الدُّنْيَا، إِلَى
مَنَابِتِ الشَّيْحِ، وَمَهَا فِي الرِّيحِ، وَنَكَدِ الْمَعَاشِ، فَتَرَكُوهُمْ عَالَةً مَسَاكِينَ إِخْوَانَ دَبْرٍ وَوَبْرٍ، أَدَلَّ
الْأُمَّمِ دَارًا، وَأَجْدَبَهُمْ قَرَارًا، لَا يَأْوُونَ إِلَى جَنَاحِ دَعْوَةٍ يَعْتَصِمُونَ بِهَا، وَلَا إِلَى ظِلِّ أَلْفَةٍ
يَعْتَمِدُونَ عَلَى عِزِّهَا،

Their condition was full of distress. Their hands were scattered. Their majority was divided. They were in great anguish and under layers of ignorance. They buried their daughters alive, worshipped idols, disregarded kinship and practised robbery.

فَالْأَحْوَالُ مُضْطَرِبَةٌ، وَالْأَيْدِي مُخْتَلِفَةٌ، وَالْكَثْرَةُ مُتَفَرِّقَةٌ، فِي بَلَاءِ أَزْلِ، وَأَطْبَاقِ جَهْلِ! مِنْ
بَنَاتِ مَوْءُودَةٍ، وَأَصْنَامِ مَعْبُودَةٍ، وَأَرْحَامِ مَقْطُوعَةٍ، وَعَارَاتِ مَشْنُونَةٍ.

The blessing of the Messenger of Allah, peace be on him

النعمة برسول الله ﷺ

Now, look at the various favours of Allah upon them, that He deputed towards them a prophet who got them to pledge their obedience to him and made them unite at his call. (Look) how (Allah's) bounty spread the wings of its favours over them and flowed for them streams of its blessing, and the whole community became wrapped in blissful prosperity. Consequently, they were submerged under its bounty and enjoyed its lush life. Their affairs were settled under the protection of a powerful ruler, and circumstances offered them overpowering honour, and all things became easy for them

under the auspices of a strong country. They became rulers over the world and kings in the (various) parts of the earth. They became masters of those who were formerly their masters, and began issuing commands over those who used to command them. They were so strong that neither did their spears need testing nor did their weapons have any flaw.

فَانظُرُوا إِلَى مَوَاقِعِ نِعْمِ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ عَلَيْهِمْ حِينَ بَعَثَ إِلَيْهِمْ رَسُولًا، فَعَقَدَ بِمِلَّتِهِ طَاعَتَهُمْ، وَجَمَعَ عَلَى دَعْوَتِهِ أَلْفَتَهُمْ، كَيْفَ نَشَرْتَ النِّعْمَةَ عَلَيْهِمْ جَنَاحَ كَرَامَتِهَا، وَأَسَأَلْتَ لَهُمْ جَدَاوِلَ نَعِيمِهَا، وَالتَّقْتِ الْمِلَّةَ بِهِمْ فِي عَوَائِدِ بَرَكَتِهَا، فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي نِعْمَتِهَا عَرَفِينَ، وَفِي حُضْرَةِ عَيْشِهَا فَكِيهِينَ، قَدْ تَرَبَّعَتِ الْأُمُورُ بِهِمْ، فِي ظِلِّ سُلْطَانِ قَاهِرٍ، وَأَوْتَنُهُمُ الْحَالُ إِلَى كَنْفِ عِزِّ غَالِبٍ، وَتَعَطَّطَتِ الْأُمُورُ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي دُرَى مُلْكٍ ثَابِتٍ، فَهُمْ حُكَّامٌ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ، وَمُلوِكٌ فِي أَطْرَافِ الْأَرْضِينَ، يَمْلِكُونَ الْأُمُورَ عَلَى مَنْ كَانَ يَمْلِكُهَا عَلَيْهِمْ، وَيُمْتَصُونَ الْأَحْكَامَ فِيمَنْ كَانَ يُمْتَصِيهَا فِيهِمْ! لَا تُعْمَرْ لَهُمْ فَنَاءٌ، وَلَا تُفْرَغَ لَهُمْ صَفَاءٌ!

Condemning the disobedient ones

لوم العصاة

Beware! You have shaken your hands loose from the rope of obedience, and broken the divine fort around you by (resorting to) pre-Islamic rules. Certainly, it is a great blessing of Allah, the Glorified, on this Ummah, that He has engendered among them unity through the cord of affection in whose shade they walk and take shelter. This is a blessing whose value no one in the whole world realises, because it is more valuable than any price and higher than any wealth.

أَلَا وَإِنَّكُمْ قَدْ نَفَضْتُمْ أَيْدِيَكُمْ مِنْ حَبْلِ الطَّاعَةِ، وَتَلَمَّثْتُمْ حِصْنَ اللَّهِ الْمَضْرُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ، بِأَحْكَامِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ قَدْ أَمَنَّ عَلَى جَمَاعَةِ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ فِيمَا عَقَدَ بَيْنَهُمْ مِنْ حَبْلِ هَذِهِ الْأَلْفَةِ الَّتِي يَنْتَقِلُونَ فِي ظِلِّهَا، وَيَأْوُونَ إِلَى كَنْفِهَا، بِنِعْمَةٍ لَا يَعْرِفُ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمَخْلُوقِينَ لَهَا قِيَمَةً، لِإِنَّهَا أَرْجَحُ مِنْ كُلِّ تَمَنٍّ، وَأَجَلُّ مِنْ كُلِّ حُطْرٍ.

You should know that you have again reverted to the position of the Bedouin Arabs after migration (to Islam), and have become different parties after having been once united. You do not possess anything of Islam except its name, and know nothing of belief save its show. You say, "The Fire yes, but no shameful position," as if you would throw down Islam on its face in order to defame its honour and break its pledge (for brotherhood) which Allah gave you as a sacred trust on His earth and (a source of) peace among the people. Be sure that if you incline towards anything other than Islam, the unbelievers will fight you. Then there will be neither Gabriel nor Michael, neither muhajirun nor ansar to help you, but only the clashing of swords, till Allah settles the matter for you.

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّكُمْ صِرْتُمْ بَعْدَ الْهَيْجَرَةِ أَعْرَابًا، وَبَعْدَ الْمُوَالَاةِ أَحْزَابًا، مَا تَتَعَلَّقُونَ مِنَ الْأَسْلَامِ إِلَّا بِاسْمِهِ، وَلَا تَعْرِفُونَ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ إِلَّا رِسْمَهُ، تَقُولُونَ: النَّارَ وَلَا الْعَارَ! كَأَنَّكُمْ تُرِيدُونَ أَنْ تُكْفِتُوا الْأَسْلَامَ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ، أَنْتَهَاكَ لِحْرِمِهِ، وَنَقْضًا لِمِيثَاقِهِ الَّذِي وَضَعَهُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ حَرَمًا فِي أَرْضِهِ، وَأَمْنًا بَيْنَ خَلْقِهِ. وَإِنَّكُمْ إِنْ لَجَأْتُمْ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ حَارَبَكُمْ أَهْلُ الْكُفْرِ، ثُمَّ لَا جَبْرَائِيلَ وَلَا ميكائِيلَ وَلَا مُهَاجِرُونَ وَلَا أَنْصَارَ يَنْصُرُونَكُمْ إِلَّا الْمُقَارَعَةَ بِالسَّيْفِ حَتَّى يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَكُمْ.

Certainly, there are examples before you of Allah's wrath, punishment, days of tribulations and happenings. Therefore, do not disregard His promises, ignoring His punishment, making light His wrath and not expecting His violence, because Allah, the Glorified, did not curse the past ages except because they had left off asking others to do good acts and refraining them from bad acts. In fact Allah cursed the foolish for committing sins and the wise because they gave up refraining others from evils. Beware! You have broken the bonds of Islam, transgressed its limits, and destroyed its commands.

وَإِنَّ عِنْدَكُمْ الْأَمْثَالَ مِنْ بَأْسِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى وَقَوَارِعِهِ، وَأَيَّامِهِ وَوَقَائِعِهِ، فَلَا تَسْتَبْطِئُوا وَعِيدَهُ جَهْلًا بِأَحْزِهِ، وَتَهَاوَنًا بِبَطْنِهِ، وَيَأْسًا مِنْ بَأْسِهِ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ لَمْ يَلْعَنِ الْقَرْنَ الْمَاضِي بَيْنَ أَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَّا لِتَرْكِهِمُ الْأَمْرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيِ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، فَلَعَنَ السُّفَهَاءَ لِتُكُوبِ الْمَعَاصِي، وَالْخُلَمَاءَ لِتَرْكِ التَّنَاهِي! أَلَا وَقَدْ قَطَعْتُمْ قَيْدَ الْأَسْلَامِ، وَعَطَلْتُمْ حُدُودَهُ، وَأَمْتَمْتُمْ أَحْكَامَهُ.

Amir al-mu'minin's high position and wonderful deeds in Islam

Beware! Surely Allah has commanded me to fight those who revolt, or who break the pledge, or create trouble on the earth. As regards pledge-breakers, I have fought them, as regards deviators from truth, I have waged holy war against them, and as regards those who have gone out of the faith, I have put them in (serious) disgrace⁵. As for Satan of the pit,⁶ he too has been dealt with by me through the loud cry with which the scream of his heart and shaking of his chest was also heard. Only a small portion of the rebels has remained. If Allah allows me one more chance over them I will annihilate them except a few remnants that may remain scattered in the suburb of the cities.

أَلَا وَقَدْ أَمَرَنِي اللَّهُ بِقِتَالِ أَهْلِ الْبَغْيِ وَالنَّكَثِ وَالْفَسَادِ فِي الْأَرْضِ، فَأَمَّا النَّاكِثُونَ فَقَدْ قَاتَلْتُ، وَأَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَقَدْ جَاهَدْتُ، وَأَمَّا الْمَارِقَةُ فَقَدْ دَوَّخْتُ، وَأَمَّا شَيْطَانُ الرِّدَّةِ فَقَدْ كَفَيْتُهُ بِصَعْفَةِ سُمُغْتٍ لَهَا وَجْبَةٌ قَلْبِهِ وَرَجَةٌ صَدْرِهِ، وَبَقِيَتْ بَقِيَّةٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبَغْيِ، وَلَوْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ فِي الْكُرَّةِ عَلَيْهِمْ لِأَدْبَلَنَ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا مَا يَتَشَدَّرُ فِي أَطْرَافِ الْأَرْضِ تَشَدُّرًا!

His Courage and Merits, may peace be upon him

شجاعته وفضله (عليه السلام)

Even in my boyhood I had lowered the chest of (the famous men) of Arabia, and broken the horn points (i.e., defeated the chiefs) of the tribes of

Rabi`ah and Mudar. Certainly, you know my position of close kinship and special relationship with the Prophet of Allah - peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants. When I was only a child he took charge of me. He used to press me to his chest and lay me beside him in his bed, bring his body close to mine and make me smell his fragrance. He used to chew something and then feed me with it. He found no lie in my speaking, nor weakness in any act.

أَنَا وَصَعْتُ [فِي الصَّغَرِ] بِكَالِإِكْلِ الْعَرَبِ، وَكَسَرْتُ نَوَاجِمَ قُرُونٍ رَبِيعَةً وَمُضَرَ. وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَوْضِعِي مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) بِالْقَرَابَةِ الْقَرِيبَةِ، وَالْمَنْزِلَةِ الْحَصِيصَةِ: وَضَعَنِي فِي حَجْرِهِ وَأَنَا وَلِيدٌ يَضُمُّنِي إِلَى صَدْرِهِ، وَيَكْتَفِينِي فِي فِرَاشِهِ، وَيُمْسِنِي جَسَدَهُ، وَيُشَمِّنِي عَرْفَهُ، وَكَانَ يَمْضَعُ الشَّيْءَ ثُمَّ يُلْقِمُنِيهِ، وَمَا وَجَدَ لِي كَذِبَةً فِي قَوْلٍ، وَلَا حَظْلَةً فِي فِعْلٍ.

From the time of his weaning, Allah had put a mighty angel with him to take him along the path of high character and good behaviour through day and night, while I used to follow him like a young camel following in the footprints of its mother. Every day he would show me in the form of a banner some of his high traits and commanded me to follow it. Every year he used to go in seclusion to the hill of Hira', where I saw him but no one else saw him. In those days Islam did not exist in any house except that of the Prophet of Allah - peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants - and Khadijah, while I was the third after these two. I used to see and watch the effulgence of divine revelation and message, and breathed the scent of Prophethood.

وَلَقَدْ قَرَنَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى بِهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) مِنْ لَدُنْ [أَنْ] كَانَ فَطِيمًا أَعْظَمَ مَلِكٍ مِنْ مَلَائِكَتِهِ يَسَلُّكَ بِهِ طَرِيقَ الْمَكَارِمِ، وَتَحَاسِنَ أَخْلَاقِ الْعَالَمِ، لَيْلُهُ وَنَهَارُهُ، وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُ أَتَّبِعُهُ اتِّبَاعَ الْفَصِيلِ أَثَرِ أُمِّهِ، يَرْفَعُ لِي فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ عِلْمًا مِنْ أَخْلَاقِهِ، وَيَأْمُرُنِي بِالْإِقْتِدَاءِ بِهِ. وَلَقَدْ كَانَ يُجَاوِرُ فِي كُلِّ سَنَةٍ بِحِجْرَاءَ، فَأَرَاهُ وَلَا يَرَاهُ غَيْرِي، وَمَنْ يَجْمَعُ بَيْنَ وَاحِدٍ يَوْمَيْنِ فِي الْأَسْلَامِ غَيْرَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) وَحَدِيحَةَ وَأَنَا ثَالِثُهُمَا، أَرَى نُورَ الْوَحْيِ وَالرَّسَالَةِ، وَأَشْمُ رِيحَ النُّبُوَّةِ.

When the revelation descended on the Prophet of Allah - peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants - I heard the moan of Satan. I said, "O Prophet of Allah, what is this moan?" and he replied, "This is Satan who has lost all hope of being worshipped. O Ali, you see all that I see and you hear all that I hear, except that you are not a Prophet, but you are a vicegerent and you are surely on (the path of) virtue."

وَلَقَدْ سَمِعْتُ رَنَّةَ الشَّيْطَانِ حِينَ نَزَلَ الْوَحْيُ عَلَيْهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَقُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا هَذِهِ الرَّنَّةُ؟ فَقَالَ: «هَذَا الشَّيْطَانُ قَدْ آيَسَ مِنْ عِبَادَتِهِ، إِنَّكَ تَسْمَعُ مَا أَسْمَعُ، وَتَرَى مَا أَرَى، إِلَّا أَنَّكَ لَسْتِ بِنَبِيٍّ، وَلَكِنَّكَ وَزِيرٌ، وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَى خَيْرٍ.»

I was with him when a party of the Quraysh came to him and said to him, "O Muhammad, you have made a big claim which none of your fore-fathers or those of your family have made. We ask you one thing; if you give us an

answer to it and show it to us, we will believe that you are a prophet and a messenger, but if you cannot do it, we will know that you are a sorcerer and a liar."

وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُ مَعَهُ (صلى الله عليه وآله) لَمَّا أَتَاهُ الْمَلَأَ مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ، فَقَالُوا لَهُ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ، إِنَّكَ قَدْ ادَّعَيْتَ عَظِيمًا لَمْ يَدْعِهِ آبَاؤُكَ وَلَا أَحَدٌ مِنْ بَنِيكَ، وَنَحْنُ نَسْأَلُكَ أَمْرًا إِنْ أَجَبْتَنَا إِلَيْهِ وَأَرَيْتَنَا، عَلِمْنَا أَنَّكَ نَبِيٌّ وَرَسُولٌ، وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ عَلِمْنَا أَنَّكَ سَاحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ.

The Messenger of Allah said: "What do you ask for?" They said: "Ask this tree to move for us, even with its roots, and stop before you." The Prophet said, "Verily, Allah has power over everything. If Allah does it for you, will you then believe and stand witness to the truth?" They said "Yes". Then he said, "I shall show you whatever you want, but I know that you won't bend towards virtue, and there are among you those who will be thrown into the pit, and those who will form parties (against me)." Then the Holy Prophet said: "O tree, if you do believe in Allah and the Day of Judgement, and know that I am the Prophet of Allah, come up with your roots and stand before me with the permission of Allah." By Him who deputed the Prophet with truth, the tree did remove itself with its root and came with a great humming sound and a flapping like the flapping of the wings of birds, till it stopped before the Messenger of Allah and cast its higher branches over the Prophet, while some of its branches came down onto my shoulders, and I was on the right side of the Holy Prophet.

فَقَالَ لَهُمْ (صلى الله عليه وآله): «وَمَا تَسْأَلُونَ؟». قَالُوا: نَدْعُو لَنَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ حَتَّى تَنْفَلِحَ بِعُرُوقِهَا وَتَقِفَ بَيْنَ يَدَيْكَ. فَقَالَ (صلى الله عليه وآله): «إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ، فَإِنْ فَعَلَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ لَكُمْ، أَتُؤْمِنُونَ وَتَشْهَدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ؟». قَالُوا: نَعَمْ. قَالَ: «فَإِنِّي سَأْرِيكُمْ مَا تَطْلُبُونَ، وَإِنِّي لَاعْلَمُ أَنَّكُمْ لَا تَفِيئُونَ إِلَيَّ حَيْرًا، وَإِنْ فِيكُمْ مَنْ يُطْرَحُ فِي الْقَلْبِ، وَمَنْ يُجْرَبُ الْأَحْزَابِ.»

ثُمَّ قَالَ: «يَا أَيُّهَا الشَّجَرَةُ إِنْ كُنْتِ تُؤْمِنِينَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، وَتَعْلَمِينَ أَنَّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، فَانْفَلِعِي بِعُرُوقِكَ حَتَّى تَقِفِي بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ». فَوَالَّذِي بَعَثَهُ بِالْحَقِّ نَبِيًّا لَأَنْفَلَعْتُ بِعُرُوقِهَا، وَجَاءَتْ وَلَهَا دَوِيٌّ شَدِيدٌ، وَقَصَفَتْ كَقَصْفِ أَجْحِجَةِ الطَّيْرِ، حَتَّى وَقَفَتْ بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) مُرْفُوفَةً، وَأَلْفَتْ بِعُضْنِهَا الْأَعْلَى عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، وَبِعُضْرِ أَعْصَانِهَا عَلَى مَنْكِبِي، وَكُنْتُ عَنْ يَمِينِهِ (عليه السلام).

When the people saw this they said by way of pride and vanity. "Now you order half of it to come to you and the other half of it remain (in its place)." The Holy Prophet ordered the tree to do the same. Then half of the tree advanced towards him in an amazing manner and with greater humming. It was about to touch the Prophet of Allah. Then they said, disbelieving and revolting, "Ask this half to get back to its other half and be as it was." The Prophet ordered it and it returned. Then I said, "There is no god but Allah! O Prophet of Allah, I am the first to believe in you and to

acknowledge that the tree did what it did just now with the command of Allah, the Sublime, in testimony to your Prophethood and to heighten your word". Upon this all the people shouted, "Rather a sorcerer, a liar; it is wonderful sorcery, he is very adept in it. Only a man like this (pointing to me) can stand testimony to you in your affairs."

فَلَمَّا نَظَرَ الْقَوْمُ إِلَى ذَلِكَ قَالُوا . عُلُوءًا وَاسْتِكْبَارًا : فَمُرَّهَا فَلْيَأْتِكَ نِصْفُهَا وَيَبْقَى نِصْفُهَا . فَمَرَّهَا بِذَلِكَ ، فَأَقْبَلَ إِلَيْهِ نِصْفُهَا كَأَعْجَبِ إِقْبَالٍ وَأَشَدِّهِ دَوِيًّا ، فَكَادَتْ تَلْتَفُ بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) . فَقَالُوا . كُفْرًا وَعُتُوًّا : فَمُرْ هَذَا النَّصْفَ فَلْيَرْجِعْ إِلَى نِصْفِهِ كَمَا كَانَ . فَمَرَّهُ فَرَجَعَ . فَقُلْتُ أَنَا : لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ ، إِنِّي أَوَّلُ مُؤْمِنٍ بِكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ، وَأَوَّلُ مَنْ آمَرَ أَنَّ الشَّجَرَةَ فَعَلَتْ مَا فَعَلْتَ بِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ تَصَدِيقًا لِنُبُوتِكَ ، وَإِجْلَالًا لِكَلِمَتِكَ . فَقَالَ الْقَوْمُ كُلُّهُمْ : بَلَن سَاحِرٍ كَذَّابٍ ، عَجِيبِ السِّحْرِ خَفِيفٍ فِيهِ ، وَهَلْ يُصَدِّقُكَ فِي أَمْرِكَ إِلَّا مِثْلُ هَذَا (يَعْنُونِي) .

Certainly, I belong to the group of people who care not for the reproach of anybody in matters concerning Allah. Their countenance is the countenance of the truthful and their speech is the speech of the virtuous. They are wakeful during the nights (in devotion to Allah), and over beacons (of guidance) in the day. They hold fast to the rope of the Qur'an. revive the traditions of Allah and of His Prophet. They do not boast nor indulge in self conceit, nor misappropriate, nor create mischief. Their hearts are in Paradise while their bodies are busy in (good) acts.

وَأَيُّ لِمَنْ قَوْمٍ لَا تَأْخُذُهُمْ فِي اللَّهِ لَوْمَةٌ لَائِمٌ ، سِيمَاهُمْ سِيمَا الصَّادِقِينَ ، وَكَلَامُهُمْ كَلَامُ الْأَبْرَارِ ، عُمَارُ اللَّيْلِ ، وَمَنَازُ النَّهَارِ ، مُتَمَسِّكُونَ بِحَبْلِ الْقُرْآنِ ، يُحْيُونَ سُنَنَ اللَّهِ وَسُنَنَ رَسُولِهِ ، لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ وَلَا يَعْزُبُونَ ، وَلَا يَعْزُبُونَ وَلَا يُفْسِدُونَ ، فُلُوبُهُمْ فِي الْجَنَانِ ، وَأَجْسَادُهُمْ فِي الْعَمَلِ !

Alternative Sources for Sermon 192

- (1) Ibn Tawus, *Kitab al-yaqin*, 196;
- (2) al-Kulayni, *Furu` al-Kafi*, IV, 168;
- (3) al-Saduq, *al-Faqih*, I, 152;
- (4) al-Zamakhshari, *Rabi`*, I, 113;
- (5) al-Mawardi, *A`lam*, 97;
- (6) See al-Tehrani, *al-Dhari`ah*, VII, 204.

Notes

1. The intention is that "you should not create conditions by which you may be deprived of Allah's favours, like the jealous who aims at harming him of whom he is jealous."

2. The intention is to say that if belief is accepted under force of awe and fear and worship is offered under the influence of power and authority then neither will it be belief in the true sense nor worship in real spirit. This is because belief is the name of inner testimony and heart-felt conviction. The conviction produced by force and compulsion can be only verbal but not heart-felt. Similarly, worship is the name of open acknowledgement of one's position of servitude. Worship which is devoid of the feeling of servitude or the sense of devotion and which is performed only in view of authority or fear cannot be real worship. Therefore, such belief and such worship would not present their correct connotation.

3. The reason for specifying the learned and the poor is that the learned has the light of learning to lead him, which the destitution of the poor may deny to him. In spite of this, both the learned and the poor fall into his deceit.

Then how can the ignorant save himself from his clutches, and how can the rich who has all the means to get into wrong ways, defend himself against him.

Nay! Verily man is wont to rebel! As he deemeth himself needless!

4. If a glance is cast at the rise and fall and events and happenings of the past people this fact will shine like daylight that the rise and fall of communities is not the result of luck or change, but that, to a great extent, it is affected by their acts and deeds. And of whatever type those deeds are, their results and consequences are in accord with them. Consequently, the stories and events of past people openly reflect that the result of oppression and evil deeds has always been ruin and destruction, while the consequence of virtuous action and peaceful living was always good luck and success. Since time and people make no difference, if the same conditions appear again and the same actions are repeated the same results must accrue which had appeared in the earlier set of circumstances, because the accrual of the results of good or bad actions is sure and certain like the properties and effects of everything. If this were not so it would not be possible to kindle hope in the minds of the oppressed and the afflicted by presenting to them past events and their effects, nor could the oppressors and tyrants be warned of the ill-effects of their deeds, on the ground that it was not necessary that the same would accrue now as had accrued earlier. But it is the universality of causality which makes past events the object of a lesson for posterity. Consequently, it was for this purpose that Amir al-mu'minin provoked thinking and consideration and mentioned the various events of Banu Isma'il, Banu Ishaq and Banu Isra'il and their affliction at the hands of the kings of Persia and Rome.

The progeny of Ismael, the elder son of Ibrahim (Abraham), is called Banu Isma'il while the progeny of his younger son Issac is called Banu Ishaq which later continued to divide into various off-shoots and acquired different names. Their original abode was at Canaan in Palestine, where Ibrahim had settled after the immigration from the plains of the Euphrates and the Tigris. His son Isma'il had settled in the Hijaz, where Ibrahim had left him and his mother Hajar (Hagar). Isma'il married as-Sayyidah bint Mudad a woman of the tribe of Jurhum which also inhabited this very area. His progeny sprang from her and spread throughout the world. The other son of Ibrahim namely Ishaq remained in Canaan. His son was Ya'qub (Jacob/Israel) who married Liya the daughter of his mother's brother and after her death married his other daughter.

Both of them bore him progeny which is known as Banu Isra'il. One of his sons was Yusuf (Joseph), who reached the neighbouring country, Egypt, through an accident, and, after suffering slavery and imprisonment, eventually became the ruler and occupier of the throne.

After this change, he sent for all his relations and kith and kin and in this way Egypt became the abode of Banu Isra'il. For some time they lived there in peace and safety, and led a life of respect and esteem, but by and by the locals began to view them with disdain and hatred and made them the target of all sorts of tyrannies, so much so that they used to kill their children and retained their women as slave-maids, as a result of which their determination and courage was trampled and their spirit of freedom was completely subdued. At last, conditions changed and the period of their troubles came to an end, after four hundred years of the shackles of slavery; when Allah sent Musa to deliver them from the oppression of the Pharaoh. Musa set off with them to leave Egypt, but in order to destroy the Pharaoh, Allah turned them towards the Nile where there was all flood in front, and on the rear the huge forces of the Pharaoh. This bewildered them much, but Allah commanded Musa to enter the river without fear. Thus, when he went forward, there appeared in the river not only one but several courses to pass through and Musa crossed to the other side of the river along with Banu Isra'il. Pharaoh was closely following. When he saw them passing he too advanced with his arm but when they reached the middle of the stream the still water began moving and, engulfing Pharaoh and his army in its waves, finished them. About them the Qur'an says:

And (remember ye) when We delivered you from Pharaoh's people who afflicted you with grievous torment, slaying your sons and by letting your women alive, and in that was a great trial from your Lord. (2:49)

However, when, after leaving the boundaries of Egypt, they entered their motherland Palestine, they established their own state and began to live in freedom, and Allah changed their lowliness and disgrace into the greatness and sublimity of rule and power. In this connection, Allah says:

And made We inheritors the people who were deemed weak (to inherit) the eastern parts of the earth and the western parts of it, which we had blessed therein (with fertility) and the good word of thy Lord was fulfilled in the children of Israel for what they did endure; and destroyed We, what Pharaoh and his people had wrought, and what shade they did make. (Qur'an, 7:137)

On occupying the throne of rule and regaining prosperity and peacefulness, Banu Isra'il forgot all the ignominies and disgraces of the period of slavery, and instead of being thankful to Allah for the favours granted by Him they took to rebellion and revolt. Consequently, they shamelessly indulged in vices and misconduct and partook in mischiefs and evil deeds to the maximum, made lawful things unlawful and unlawful things lawful by false excuses and disobeyed the prophets who tried to preach and correct them under the command of Allah, and even killed them. The natural consequence of their vicious activities was that they were caught in punishment for their deeds. Consequently, Nebuchadnezzar, who was ruling in Babylon (Iraq) in 600 B.C., rose to march against Syria and Palestine and killed seventy thousand Banu Isra'il with his blood-thirsty swords, devastated their towns, drove away the survivors with him like sheep and goats and threw them in the abyss of ignominy by turning them into slaves.

Although after this ruination there seemed no way for them to regain position and power, yet nature gave them still another chance to recover. When Nebuchadnezzar died and power came in the hands of Belshazzar he started all sorts of oppression on the people. Being disgusted with this, they sent word to the ruler of Persia that they were tired of enduring the oppression of their ruler and that he should rescue them from him, and free them from the oppression of Belshazzar. Cyrus the Great, who was a just and upright ruler, rose up in response to this request and, with the co-operation of the local population, overturned the government, as a consequence of which the yoke of slavery on Banu Isra'il's necks was also removed, and they were allowed to return to Palestine.

Thus, after seventy years of subjugation they again set foot in their homeland and took over the reins of government. If they had taken their lesson from the past events they would not have committed the same evils as a consequence of which they had to suffer slavery; but the mental constitution of this community was such that whenever they achieved prosperity and freedom from care they lost themselves in the intoxication of riches and in the enjoyment of pleasure, mocked the laws of religion, derided the prophets and even killing them did not mean anything serious to them. Thus, when their ruler Herod at the request of his sweetheart, beheaded the Prophet Yahya (John) and presented his head to her, none of them raised any voice against this brutality or was affected by it in any manner. This was the state of their unruliness and fierceness when `Isa made his appearance. He stopped them from evil deeds and exhorted them to adopt good habits, but they opposed him too and gave him troubles of various sorts, so much so that they tried to end his life. However, Allah foiled all their devices and made `Isa safe against their approach.

When their disobedience reached this stage and their capacity to accept guidance was completely wiped out, fate decided to ruin them and made full arrangements for their annihilation and destruction. The ruler of Roma (Byzantia) Vespasianus sent his son Titus to attack Syria, he laid siege round Jerusalem, demolished the houses and broke down the walls of the Synagogue as a result of which thousand of Banu Isra'il left their houses and became scattered abroad, while thousands died of hunger; and those who remained were put to sword. Most of them settled in Hijaz, but because of their rejecting Prophet Muhammad (S) their unity was so disturbed that they could never again converge on any one centre of honour and could never regain a life of prestige and dignity in place of disgrace and ignominy.

In the same way the ruler of Persia made serious attacks on Arabia and subjugated the inhabitants of those places. Thus, Shapur ibn Hurmuz, at the age of sixteen, took with him four thousand combatants and attacked Arabs who resided within the boundaries of Persia and then advanced towards Bahrayn, Qatif and Hajar and ruined Banu Tamim, Banu Bakr ibn Wa'il and Banu `Abd al-Qays and cut through the shoulders of seventy thousand Arabs,

after which his nickname became "Dhu'l-Aktaf" (the shoulderer). He forced the Arabs that they should live in tents built of hair, should grow long hair on their heads, should not wear white clothes and should ride unsaddled horses. Then he settled twelve thousand people of Isfahan and other cities of Persia in the area between Iraq and Syria.

In this way he drove the inhabitants of those places from fertile lands to waterless forests which had neither any of the conveniences of life nor means of livelihood, and for long these people remained the victims of other's oppression due to their own disunity and division. At last, Allah deputed the Prophet and raised them out of disgrace to the highest pinnacle of progress and sublimity.

5. Amir al-mu'minin, Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, Jabir ibn `Abdullah al-Ansari, `Abdullah ibn Mas'ud, `Ammar ibn Yasir, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri and `Abdullah ibn `Abbas narrated that the Holy Prophet commanded `Ali ibn Abi Talib to fight those who are pledge-breakers (nakithin), deviators from truth (qasitin) and those who have left the faith (mariqin). (al-Mustadrak, vol. 3, p. 139; al-Isti'ab, vol. 3, p. 1117; Usd al-ghabah, vol. 3, pp. 32-33; ad-Durr al-manthur, vol. 6, p. 18; al-Khasa'is al-kubra, vol. 2, p. 138; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol. 5, p. 186; vol. 6, p. 235; vol. 7, p. 238; Kanz al-ummal, vol. 6, pp. 72, 82, 88, 155, 215, 319, 391, 392; Tarikh Baghdad, vol. 8, p. 340; vol. 13, pp. 186-187; al-Tarikh, Ibn `Asakir, vol. 5, p. 41; at-Tarikh, Ibn Kathir, vol. 7 pp. 304-306; ar-Riyad an-nadarah, vol. 2, p. 240; Sharh al-mawahib al-ladunniyah, vol. 3, pp. 316-317; Muwaddah al-awham, vol. 1, p. 386).

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid says: "It has been proved (by right ascription) from the Holy Prophet that he said to `Ali (p.b.u.h.): You will fight after me those who are pledge-breakers, deviators from truth and those who have gone out of the faith.

"The pledge-breakers were the people of Jamal, because they broke their allegiance with him. The deviators from truth were the people of Syria (ash-Sham) at Siffin. Those who have gone out of the faith were the Kharijites at an-Nahrawan. Regarding these three groups, Allah says (about the first one):

Verily, those who swear their fealty unto thee do but swear fealty unto Allah; the hand of Allah is above their hands; so whosoever violateth his oath, doth violate it only to the hurt of his (own) self;... (Qur'an, 48:10)

(About the second group) Allah says:

And as for the deviators, they shall be for the hell, a fuel. (Qur'an, 72:15)"

Concerning the third group, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has referred to the following tradition (hadith) that al-Bukhari (in as-Sahih, vol. 4, pp. 166-167, 243), Muslim (in as-Sahih, vol. 3, pp. 109-117), at-Tirmidhi (in al-Jami' as-Sahih, vol. 4, p. 481), Ibn Majah (in as-Sunan, vol. I, pp. 59-62), an-Nasa'i (in as-Sunan, vol. 3, pp. 65-66), Malik ibn Anas (in al-Muwatta', pp. 204-205), ad-Dar'qutni (in as-Sunan, vol. 3, pp.131-132), ad-Darimi (in as-Sunan, vol. 2, p. 133), Abu Dawud (in as-Sunan, vol. 4, pp. 241-246), al-Hakim (in al-Mustadrak, vol. 2, pp. 145-154; vol. 4, p. 531), Ahmad ibn Hanbal (in al-Musnad, vol. 1, pp. 88, 140, 147; vol. 3, pp. 56, 65) and al-Bayhaqi (in as-Sunan al-kubra', vol. 8, pp. 170-171) have narrated through a group of the companions of the Holy Prophet that he said about Dhu'l-Khuwaysirah (the surname for Dhu'th-Thudayyah Hurqus ibn Zuhayr at-Tamimi, the chief of the Kharijites):

From this very person's posterity there will arise people who will recite the Qur'an, but it will not go beyond their throat, they will kill their followers of Islam and will spare the idol-worshippers. They will glance through the teaching of Islam as hurriedly as the arrow passes through its prey. If I were to ever find them I would kill them like `Ad.

Then Ibn Abi'l-Hadid continues:

This is the sign for his (Holy Prophet's) prophethood and his prophecy of the secret knowledge. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 13, p.183)

6. By "Satan of the pit" the reference is to Dhu'th-Thudayyah (whose full name already mentioned in footnote no. 5) who was killed in Nahrawan by the stroke of lightning from the sky, and there was no need to kill him by sword. The Holy Prophet had foretold his death. Therefore, after the annihilation of the Kharijites at Nahrawan, Amir al-mu'minin came out in search, but could not find his body anywhere. In the meantime, ar-Rayyan ibn Sabirah saw forty to fifty bodies in a pit on the bank of the canal. When they were taken out the body of Dhu'th-Thudayyah was also found among them. He was called Dhu'th-Thudayyah because of a mass of flesh on his shoulder. When Amir al-mu'minin saw his

body he said, "Allah is Great, neither I spoke lie nor was I told wrong." (Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 13, pp. 183-184; at-Tabari, vol 1, pp. 3383-3384; Ibn al-Athir vol. 3, p. 348)

Sermon 193: Now then, Allah the Glorified, the Sublime, created...

It is related that a companion of Amir al-mu'minin called Hammam¹ who was a man devoted to worship said to him, "O' Amir al-mu'minin, describe to me the pious man in such a way as though I see them." Amir al-mu'minin avoided the reply and said, "O Hammam, fear Allah and perform good acts because 'Verily, Allah is with those who guard (themselves against evil), and those who do good (to others)'" (Qur'an, 16:128). Hammam was not satisfied with this and pushed him to speak. Thereupon, Amir al-mu'minin praised Allah and extolled Him and sought His blessings on the Holy Prophet and then spoke:

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يصف فيها المتقين

روي أنّ صاحباً لامير المؤمنين (عليه السلام) يقال له همام كان رجلاً عابداً، فقال له:

يا أمير المؤمنين، صف لي المتقين كأني أنظر إليهم.

إنَّ اللهَ مَعَ الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ مُحْسِنُونَ) فتناقل عن جوابه، ثم قال (عليه السلام): يا

همام، اتق الله وأحسب ف)

فلم يقنع همام بذلك القول حتى عزم عليه

قال: فحمد الله وأثنى عليه، وصلى على النبي (صلى الله عليه وآله)، ثم قال (عليه

السلام):

Now then, Allah the Glorified, the Sublime, created (the things of) creation. He created them without any need for their obedience or being safe from their sinning, because the sin of anyone who sins does not harm Him nor does the obedience of anyone who obeys Him benefit Him. He has distributed among them their livelihood, and has assigned them their positions in the world.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ . سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى . خَلَقَ الْخَلْقَ حِينَ خَلَقَهُمْ غَيْرَ عَنِ طَاعَتِهِمْ أَمِنًا مِنْ مَعْصِيَتِهِمْ، لِأَنَّهُ لَا تَضُرُّهُ مَعْصِيَةُ مَنْ عَصَاهُ، وَلَا تَنْفَعُهُ طَاعَةُ مَنْ أَطَاعَهُ، فَقَسَمَ بَيْنَهُمْ مَعَايِشَهُمْ، وَوَضَعَهُمْ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا مَوَاضِعَهُمْ.

Thus, the God-fearing, in it are the people of distinction. Their speech is to the point, their dress is moderate and their gait is humble. They keep their eyes closed to what Allah has made unlawful for them, and they put their ears to that knowledge which is beneficial to them. They remain in the time of trials as though they remain in comfort. If there had not been fixed periods (of life) ordained for each, their spirits would not have remained in their bodies even for the twinkling of an eye because of (their) eagerness for the reward and fear of chastisement. The greatness of the Creator is seated in their heart, and, so, everything else appears small in their eyes. Thus to

them Paradise is as though they see it and are enjoying its favours. To them, Hell is also as if they see it and are suffering punishment in it.

فَالْمُتَّقُونَ فِيهَا هُمْ أَهْلُ الْفَضَائِلِ: مَنْطِقُهُمُ الصَّوَابُ، وَمَلْبَسُهُمُ الْاِقْتِصَادُ، وَمَشِيئُهُمُ التَّوَاضُعُ. غَضُّوا أَبْصَارَهُمْ عَمَّا حَرَّمَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَوَقَفُوا أَسْمَاعَهُمْ عَلَى الْعِلْمِ النَّافِعِ لَهُمْ. نَزَلَتْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ مِنْهُمْ فِي الْبَلَاءِ كَالَّتِي نَزَلَتْ فِي الرَّحَاءِ. لَوْ لَا الْأَجَلُ الَّذِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ لَمْ تَسْتَقِرَّ أَرْوَاحُهُمْ فِي أَجْسَادِهِمْ طَرْفَةَ عَيْنٍ، شَوْقًا إِلَى الثَّوَابِ، وَخَوْفًا مِنَ الْعِقَابِ. عَظَّمَ الْخَالِقُ فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ فَصَعْرَ مَا دُونَهُ فِي أَعْيُنِهِمْ، فَهُمْ وَالْجَنَّةُ كَمَنْ قَدْ رَأَاهَا، فَهُمْ فِيهَا مُنْعَمُونَ، وَهُمْ وَالنَّارُ كَمَنْ قَدْ رَأَاهَا، فَهُمْ فِيهَا مُعَذَّبُونَ.

Their hearts are grieved, others are protected from their evils, their bodies are thin, their needs are scanty, and their souls are chaste. They endured (hardship) for a short while, and in consequence they secured comfort for a long time. It is a beneficial transaction that Allah made easy for them. The world aimed at them, but they did not aim at it. It captured them, but they freed themselves from it by a ransom.

قُلُوبُهُمْ مَحْزُونَةٌ، وَشُرُورُهُمْ مَأْمُونَةٌ، وَأَجْسَادُهُمْ نَحِيفَةٌ، وَحَاجَاتُهُمْ خَفِيفَةٌ، وَأَنْفُسُهُمْ عَفِيفَةٌ. صَبَرُوا أَيَّامًا قَصِيرَةً أَعْقَبَتْهُمْ رَاحَةً طَوِيلَةً، بِخَارَةِ مَرْجِحَةٍ، يَسَّرَهَا لَهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ. أَرَادَتْهُمْ الدُّنْيَا وَلَمْ يُرِيدُوهَا، وَأَسْرَتْهُمْ فَقَدُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ مِنْهَا.

During a night they are upstanding on their feet reading portions of the Qur'an and reciting it in a well-measured way, creating through it grief for themselves and seeking by it the cure for their ailments. If they come across a verse creating eagerness (for Paradise) they pursue it avidly, and their spirits turn towards it eagerly, and they feel as if it is in front of them. And when they come across a verse which contains fear (of Hell) they bend the ears of their hearts towards it, and feel as though the sound of Hell and its cries are reaching their ears.

They bend themselves from their backs, prostrate themselves on their foreheads, their palms, their knees and their toes, and beseech Allah, the Sublime, for their deliverance. During the day they are enduring, learned, virtuous and God-fearing. Fear (of Allah) has made them thin like arrows. If any one looks at them he believes they are sick, although they are not sick, and he says that they have gone mad. In fact, great concern (i.e., fear) has made them mad.

أَمَّا اللَّيْلُ فَصَافُونَ أَقْدَامَهُمْ، نَالِينَ لِإِجْرَاءِ الْقُرْآنِ يُرْتَلُّونَهَا تَرْتِيلًا، يُحْزِنُونَ بِهِ أَنْفُسَهُمْ، وَيَسْتَشِيرُونَ بِهِ دَوَاءَ دَائِهِمْ، فَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِآيَةٍ فِيهَا تَشْوِيقٌ رَكَنُوا إِلَيْهَا طَمَعًا، وَتَطَلَّعَتْ نُفُوسُهُمْ إِلَيْهَا شَوْقًا، وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهَا نُصِبَ أَعْيُنِهِمْ، وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِآيَةٍ فِيهَا تَخْوِيفٌ أَصْعَوْا إِلَيْهَا مَسَامِعَ قُلُوبِهِمْ، وَظَنُّوا أَنَّ زَفِيرَ جَهَنَّمَ وَشَهِيئَتَهَا فِي أَصُولِ آدَانِهِمْ، فَهُمْ حَائُونَ عَلَى أَوْسَاطِهِمْ، مُفْتَرِّشُونَ لِحَبَاهِمِهِمْ وَأَكْفِهِمْ، وَأَطْرَافِ أَقْدَامِهِمْ، يَطْلُبُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ فِي فَكَاكِ رِقَابِهِمْ.

وَأَمَّا النَّهَارَ فَحُلَمَاءُ عُلَمَاءَ، أَبْرَارٌ أَتَقِيَاءُ، قَدْ بَرَّاهُمْ الْخَوْفُ بَرِّي الْقِدَاحِ، يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِمُ النَّظِيرُ
فَيَحْسِبُهُمْ مَرَضَى، وَمَا بِالْقَوْمِ مِنْ مَرَضٍ، وَيَقُولُ: قَدْ حُولِطُوا! وَلَقَدْ خَالَطَهُمْ أَمْرٌ عَظِيمٌ!

They are not satisfied with their meagre good acts, and do not regard their major acts as great. They always blame themselves and are afraid of their deeds. When anyone of them is spoken of highly, he says: "I know myself better than others, and my Lord knows me better than I know. O Allah, do not deal with me according to what they say, and make me better than they think of me and forgive me (those shortcomings) which they do not know."

لَا يَرْضَوْنَ مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمُ الْقَلِيلَ، وَلَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ الْكَثِيرَ، فَهُمْ لِأَنْفُسِهِمْ مُتَّهِمُونَ، وَمِنْ
أَعْمَالِهِمْ مُشْفِقُونَ. إِذَا رُكِّي أَحَدٌ مِنْهُمْ خَافَ بِمَا يُقَالُ لَهُ، فَيَقُولُ: أَنَا أَعْلَمُ بِنَفْسِي مِنْ
غَيْرِي، وَرَبِّي أَعْلَمُ مِنِّي بِنَفْسِي! اللَّهُمَّ لَا تُؤَاخِذْنِي بِمَا يَقُولُونَ، وَاجْعَلْنِي أَفْضَلَ بِمَا يَطُنُّونَ،
وَاعْفِرْ لِي مَا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ.

Among the signs of anyone of them is that you will see that he has strength in religion, determination along with leniency, faith with conviction, eagerness for knowledge, and knowledge with forbearance, moderation in riches, devotion in worship, gracefulness in starvation, endurance in hardship, desire for the lawful, pleasure in guidance and hatred from greed. He performs virtuous deeds but still feels afraid. In the evening he is anxious to offer thanks (to Allah). In the morning his anxiety is to remember (Allah).

He passes the night in fear and rises in the morning in joy - fear lest night is passed in forgetfulness, and joy over the favour and mercy received by him. If his self refuses to endure a thing which it does not like he does not grant its request towards what it likes. The coolness of his eye lies in what is to last for ever, while from the things (of this world) that will not last he keeps aloof. He transfuses knowledge with forbearance, and speech with action.

فَمِنْ عِلَامَةِ أَحَدِهِمْ أَنَّكَ تَرَى لَهُ قُوَّةً فِي دِينِ، وَحَزْماً فِي لِينِ، وَإِيمَاناً فِي يَقِينِ، وَحِرْصاً فِي
عِلْمِ، وَعِلْماً فِي حِلْمِ، وَقَصْداً فِي غَيْءِ، وَخُشُوعاً فِي عِبَادَةِ، وَتَجَمُّلاً فِي فَاقَةِ، وَصَبْراً فِي شِدَّةِ،
وَطَلَباً فِي حِلَالِ، وَنَشَاطاً فِي هُدًى، وَتَحَرُّجاً عَنِ طَمَعِ. يَعْمَلُ الْأَعْمَالَ الصَّالِحَةَ وَهُوَ عَلَى
وَجَلٍ، يُمَسِّي وَهْمَهُ الشُّكْرَ، وَيُصْبِحُ وَهْمَهُ الدِّكْرَ، يَبِيثُ حَذِراً، وَيُصْبِحُ فَرِحاً، حَذِراً لَمَّا حَذَرَ
مِنَ الْعَقْلَةِ، وَفَرِحاً بِمَا أَصَابَ مِنَ الْفَضْلِ وَالرَّحْمَةِ. إِنْ اسْتَصْعَبَتْ عَلَيْهِ نَفْسُهُ فِيمَا تَكَرَّرَ لَمْ
يُعْطِهَا سَوْهًا فِيمَا تُحِبُّ. فَرَّةٌ عَيْنِهِ فِيمَا لَا يَزُولُ، وَرَهَادَةٌ فِيمَا لَا يَبْقَى، يَمْزُجُ الْحِلْمَ بِالْعِلْمِ،
وَالْقَوْلَ بِالْعَمَلِ.

You will see his hopes simple, his shortcomings few, his heart fearing, his spirit contented, his meal small and simple, his religion safe, his desires dead and his anger suppressed. Good alone is expected from him. Evil from him is not to be feared. Even if he is found among those who forget (Allah)

he is counted among those who remember (Him), but if he is among the rememberers he is not counted among the forgetful. He forgives him who is unjust to him, and he gives to him who deprives him. He behaves well with him who behaves ill with him.

تَرَاهُ قَرِيْباً أَمَلُهُ، قَلِيْلًا زَلُّهُ حَاشِعًا قَلْبُهُ، قَانِعَةً نَفْسُهُ، مَنزُورًا أَكْلُهُ، سَهْلًا أَمْرُهُ، حَرِيْرًا دِيْنُهُ، مَيِّتَةً شَهْوَتُهُ، مَكْظُومًا غَيْظُهُ. الْحَتِيْرُ مِنْهُ مَأْمُوْلٌ، وَالشَّرُّ مِنْهُ مَأْمُوْنٌ. إِنْ كَانَ فِي الْعَافِيْلِيْنَ كُتِبَ فِي الدَّاكِرِيْنَ، وَإِنْ كَانَ فِي الدَّاكِرِيْنَ لَمْ يُكْتَبْ مِنَ الْعَافِيْلِيْنَ. يَعْمُو عَمَّنْ ظَلَمَهُ، وَيُعْطِي مَنْ حَرَمَهُ، وَيَصِلُ مَنْ قَطَعَهُ.

Indecent speech is far from him, his utterance is lenient, his evils are non-existent his virtues are ever present, his good is ahead and mischief has turned its face (from him). He is dignified during calamities, patient in distresses, and thankful during ease. He does not commit excess over him whom he hates, and does not commit sin for the sake of him whom he loves. He admits truth before evidence is brought against him. He does not misappropriate what is placed in his custody, and does not forget what he is required to remember. He does not call others bad names, he does not cause harm to his neighbour, he does not feel happy at others misfortunes, he does not enter into wrong and does not go out of right.

بَعِيْدًا فُحْشُهُ، لَيِّنًا قَوْلُهُ، غَائِبًا مُنْكَرُهُ، حَاضِرًا مَعْرُوفُهُ، مُقْبِلًا حَيْرُهُ، مُدْبِرًا شَرُّهُ. فِي الرَّلَازِلِ وَفُؤُورٍ، وَفِي الْمَكَارِهِ صَبُوْرٍ، وَفِي الرَّحَاءِ شُكُوْرٍ. لَا يَحِيْفُ عَلَيَّ مَنْ يَبْغِضُ، وَلَا يَأْتِمُّ فَيَمْنُ يُحِبُّ. يَعْتَرِفُ بِالْحَقِّ قَبْلَ أَنْ يُشْهَدَ عَلَيْهِ. لَا يُضَيِّعُ مَا اسْتُحْفِظَ، وَلَا يَنْسَى مَا ذُكِّرَ، وَلَا يُنَابِزُ بِالْأَلْقَابِ، وَلَا يُضَارُّ بِالْجَارِ، وَلَا يَشْمَتُ بِالْمَصَائِبِ، وَلَا يَدْخُلُ فِي الْبَاطِلِ، وَلَا يَخْرُجُ مِنَ الْحَقِّ.

If he is silent his silence does not grieve him, if he laughs he does not raise his voice, and if he is wronged he endures till Allah takes revenge on his behalf. His own self is in distress because of him, while the people are in ease from him. He puts himself in hardship for the sake of his next life, and makes people feel safe from himself. His keeping away from those who distance themselves from him is by way of asceticism and purification, and his nearness to those who draw near to him is by way of leniency and mercifulness. His keeping away is not by way of vanity or feeling of greatness, nor his nearness by way of deceit and cheating.

إِنْ صَمَتَ لَمْ يَعُمَّهُ صَمْتُهُ، وَإِنْ ضَحِكَ لَمْ يَعْطُ صَوْتُهُ، وَإِنْ بُعِيَ عَلَيْهِ صَبَرَ حَتَّى يَكُونَ اللَّهُ هُوَ الَّذِي يَنْتَقِمُ لَهُ. نَفْسُهُ مِنْهُ فِي عَنَاءٍ، وَالنَّاسُ مِنْهُ فِي رَاحَةٍ. أَتَعَبَ نَفْسَهُ لِإِخْرَتِهِ، وَأَرَاحَ النَّاسَ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ. بُعِدَهُ عَمَّنْ تَبَاعَدَ عَنْهُ زُهْدٌ وَنَزَاهَةٌ، وَدُنُوهُ مِمَّنْ دَنَا مِنْهُ لِيْنٌ وَرَحْمَةٌ، لَيْسَ تَبَاعُدُهُ بِكِبَرٍ وَعَظْمَةٍ، وَلَا دُنُوهُ بِمَكْرٍ وَخَدِيْعَةٍ.

It is related that Hammam passed into a deep swoon and then expired. Then Amir al-mu'minin said: Verily, by Allah I had this fear about him. Then he added: Effective advice produces such effects on receptive minds.

Someone ² said to him: O Amir al-mu'minin, how is it you do not receive such an effect? Amir al-mu'minin replied: Woe to you! For death there is a fixed hour which cannot be exceeded, and a cause which does not change. Now look, never repeat such talk which Satan had put on your tongue.

قال: فصعق همّام رحمه الله صعقةً كانت نفسه فيها. فقال أمير المؤمنين (عليه السلام): أَمَا وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ كُنْتُ أَخَافُهَا عَلَيْهِ. ثُمَّ قَالَ: هَكَذَا تَصْنَعُ الْمَوَاعِظُ الْبَالِغَةُ بِأَهْلِهَا!
فقال له قائل: فما بالك يا أمير المؤمنين؟ فقال (عليه السلام): وَيْحَكَ، إِنَّ لِكُلِّ أَجَلٍ وَقْتًا لَا يَعْدُوهُ، وَسَبَبًا لَا يَتَجَاوَزُهُ، فَمَهْلًا، لَا تَعُدُّ لِمِثْلِهَا، فَإِنَّمَا نَفَثَ الشَّيْطَانُ عَلَى لِسَانِكَ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 193

- (1) *Kitab Sulaym ibn Qays*, 211;
- (2) *al-Saduq, al-'Amali*, 340;
- (3) *Ibn Qutaybah, 'Uyun*, II, 352;
- (4) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf*, 159;
- (5) *Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, Tadhkirah*, 148;
- (6) *Ibn Talhah, Matalib*, I, 151;
- (7) *al-Karajiki, Kanz*, 31;
- (8) *al-Mas'udi, Muruj*, II, 420. `Abd al-Zahra' mentions 8 commentaries on this famous khutbah al-Qasi`ah.

Notes

1. According to Ibn Abi'l-Hadid this is Hammam ibn Shurayh but al-`Allamah al-Majlisi says that apparently this is Hammam ibn `Ubadah.
2. This man was `Abdullah ibn al-Kawwa' who was in the fore-front of the Kharijite movement and was a great opponent of Amir al-mu'minin.

Sermon 194: We praise Allah for the succour He has given us...

In description of hypocrites

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يصف فيها المنافقين

We praise Allah for the succour He has given us in carrying out His obedience and in preventing us from disobedience, and we ask Him to complete His favours (to us) and to make us hold on to His rope. We stand witness that Muhammad is His slave and His Messenger. He entered every hardship in search of Allah's pleasure and endured for its sake every grief. His near relations changed themselves for him and those who were remote from him (in relationship) united against him.

The Arabs let loose the reins (of their horses to quicken their march) against him, and struck the bellies of their carriers to (rouse them) in fighting against him, so much so that enemies came to his threshold from the remotest places and most distant areas.

نَحْمَدُهُ عَلَى مَا وَفَّقَ لَهُ مِنَ الطَّاعَةِ، وَدَادَ عَنْهُ مِنَ الْمُعْصِيَةِ، وَنَسَأَلُهُ لِمَنْتِهِ تَمَامًا، وَبِحَبْلِهِ اعْتِصَامًا. وَنَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، حَاضِرَ إِلَى رِضْوَانِ اللَّهِ كُلِّ عَمْرَةٍ، وَتَجَرَّعَ فِيهِ كُلَّ غُصَّةٍ، وَقَدْ تَلَوْنَ لَهُ الْأَذْنُونَ، وَتَأَلَّبَ عَلَيْهِ الْأَقْصُونَ، وَخَلَعَتْ إِلَيْهِ الْعَرَبُ أَعْنَتَهَا، وَضَرَبَتْ إِلَى مُحَارِبَتِهِ بُطُونَ رَوَاجِلِهَا، حَتَّى أَنْزَلَتْ بِسَاحَتِهِ عَدَاوَتَهَا، مِنْ أْبْعَدِ الدَّارِ، وَأَسْحَقِ الْمَزَارِ.

I advise you, O creatures of Allah, to fear Allah and I warn you of the hypocrites, because they are themselves misguided and misguide others, and they have slipped and make others slip too. They change into many colours, and adopt various ways. They support you with all sorts of supports, and lay in waiting for you at every lookout.

Their hearts are diseased while their faces are clean. They walk stealthily and tread like the approach of sickness (over the body). Their words speak of cure, but their acts are like incurable diseases. They are jealous of ease, intensify distress, and destroy hopes. Their victims are found lying down on every path, while they have means to approach every heart and they have (false) tears for every grief.

أَوْصِيَكُمْ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، وَأَحْذِرْكُمْ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ: الضَّالُّونَ الْمُضِلُّونَ، وَالرَّالُونَ الْمُرْلُونَ. يَتَلَوْنَ أَلْوَانَ، وَيَفْتَنُونَ أَفْتِنَانًا، يَعْمِدُونَكُمْ بِكُلِّ عِمَادٍ، وَيَرِصُدُونَكُمْ بِكُلِّ مِرْصَادٍ. قُلُوبُهُمْ دَوِيَّةٌ، وَصِفَاحُهُمْ نَقِيَّةٌ. يَمْتَشُونَ الْحَفَاءَ، وَيَدْبُونَ الصَّرَاءَ. وَصَفُهُمْ دَوَاءٌ، وَقَوْلُهُمْ شِفَاءٌ، وَفِعْلُهُمْ الدَّاءُ الْعِيَاءُ. حَسَدُهُ الرَّحَاءُ، وَمُؤَكِّدُوا الْبَلَاءِ، وَمُفْنِطُوا الرَّجَاءِ. هُمْ بِكُلِّ طَرِيقٍ صَرِيحٍ، وَإِلَى كُلِّ قَلْبٍ شَفِيعٍ، وَلِكُلِّ شَجْوٍ دُمُوعٌ.

They eulogise each other and expect reward from each other. When they ask something they insist on it, if they reprove (any one) they disgrace (him), and if they pass verdict they commit excess. They have adopted for every truth a wrong way, for every erect thing a bender, for every living being a killer, for every (closed) door a key and for every night a lamp. They covet, but with despair, in order to maintain with it their markets, and to popularise their handsome merchandise. When they speak they create doubts. When they describe they exaggerate. First they offer easy paths but (afterwards) they make them narrow. In short, they are the party of Satan and the stings of fire.

..they are Satan's Party; Beware! Verily, the party of Satan are the losers. (Qur'an, 58:19)

يَتَفَارِضُونَ التَّنَاءَ، وَيَتَرَاقِبُونَ الْجُزَاءَ. إِنْ سَأَلُوا أَحْفُوا، وَإِنْ عَدَلُوا كَشَفُوا، وَإِنْ حَكَمُوا
أَسْرَفُوا. قَدْ أَعَدُّوا لِكُلِّ حَقِّ بَاطِلًا، وَلِكُلِّ قَائِمٍ مَائِلًا، وَلِكُلِّ حَيٍّ قَاتِلًا، وَلِكُلِّ بَابٍ مُفْتَحًا،
وَلِكُلِّ لَيْلٍ مُصْبَحًا. يَتَوَصَّلُونَ إِلَى الطَّمَعِ بِالْيَأْسِ لِيُتَمِّمُوا بِهِ أَسْوَاقَهُمْ، وَيُنْفَعُوا بِهِ أَعْلَاقَهُمْ.
يُفُولُونَ فَيُشَبِّهُونَ، وَيَصِفُونَ فَيَمَوْهُونَ. قَدْ هَيَّأُوا الطَّرِيقَ، وَأَضَلُّوا الْمَضِيقَ.
فَهُمْ لُئِمَةُ الشَّيْطَانِ، وَحُمَةُ النَّيْرَانِ (أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ الشَّيْطَانِ أَلَّا إِنَّ حِزْبَ الشَّيْطَانِ هُمُ
الْحَاسِرُونَ)

Alternative Sources for Sermon 194

- (1) Al-Yamani, al-Taraz, II, 308;
- (2) al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 54, 269.

Sermon 195: Praise be to Allah who has displayed such effects...

Allah's praise, advice about fear of Allah and details about the Day of Judgement

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يحمد الله ويثني على نبيّه ويعظ

حمد الله و الشهادتان

Praise be to Allah who has displayed such effects of His authority and the glory of His sublimity through the wonders of His might that they dazzle the pupils of the eyes and prevent the minds from appreciating the reality of His attributes. I stand witness that there is no god but Allah by virtue of belief, certainty, sincerity and conviction.

I also stand witness that Muhammad is His slave and His Prophet whom He deputed when the signs of guidance were obliterated and the ways of religion were desolate. So, he threw open the truth, gave advice to the people, guided them towards righteousness and ordered them to be moderate. May Allah bless him and his descendants.

الحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَظْهَرَ مِنْ آثَارِ سُلْطَانِهِ، وَجَلَالَ كِبَرِيَّائِهِ، مَا حَيَّرَ مُقَلَّ الْعُقُولِ مِنْ عَجَائِبِ قُدْرَتِهِ، وَرَدَعَ حَطَرَاتِ هَمَاهِمِ النُّفُوسِ عَنْ عِزِّفَانِ كُنْهِ صِفْتِهِ. . وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، شَهَادَةَ إِيمَانٍ وَإِيقَانٍ، وَإِخْلَاصٍ وَإِدْعَانٍ.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، أَرْسَلَهُ وَأَعْلَمَهُ الْهُدَى دَارِسَةً، وَمَنَاهِجُ الدِّينِ طَامِسَةً، فَصَدَعَ بِالْحَقِّ، وَنَصَحَ لِلخَلْقِ، وَهَدَى إِلَى الرُّشْدِ، وَأَمَرَ بِالْقَصْدِ، (ﷺ).

Know, O creatures of Allah, that He has not created you for nought and has not left you free. He knows the extent of His favours over you and the quantity of His bounty towards you. Therefore, ask Him for success and for the attainment of aims. Beg before Him and seek His generosity. No curtain hides you from Him, nor is any door closed before you against Him. He is at every place, in every moment and every instance. He is with every man and jinn. Giving does not create any breach in Him. Gifting does not cause Him diminution. A beggar cannot exhaust Him and paying (to others) cannot take Him to the end.

وَأَعْلَمُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَخْلُقْكُمْ عَبَثًا، وَلَمْ يُرْسِلْكُمْ هَمَلًا، عَلِمَ مَبْلَغَ نِعْمِهِ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَأَخَصَى إِحْسَانَهُ إِلَيْكُمْ، فَاسْتَفْتِحُوهُ وَاسْتَنْجِحُوهُ وَاطْلُبُوا إِلَيْهِ وَاسْتَمْنِحُوهُ، فَمَا قَطَعَكُمْ عَنْهُ حِجَابٌ، وَلَا أُغْلِقَ عَنْكُمْ دُونَهُ بَابٌ، وَإِنَّهُ لِبِكَلٍ مَكَانٍ، وَفِي كُلِّ حِينٍ وَأَوَانٍ، وَمَعَ كُلِّ إِنْسٍ وَجَانٍّ، لَا يَثْلُمُهُ الْعَطَاءُ، وَلَا يَنْفُضُهُ الْحِيَاءُ، وَلَا يَسْتَنْفِذُهُ سَائِلٌ، وَلَا يَسْتَقْصِيهِ نَائِلٌ،

One person cannot turn His attention from another, one voice does not detract Him from another voice, and one grant of favour does not prevent Him from refusing another favour. Anger does not prevent Him from mercy, mercy does not prevent Him from punishing; His concealment does not hide His manifestness and His manifestness does not prevent Him from concealment. He is near and at the same time distant. He is high and at the same time low. He is manifest and also concealed. He is concealed yet well-known. He lends but is not lent anything. He has not created (the things of) creation after devising, nor did He take their assistance on account of fatigue.

وَلَا يَلْوِيهِ شَحْصٌ عَنِ شَحْصٍ، وَلَا يُلْهِمِيهِ صَوْتٌ عَنِ صَوْتٍ، وَلَا تَحْجُزُهُ هَبَّةٌ عَنِ سَلْبٍ،
وَلَا يَشْغَلُهُ غَضَبٌ عَنِ رَحْمَةٍ، وَلَا تُؤْهِمُهُ رَحْمَةٌ عَنِ عِقَابٍ، وَلَا يُجِنُّهُ الْبُطُونُ عَنِ الظُّهُورِ، وَلَا
يَقْطَعُهُ الظُّهُورُ عَنِ الْبُطُونِ، قَرِيبٌ فَنَأَى، وَعَلَا فَدَنَا، وَظَهَرَ فَبَطَنَ، وَبَطَنَ فَعَلَنَ، وَدَانَ وَلمَ
يُذَنَ، لَمْ يَذَرَ الخَلْقَ بِاخْتِيَالٍ، وَلَا اسْتِعَانَ بِحِمِّ لِكَاكِلٍ

I advise you, O creatures of Allah, to have fear of Allah, for it is the rein and the mainstay (of religion). Hold fast to its salient points, keep hold of its realities. It will take you to abodes of easiness, places of comfort, fortresses of safety and houses of honour on the Day (of Judgement) when eyes will be wide open, (Qur'an, 14:42), when there will be darkness all round, when small groups of camels pregnant for ten months will be allowed free grazing, and when the Horn will be blown, then every living being will die, every voice will become dumb the high mountains and hard rocks will crumble (to pieces) so that their hard stones will turn into moving sand and their bases will become level. (On that day) there will be no interceder to intercede and no relation to ward off (trouble), and no excuse will be of avail.

أَوْصِيكُمْ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّهَا الزِّمَامُ وَالْقَوَامُ، فَتَمَسَّكُوا بِوَتَائِقِهَا، وَاعْتَصِمُوا
بِحَقَائِقِهَا، تَوَلُّ بِكُمْ إِلَى أَكْنَانِ الدَّعَةِ، وَأَوْطَانِ السَّعَةِ، وَمَعَاقِلِ الْحِرِّزِ، وَمَنَازِلِ الْعِزِّ فِي (يَوْمِ
تَشْخَصُ فِيهِ الْأَبْصَارُ)، وَتُظَلِّمُ لَهُ الْأَقْطَارُ، وَتُعْطَلُ فِيهِ صُرُومُ الْعِشَارِ، وَيُنْفَخُ فِي الصُّورِ،
فَتَرْهَقُ كُلُّ مُهْجَةٍ، وَتَبْكَكُمْ كُلُّ هَجَةٍ، وَتَذِلُّ الشُّمُّ الشَّوَامِخَ، وَالصُّمُّ الرِّوَاسِخَ، فَيَصِيرُ صِلْدُهَا
سَرَابًا رَقْرَقًا، وَمَعْهَدُهَا قَاعًا سَمَلَقًا، فَلَا شَفِيعَ يَشْفَعُ، وَلَا حَمِيمَ يَنْفَعُ، وَلَا مَعْدِرَةَ تَدْفَعُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 195

(1) *Al-Majlisi, Bihar, vol. 74, 314.*

Sermon 196: Allah deputed the Prophet when no sign of guidance existed...

The condition of the world at the time of the proclamation of prophethood, the transience of this world and the state of its inhabitants.

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

بعثة النبي (ﷺ)

Allah deputed the Prophet when no sign of guidance existed, no beacon was giving light and no passage was clear.

بَعَثَهُ حِينَ لَا عِلْمَ قَائِمٍ، وَلَا مَنَارَ سَاطِعٍ، وَلَا مَنَهْجَ وَاضِحٍ.

العظة بالزهد

I advise you, O creatures of Allah, to have fear of Allah, and I warn you of this world which is a house from which departure is inevitable and a place of discomfort. He who lives in it has to depart, and he who stays here has to leave it. It is drifting with its people like a boat whom severe winds dash (here and there) in the deep sea. Some of them get drowned and die, while some of them escape on the surface of the waves, where winds push them with their currents and carry them towards their dangers. So, whatever is drowned cannot be restored, and whatever escapes is on the way to destruction.

أَوْصِيكُمْ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، وَأَحْذَرِكُمْ الدُّنْيَا، فَإِنَّهَا دَارُ شُحُوصٍ، وَمَحَلَّةٌ تَنْغِيصُ، سَاكِنِيهَا ظَاعِرٌ، وَقَاطِنِيهَا بَائِسٌ، تَمِيدُ بِأَهْلِهَا مَيْدَانَ السَّفِينَةِ تَقْصِفُهَا الْعَوَاصِفُ فِي جُجِ الْبِحَارِ، فَمِنْهُمْ الْغَرِقُ الْوَبْقُ وَمِنْهُمْ النَّاجِي عَلَى مُتُونِ الْأَمْوَاجِ، تَخْفِزُهُ الرِّيَّاحُ بِأَدْيَالِهَا، وَتَحْمِلُهُ عَلَى أَهْوَالِهَا، فَمَا غَرِقَ مِنْهَا فَلَيْسَ بِمُسْتَدْرِكٍ، وَمَا نَجَا مِنْهَا فَلِإِلَى مَهْلِكٍ!

O creatures of Allah, you should know now that you have to perform (good) acts, because (at present) your tongues are free, your bodies are healthy, your limbs have movement, the area of your coming and going is vast and the course of your running is wide; before the loss of opportunity or the approach of death. Take death's approach as an accomplished fact and do not think it will come (hereafter).

عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، الْآنَ فَاعْلَمُوا، وَالْأَلْسُنُ مُطْلَقَةٌ، وَالْأَبْدَانُ صَحِيحَةٌ، وَالْأَعْضَاءُ لَدَنَّةٌ، وَالْمُنْقَلَبُ فَسِيحٌ، وَالْمَجَالُ غَرِيضٌ، قَبْلَ إِزْهَاقِ الْقُوْتِ، وَحُلُولِ الْمَوْتِ، فَحَقِّقُوا عَلَيْكُمْ نُزُولَهُ، وَلَا تَنْتَظِرُوا قُدُومَهُ

Alternative Sources for Sermon 196

(1) Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 87.

Sermon 197: Those companions of Muhammad...

Amir al-mu'minin's attachment to the Holy Prophet. The performance of his funeral rites.

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

ينبّه فيها على فضيلته لقبول قوله وأمره ونهيه

Those companions of Muhammad - the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants - who were the custodians (of divine messages) know that I never disobeyed Allah or His Messenger¹ - the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants - at all, and by virtue of the courage² with which Allah honoured me I supported him with my life on occasions when even the brave turned away and feet remained behind (instead of proceeding forward).

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمَ الْمُسْتَحْفَظُونَ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ مُحَمَّدٍ (صلى الله عليه وآله) أَنِّي لَمْ أَرُدَّ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَلَا عَلَى رَسُولِهِ سَاعَةً قَطُّ، وَلَقَدْ وَاسَيْتُهُ بِنَفْسِي فِي الْمَوَاطِنِ الَّتِي تَنكُصُ فِيهَا الْأَبْطَالُ وَتَتَأَخَّرُ الْأَقْدَامُ، نَجْدَةً أَكْرَمَنِي اللَّهُ بِهَا.

When the Prophet - the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants - died his head was on my chest, and his (last) breath blew over my palms and I passed it over my face. I performed his (funeral) ablution, may Allah bless him and his descendants, and the angels helped me. The house and the courtyard were full of them. One party of them was descending and the other was ascending.

My ears continually caught their humming voice, as they invoked Allah's blessing on him, till we buried him in his grave. Thus, who can have greater rights with him than I during his life or after his death? Therefore depend on your intelligence and make your intentions pure in fighting your enemy, because I swear by Him who is such that there is no god but He, that I am on the path of truth and that they (the enemy) are on the misleading path of wrong. You hear what I say; and I seek Allah's forgiveness for myself and for you.

وَلَقَدْ فُيِضَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) وَإِنَّ رَأْسَهُ لَعَلَى صَدْرِي. وَلَقَدْ سَأَلْتُ نَفْسَهُ فِي كَفِّي، فَأَمَرْتُهَا عَلَى وَجْهِي. وَلَقَدْ وُلِّيتُ غُسْلَهُ (صلى الله عليه وآله) وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ أَعْوَانِي، فَضَجَّتِ الدَّارُ وَالْأَقْبِيَّةُ، مَلَأَ يُهْبِطُ، وَمَلَأَ يَعْرُجُ، وَمَا فَارَقْتُ سَمْعِي هَيْئَةً مِنْهُمْ، يُصَلُّونَ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّى وَارَيْنَاهُ فِي ضَرْبِهِ. فَمَنْ ذَا أَحَقُّ بِهِ مِنِّي حَيًّا وَمَيِّتًا؟ فَانْفُدُوا عَلَيَّ بِصَافِرِكُمْ، وَلْتَصَدَّقْ نِيَّاتِكُمْ فِي جِهَادِ عَدُوِّكُمْ، فَوَالَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ إِنِّي لَعَلَى جَادَةِ الْحَقِّ، وَإِنَّهُمْ لَعَلَى مَرَلَةِ الْبَاطِلِ. أَقُولُ مَا تَسْمَعُونَ، وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 197

(1) Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 243;

(2) *al-Mufid, al-'Amali, see al-Majlisi, Bihar, vol. 17, 105.*

Notes

1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written (in *Sharh Nahjul Balaghah*, vol. 10, pp. 180-183) that Amir al-mu'minin's saying that he never disobeyed the commands of the Prophet is a sort of taunt to those who felt no hesitation in rejecting the Prophet's commands and sometimes even checked him. For example, when, at the time of the peace of al-Hudaybiyah, the Prophet was agreeable to negotiate peace with the unbelievers among the Quraysh, one of the companions became so enraged that he expressed doubts about the prophethood of the Prophet whereupon Abu Bakr had to say: Woe be to you! Keep clinging to him. He is certainly Allah's Messenger and He will not ruin him.

The introduction to the oath, 'inna', and the word of emphasis 'lam' which are used here to create conviction about the prophethood shows that the addressee had gone farther than mere doubt, because these words of emphasis are employed only when the stage of denial has been reached. However, if belief required absence of doubt, the presence of doubt must imply defect in the belief, as Allah says: The believers are only those who believe in Allah and His Messenger, they doubt not thereafter,... (Qur'an, 49:15)

Similarly, when the Prophet intended to say the funeral prayers of Ubayy ibn Salul the same companion said to him, "How do you intend to seek forgiveness for this Chief of hypocrites?" And he even drew away the Prophet by catching the skirt (of his shirt). Then the Prophet had to say, "No act of mine is beside the command of Allah". In the same way the Prophet's command to accompany the force of Usamah ibn Zayd was ignored. The greatest of all these insolences was displayed in connection with the Prophet's intention to write down his advice as to when such a blame was laid against the Prophet which proves an absence of belief in the commands of the shari'ah, and creates a doubt about each command as to whether it is based on divine revelation or (Allah may forbid) just the result of mental disorder.

2. Who can deny that the ever-successful lion of Allah, `Ali ibn Abi Talib (p.b.u.h.) shielded the Prophet on every critical occasion and performed the duty of protecting him by dint of the courage and valour gifted to him by Allah. The first occasion of risking his life was when the unbelievers from the Quraysh decided finally to kill the Prophet and `Ali slept on his bed surrounded by enemies and under the direct peril of swords, whereby the enemies were not able to succeed in their aims. Then, in those battles where the enemies used to attack the Prophet together and where the feet of even the reputed heroes could not stand firm, Amir al-mu'minin remained steadfast with the banner (of Islam) in his hand. `Abd al-Barr and al-Hakim writes about it:

Ibn `Abbas says that `Ali had four qualities which no one else possessed. Firstly, he was the first among Arabs and non-Arabs to have said prayers with the Messenger of Allah. Secondly, he always had the banner of Islam in his hand in every battle. Thirdly, when people ran away from the Prophet, `Ali remained with him; and fourthly it was he who gave the Prophet his funeral ablution and laid him in his grave. (al-Isti`ab, vol. 3, p. 1090; al-Mustadrak `ala as-sahihayn vol. 3, p. 111)

A study of the holy wars of Islam fought in the Prophet's days leaves no doubt that, except for the battle of Tabuk in which Amir al-mu'minin did not partake, all other battles bear testimony to his fine performance and all the successes are due to his valour. Thus, in the battle of Badr seventy unbelievers were killed, half of whom were killed by `Ali's sword. In the battle of Uhud, when victory changed into defeat as a result of the Muslims engaging themselves in the collection of booty, and they fled away under the sudden attack of the enemy, Amir al-mu'minin remained steadfast, taking jihad to be a religious obligation, and displayed such conspicuous performance in support and defence of the Prophet that the Prophet too acknowledged it and also the Angel. Again, in the battle of the Trench (al-Khandaq), the Prophet was accompanied by three thousand combatants, but none dared face `Amr ibn `Abdawadd. At last, Amir al-mu'minin killed him and saved the Muslims from ignominy. In the battle of Hunayn, the Muslims were proud of their number because they were ten thousand while the unbelievers were only four thousand, but here too they leapt onto the booty, as a consequence of which the unbelievers gained the opportunity, and pounced upon them. Bewildered with this sudden attack the Muslims fled away as the Holy Qur'an says:

Most certainly did Allah help you in many (battle) fields, and on the day of Hunayn, when made you vain your great number, but they availed you nothing, and was straitened the earth against you with all its extensiveness, then ye turned back in retreat. (9:25)

On this occasion also, Amir al-mu'minin was steady like a rock, and eventually, with Allah's support, victory was achieved.

Sermon 198: Allah knows the cries of the beasts in the forest...

Allah's attribute of Omniscience

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

ينبّه على إحاطة علم الله بالجزئيات، ثم يبحث على التقوى، ويبين فضل الاسلام والقرآن

Allah knows the cries of the beasts in the forest, the sins of the people in seclusion, the movements of the fishes in the deep seas and the rising of the water by tempestuous winds. I stand witness that Muhammad is the choice of Allah, the conveyor of His revelation and the messenger of His mercy.

يَعْلَمُ عَجِيجَ الْوُحُوشِ فِي الْفَلَوَاتِ، وَمَعَاصِيَ الْعِبَادِ فِي الْخَلَوَاتِ، وَاخْتِلَافَ الْبَيْنَانِ فِي الْبِحَارِ الْعَامِرَاتِ، وَتَلَاطُمِ الْمَاءِ بِالرِّيَّاحِ الْعَاصِفَاتِ. وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا نَجِيبُ اللَّهِ، وَسَفِيرُ وَحْيِهِ، وَرَسُولُ رَحْمَتِهِ.

Advantages of fear of Allah

الوصية بالتقوى

Now then, I advise you to fear Allah, Who created you for the first time; towards Him is your return, with Him lies the success of your aims, at Him terminate (all) your desires, towards Him runs your path of right and He is the aim of your fears (for seeking protection). Certainly, fear of Allah is the medicine for the sickness of your hearts, sight for the blindness of your spirits, the cure for the ailments of your bodies, the rectifier of the evils of your breasts, the purifier of the pollution of your minds, the light of the darkness of your eyes, the consolation for the fear of your heart and the brightness for the gloom of your ignorance.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي أَوْصِيكُمْ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ الَّذِي ابْتَدَأَ خَلْقَكُمْ، وَإِلَيْهِ يَكُونُ مَعَادُكُمْ، وَبِهِ نَجَاحُ طَلِبَتِكُمْ، وَإِلَيْهِ مُنْتَهَى رَغْبَتِكُمْ، وَنَحْوَهُ قَصْدُ سَبِيلِكُمْ، وَإِلَيْهِ مَرَامِي مَفْرَعَتِكُمْ، فَإِنَّ تَقْوَى اللَّهِ دَوَاءُ دَاءِ قُلُوبِكُمْ، وَبَصْرُ عَمَى أَفِنَدَتِكُمْ، وَشِفَاءُ مَرَضِ أَجْسَادِكُمْ، وَصَلَاحُ فَسَادِ صُدُورِكُمْ، وَطُهُورُ دَنَسِ أَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَجَلَاءُ عَشَا أَبْصَارِكُمْ، وَأَمْنٌ فَرَعِ جَأَشِكُمْ، وَضِيَاءُ سَوَادِ ظَلَمَتِكُمْ.

Therefore, make obedience to Allah the way of your life and not only your outside covering, make it your inner habit instead of only outer routine, subtle enough to enter through your ribs (up to the heart), the guide for all your affairs, the watering place for your getting down (on the Day of Judgement), the interceder for the achievement of your aims, asylum for the day of your fear, the lamp of the interior of your graves, company for your long loneliness, and deliverance from the troubles of your abodes. Certainly, obedience to Allah is a protection against encircling calamities. expected dangers and the flames of burning fires.

فَاجْعَلُوا طَاعَةَ اللَّهِ شِعَاراً دُونَ دِثَارِكُمْ، وَدَخِيلاً دُونَ شِعَارِكُمْ، وَلَطِيفاً بَيْنَ أَضْلَاعِكُمْ، وَأَمِيراً
فَوْقَ أُمُورِكُمْ، وَمَنْهَلاً لِحِينِ وَرُدِّكُمْ، وَشَفِيعاً لِدَرْكِ طَلَبِيكُمْ، وَجَنَّةً لِيَوْمِ فَرَعِكُمْ، وَمَصَابِيحَ
لِيُطَوِّنَ قُبُورِكُمْ، وَسَكناً لِيُطَوِّلَ وَحْشَتِكُمْ، وَنَفْساً لِيَكْرِبَ مَوَاطِنِكُمْ، فَإِنَّ طَاعَةَ اللَّهِ حِرْزٌ مِنْ
مَتَالِفِ مُكْتَنِفَةٍ، وَمَخَافٍ مُتَوَفِّعَةٍ، وَأَوَارٍ نِيرَانِ مُوَفِّدَةٍ.

Therefore, whoever entertains fear of Allah, troubles remain away from him after having been near, affairs become sweet after their bitterness, waves (of troubles) recede from him after having crowded over him, difficulties become easy for him after occurring, generosity rains fast over him after there had been famine, mercy bends over him after it had been loath, the favours (of Allah) spring forth on him after they had been dried, and blessing descends over him in showers after being scanty. So, fear Allah Who benefits you with His good advice, preaches to you through His Messenger, and obliges you with His favours. Devote yourselves to His worship, and acquit yourselves of the obligation of obeying Him.

فَمَنْ أَخَذَ بِالتَّقْوَى عَزَبَتْ عَنْهُ الشَّدَائِدُ بَعْدَ دُئُوبِهَا، وَاحْلَوْلَتْ لَهُ الْأُمُورُ بَعْدَ مَرَارِهَا،
وَأَنْفَرَجَتْ عَنْهُ الْأُمُوجُ بَعْدَ تَرَاقُمِهَا، وَأَسْهَلَتْ لَهُ الصِّعَابُ بَعْدَ إِنْصَابِهَا، وَهَطَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ
الْكَرَامَةُ بَعْدَ فُحُوطِهَا، وَتَحَدَّبَتْ عَلَيْهِ الرَّحْمَةُ بَعْدَ نُفُورِهَا، وَتَفَجَّرَتْ عَلَيْهِ النِّعَمُ بَعْدَ نُصُوبِهَا،
وَوَبَّلَتْ عَلَيْهِ الْبِرْكَةُ بَعْدَ إِزْدَادِهَا. فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي نَفَعَكُمْ بِمَوْعِظَتِهِ، وَوَعَّظَكُمْ بِرِ سَأَلَتِهِ، وَأَمَّنَّ
عَلَيْكُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ، فَعَبِّدُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ لِعِبَادَتِهِ، وَاحْرُجُوا إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَقِّ طَاعَتِهِ.

About Islam

فضل الاسلام

This Islam is the religion which Allah has chosen for Himself, developed it before His eyes, preferred it as the best among His creations, established its pillars on His love. He has disgraced other religions by giving honour to it. He has humiliated all communities before its sublimity; He has humbled its enemies with His kindness and made its opponents lonely by according it His support. He has smashed the pillars of misguidance with its columns. He has quenched the thirst of the thirsty from its cisterns, and filled the cisterns through those who draw its water.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ هَذَا الْأِسْلَامَ دِينَ اللَّهِ الَّذِي اصْطَفَاهُ لِنَفْسِهِ، وَاصْطَنَعَهُ عَلَى عَيْنَيْهِ، وَأَصْفَاهُ خَيْرَةً
خَلَقَهَا، وَأَقَامَ دَعَائِمَهُ عَلَى مَحَبَّتِهِ، أَدَلَّ الْأَذْيَانَ بِعِزِّهِ، وَوَضَعَ الْمِلَلَ بِرَفْعِهِ، وَأَهَانَ أَعْدَاءَهُ
بِكِرَامَتِهِ، وَحَدَلَ مُحَادِيهِ بِنَصْرِهِ، وَهَدَمَ أَرْكَانَ الضَّلَالَةِ بِرُكْنِهِ، وَسَقَى مَنْ عَطَشَ مِنْ حَيَاضِهِ،
وَأَتَّقَ الْحَيَاضَ بِمَوَاتِحِهِ.

He made Islam such that its constituent parts cannot break, its links cannot separate, its construction cannot fall, its columns cannot decay, its plant cannot be uprooted, its time does not end, its laws do not expire, its twigs cannot be cut, its parts do not become narrow, its ease does not

change into difficulty, its clarity is not affected by gloom, its straightness does not acquire curvature, its wood has no crookedness, its vast paths have no narrowness, its lamp knows no putting off and its sweetness has no bitterness.

ثُمَّ جَعَلَهُ لَا انْفِصَامَ لِعُرْوَتِهِ، وَلَا فَكَّ لِحِلْقَتِهِ، وَلَا اهْتِدَامَ لِاسَاسِهِ، وَلَا زَوَالَ لِدَعَائِمِهِ، وَلَا انْقِلَاعَ لِشَجَرَتِهِ، وَلَا انْقِطَاعَ لِمُدَّتِّهِ، وَلَا عَفَاءَ لِشَرَائِعِهِ، وَلَا جَدًّا لِقُرُوعِهِ، وَلَا ضَنْكَ لَطُرُقِهِ، وَلَا وُغُوئَةً لِسُهُولَتِهِ، وَلَا سَوَادًا لِيُوضِحِهِ، وَلَا عِوَجًا لِانْتِصَابِهِ، وَلَا عَصَلَ فِي عُودِهِ، وَلَا وَعْتَ لِفَجِّهِ، وَلَا انْطِفَاءً لِمَصَابِيحِهِ، وَلَا مَرَارَةً لِحِلَاوَتِهِ.

It consists of columns whose bases Allah has fixed in truthfulness and whose foundation He has strengthened, and of sources whose streams are ever full of water and of lamps, whose flames are full of light, and of beacons with whose help travellers get guidance, and of signs through which a way is found to its highways and of watering places which provide water to those who come to them. Allah has placed in Islam the height of His pleasure, the pinnacle of His pillars and the prominence of His obedience. Before Allah, therefore, its columns are strong, its construction is lofty, its proofs are bright, its fires are aflame, its authority is strong, its beacons are high and its destruction is difficult. You should therefore honour it, follow it, fulfil its obligations and accord the position due to it.

فَهُوَ دَعَائِمٌ أَسَاحَ فِي الْحَقِّ أَسْنَاخَهَا، وَثَبَّتَ لَهَا آسَاسَهَا، وَيَنَابِيعٌ عَزَّرَتْ عُيُونُهَا، وَمَصَابِيحٌ شَبَّتْ نِيرَانُهَا، وَمَنَارٌ افْتَدَى بِهَا سَفَارَتَهَا، وَأَعْلَامٌ قُصِدَ بِهَا فِجَاجُهَا، وَمَنَاهِلٌ رَوَى بِهَا وُرَادَهَا. اللَّهُ فِيهِ مُنْتَهَى رِضْوَانِهِ، وَذُرْوَةٌ دَعَائِمِهِ، وَسَنَامٌ طَاعَتِهِ، فَهُوَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَثِيْقُ الْأَرْكَانِ، رَفِيعُ الْبُنْيَانِ، مُنِيرُ الْبُرْهَانِ، مُضِيءُ التَّيْرَانِ، عَزِيْزُ السُّلْطَانِ، مُشْرِفُ الْمَنَارِ، مُعْوِذُ الْمَنَارِ. فَشَرَّفُوهُ وَاتَّبِعُوهُ، وَأَدُّوا إِلَيْهِ حَقَّهُ، وَضَعُوهُ مَوَاضِعَهُ.

About the Holy Prophet

الرسول الاعظم (صلى الله عليه وآله)

Then, Allah, the Glorified, deputed Muhammad - the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants - with truth at a time when the destruction of the world was near and the next life was at hand, when its brightness was turning into gloom after shining, it had become troublesome for its inhabitants, its surface had become rough, and its decay had approached near. This was during the exhaustion of its life at the approach of signs (of its decay), the ruin of its inhabitants, the breaking of its links, the dispersal of its affairs, the decay of its signs, the divulging of its secret matters and the shortening of its length. Allah made him responsible for conveying His message and (a means of) honour for his people, a period of bloom for the men of his days, a source of dignity for the supporters and an honour for his helpers.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ بَعَثَ مُحَمَّدًا (صلى الله عليه وآله) بِالْحَقِّ حِينَ دَنَا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا الْإِنْقِطَاعُ، وَأَقْبَلَ مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ الْأَطْلَافُ، وَأَظْلَمَتْ بَهْجَتُهَا بَعْدَ إِشْرَاقِ، وَقَامَتْ بِأَهْلِهَا عَلَى سَاقٍ، وَحَشَّنَ مِنْهَا مَهَادًا، وَأَزَفَ مِنْهَا قِيَادًا، فِي انْقِطَاعِ مِنْ مُدَّتِهَا، وَأَقْتَرَابِ مِنْ أَشْرَاطِهَا، وَتَصَرُّمِ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا، وَأَنْفِصَامِ مِنْ حَلْفَتِهَا، وَأَنْتِشَارِ مِنْ سَبَبِهَا، وَعَقَاءِ مِنْ أَعْلَامِهَا، وَتَكْشُفِ مِنْ عَوْرَاتِهَا، وَقَصْرِ مِنْ طَوْلِهَا. جَلَعَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى بِلَاغًا لِرِسَالَتِهِ، وَكَرَامَةً لِأُمَّتِهِ، وَرَبِيعًا لِأَهْلِ زَمَانِهِ، وَرِفْعَةً لِأَعْوَانِهِ، وَشَرَفًا لِأَنْصَارِهِ.

About the Holy Qur'an

القرآن الكريم

Then, Allah sent to him the Book as a light whose flames cannot be extinguished, a lamp whose gleam does not die, a sea whose depth cannot be sounded, a way whose direction does not mislead, a ray whose light does not darken, a separator (of good from evil) whose arguments do not weaken, a clarifier whose foundations cannot be dismantled, a cure which leaves no apprehension for disease, an honour whose supporters are not defeated, and a truth whose helpers are not abandoned.

Therefore, it is the mine of belief and its centre, the source of knowledge and its oceans, the plantation of justice and its pools, the foundation stone of Islam and its construction, the valleys of truth and its plains, an ocean which those who draw water cannot empty, springs which those who draw water cannot dry up, a watering place which those who come to take water cannot exhaust, a staging place in moving towards which travellers do not get lost, signs which no wayfarer fails to see and a highland which those who approach it cannot surpass it.

ثُمَّ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْهِ الْكِتَابَ نُورًا لَا تُطْفَأُ مَصَابِيحُهُ، وَسِرَاجًا لَا يَحْتَمُو تَوَقُّدُهُ، وَبَحْرًا لَا يَدْرُكُ قَعْرُهُ، وَمِنْهَا جَا لَا يَضِلُّ نَهْجُهُ، وَشِعَاعًا لَا يُظْلِمُ ضَوْوُهُ، وَفُرْقَانًا لَا يُخَمِّدُ بُرْهَانُهُ، وَبَيِّنَاتًا لَا تُهْدَمُ أَرْكَانُهُ، وَشِفَاءً لَا تُحْشَى أَسْفَاؤُهُ، وَعِزًّا لَا تُهْزَمُ أَنْصَارُهُ، وَحَقًّا لَا تُخَدَّلُ أَعْوَانُهُ. فَهُوَ مَعْدِنُ الْإِيمَانِ وَمُجْبُوْحَتُهُ، وَتِنَابِيْعُ الْعِلْمِ وَمُجْوَرُهُ، وَرِيَاضُ الْعَدْلِ وَعُدْرَانُهُ، وَأَتَائِبُ الْأِسْلَامِ وَبُنْيَانُهُ، وَأَوْدِيَّةُ الْحَقِّ وَغِيْطَانُهُ. وَبَحْرٌ لَا يَنْزِفُهُ الْمُسْتَنْزِفُونَ، وَعَيْوُنٌ لَا يُضْبِئُهَا الْمَاتِحُونَ، وَمَنَْاهِلٌ لَا يَغِيْضُهَا الْوَارِدُونَ، وَمَنَْازِلٌ لَا يَضِلُّ نَهْجُهَا الْمَسَاْفِرُونَ، وَأَعْلَامٌ لَا يَعْمَى عَنْهَا السَّائِرُونَ، وَآكَامٌ لَا يَجْوُزُ عَنْهَا الْقَاصِدُونَ.

Allah has made it a quencher of the thirst of the learned, a bloom for the hearts of religious jurists, a highway for the ways of the righteous, a cure after which there is no ailment, an effulgence with which there is no darkness, a rope whose grip is strong, a stronghold whose top is invulnerable, an honour for him who loves it, a peace for him who enters it, a guidance for him who follows it, an excuse for him who adopts it, an argument for him who argues with it, a witness for him who quarrels with it,

a success for him who argues with it, a carrier of burden for him who seeks the way, a shield for him who arms himself (against misguidance), a knowledge for him who listens carefully, worthy story for him who relates it and a final verdict of him who passes judgements.

جَعَلَهُ اللهُ رِيّاً لِعَطَشِ الْعُلَمَاءِ، وَرَبِيعاً لِقُلُوبِ الْمُفْهَمَاءِ، وَحَاجّاً لَطُرُقِ الصُّلَحَاءِ، وَدَوَاءً لَيْسَ بَعْدَهُ دَاءٌ، وَنُوراً لَيْسَ مَعَهُ ظُلْمَةٌ، وَحَبِلاً وَثِيقاً غُرُوثُهُ، وَمَعْقِلاً مَنِيْعاً ذُرُوثُهُ، وَعِزّاً لِمَنْ تَوَلَّاهُ، وَسِلْماً لِمَنْ دَخَلَهُ، وَهُدًى لِمَنْ اِتْتَمَّ بِهِ، وَغُدْرًا لِمَنْ اِنْتَحَلَهُ، وَبُرْهَانًا لِمَنْ تَكَلَّمَ بِهِ، وَشَاهِداً لِمَنْ حَاصَمَ بِهِ، وَفُلْجاً لِمَنْ حَاجَّ بِهِ، وَحَامِلاً لِمَنْ حَمَلَهُ، وَمَطِيَّةً لِمَنْ أَعْمَلَهُ، وَأَيَّةً لِمَنْ تَوَسَّسَ، وَجَنَّةً لِمَنْ اسْتَلَامَ، وَعِلْماً لِمَنْ وَعَى، وَحَدِيثاً لِمَنْ رَوَى، وَحُكْماً لِمَنْ قَضَى.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 198

- (1) *Al-Harrani, Tuhaf*, 126;
- (2) *al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi*, II, 49;
- (3) *al-Qali, al-'Amali*, 171;
- (4) *Abu Talib al-Makki, Qut*, I, 382;
- (5) *Abu Nu`aym, Hilyah*, I, 74, 75;
- (6) *al-Saduq, al-Khisal*, I, 108.

Sermon 199: Pledge yourself with prayer and remain steady on it...

Containing advice given by Amir al-mu'minin to his companions

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

كان يوصي به أصحابه

About Prayer

Pledge yourself with prayer and remain steady on it; offer prayer as much as possible and seek nearness (of Allah) through it, because it is, (imposed) upon the believers as (a) timed ordinance (Qur'an 4:103). Have you not heard the reply of the people of Hell when they were asked:

What hath brought you into the hell? They shall say: We were not of those who offered the regular prayers (to Allah)! (Qur'an, 74:42-43).

Certainly, prayer drops out sins like the dropping of leaves (of trees), and removes them as ropes are removed from the necks of cattle. The Messenger of Allah - the peace and blessing of Allah he upon him and his descendants - likened it to a hot bath situated at the door of a person who bathes in it five times a day. Will then any dirt remain on him?

تَعَاهَدُوا أَمْرَ الصَّلَاةِ، وَحَافِظُوا عَلَيْهَا، وَاسْتَكْبِرُوا مِنْهَا، وَتَقَرَّبُوا بِهَا، فَإِنَّهَا (كَانَتْ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَوْفُوتًا). أَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ إِلَى جَوَابِ أَهْلِ النَّارِ حِينَ سُئِلُوا: (مَا سَلَكَكُمْ فِي سَقَرٍ * قَالُوا لَمْ نَكُ مِنَ الْمُصَلِّينَ). وَإِنَّهَا لَتُحِثُّ الذُّنُوبَ حَتَّى الْوَرَقِ، وَتُطْلِقُهَا إِطْلَاقَ الرِّيقِ، وَشَبَّهَهَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) بِالْحَمَّةِ تَكُونُ عَلَى بَابِ الرَّجُلِ، فَهُوَ يَغْتَسِلُ مِنْهَا فِي الْيَوْمِ وَاللَّيْلَةِ حَمْسَ مَرَّاتٍ، فَمَا عَسَى أَنْ يَبْقَى عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الدَّرَنِ؟

Its obligation is recognised by those believers whom neither the adornment of property nor the coolness of the eyes produced by children can turn away from it. Allah, the Glorified, says:

Men whom neither merchandise nor any sale diverteth from the remembrance of Allah and constancy in prayer and paying the poor-rate; ... (Qur'an. 24:37)

Even after receiving assurance of Paradise, the Messenger of Allah - peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants - used to exert himself for prayers because of Allah, the Glorified's command.

And enjoin prayer on thy followers, and adhere thou steadily unto it, ... (Qur'an, 20:132).

Then the Holy Prophet used to enjoin his followers to prayer and exert himself for it.

وَقَدْ عَرَفَ حَقَّهَا رِجَالٌ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ لَا تَشَعْلُهُمْ عَنْهَا زِينَةُ مَتَاعٍ، وَلَا قُرَّةُ عَيْنٍ مِنْ وَدَدٍ وَلَا مَالٍ، يَقُولُ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ: (رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِيهِمْ بَيْعَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ

وَإِنِّيَأءِ الرِّكَآةِ) وَكَآَن رَسُوْلُ اللّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) نَصِبَاً بِالصَّلَاةِ بَعْدَ التَّبَشِيرِ لَهُ بِالْجَنَّةِ، لِقَوْلِ اللّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ: (وَأْمُرْ أَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَيْهَا)، فَكَآَن يَأْمُرُ بِهَا أَهْلَهُ وَيَصْبِرُ عَلَيْهَا نَفْسَهُ .

About the Islamic Tax (zakat)

الزكاة

Then, Islamic tax has been laid down along with prayer as a sacrifice (to be offered) by the people of Islam. Whoever pays it by way of purifying his spirit, it serves as a purifier for him and a protection and shield against fire (of Hell). No one therefore (who pays it) should feel attached to it afterwards, nor should feel grieved over it. Whoever pays it without the intention of purifying his heart expects through it more than its due. He is certainly ignorant of the sunnah, he is allowed no reward for it, his action goes to waste and his repentance is excessive.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ الرِّكَآةَ جُعِلَتْ مَعَ الصَّلَاةِ قُرْبَانًا لِأَهْلِ الْإِسْلَامِ، فَمَنْ أَعْطَاهَا طَيَّبَ النَّفْسَ بِهَا، فَإِنَّهَا تُجْعَلُ لَهُ كَفَّارَةً، وَمِنَ النَّارِ حِجَازًا وَوَقَايَةً، فَلَا يُتَبِعْنَهَا أَحَدٌ نَفْسَهُ، وَلَا يُكْتَبَرَنَّ عَلَيْهَا هَقْفُهُ، فَإِنَّ مَنْ أَعْطَاهَا غَيْرَ طَيَّبِ النَّفْسِ بِهَا، يَرْجُو بِهَا مَا هُوَ أَفْضَلُ مِنْهَا، فَهُوَ جَاهِلٌ بِالسُّنَّةِ، مَعْبُوءٌ الْأَجْرِ، ضَالٌّ الْعَمَلِ، طَوِيلُ النَّدَمِ.

Fulfilment of Trust

الامانة

Then, as regards fulfilment of trust, whoever does not pay attention to it will be disappointed. It was placed before the strong skies, vast earths and high mountains but none of them was found to be stronger. vaster, or higher than it. If anything could be unapproachable because of height, vastness, power or strength they would have been unapproachable, but they felt afraid of the evil consequences (of failure in fulfilling a trust) and noticed what a weaker being did not realise it, and this was man.

. . . *Verily he was (proved) unjust, ignorant. (Qur'an, 33:72)*

ثُمَّ آدَاءَ الْإِمَانَةِ، فَقَدْ حَابَ مَنْ لَيْسَ مِنْ أَهْلِهَا، إِنَّهَا عُرِضَتْ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ الْمَبْنِيَّةِ، وَالْأَرْضِينَ الْمَدْحُورَةِ، وَالْجِبَالِ ذَاتِ الطُّوْلِ الْمَنْصُوبَةِ، فَلَا أَطْوَلَ وَلَا أَعْرَضَ، وَلَا أَعْلَى وَلَا أَعْظَمَ مِنْهَا، وَلَوْ ائْتَنَعَ شَيْءٌ بِطُولِ أَوْ عَرْضِ أَوْ قُوَّةِ أَوْ عِزِّ لَأَمْتَنَعَنَّ، وَلَكِنْ أَشْفَقَنَّ مِنَ الْعُقُوبَةِ، وَعَقَلَنَّ مَا جَهِلَ مَنْ هُوَ أضعفُ مِنْهُنَّ، وَهُوَ الْإِنْسَانُ، (إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا)

علم الله تعالى

Surely, Allah, the Glorified, the Sublime, nothing is hidden from Him of whatever people do in their nights or days. He knows all the details, and His knowledge covers them. Your limbs are a witness, the organs of your body constitute an army (against yourself), your inner self serves Him as eyes (to watch your sins), and your loneliness is open to Him.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ لَا يَخْفَى عَلَيْهِ مَا الْعِبَادُ مُقْتَرِفُونَ فِي لَيْلِهِمْ وَنَهَارِهِمْ، لَطْفَ بِهِ خُبْرًا، وَأَحَاطَ
بِهِ عِلْمًا، أَعْضَاؤُكُمْ شُهُودُهُ، وَجَوَارِحُكُمْ جُنُودُهُ، وَضَمَائِرُكُمْ عُيُونُهُ، وَخَلَوَاتُكُمْ عِيَانُهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 199

(1) *Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, V, kitab al-jihad, 36.*

Sermon 200: By Allah, Mu`awiyah is not more cunning than I am...

Treason and treachery of Mu`awiyah and the fate of those guilty of treason

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في معاوية

By Allah, ¹ Mu`awiyah is not more cunning than I am, but he deceives and commits evil deeds. Had it not been for the reprehensibility of deceit, I would have been the most cunning of all men. But (the fact is that) every deceit is a sin and every sin is disobedience (of Allah), and every deceitful person will have a banner by which he will be recognised on the Day of Judgement. By Allah, I cannot be made forgetful by strategy, nor can I be overpowered by hardships.

وَاللَّهِ مَا مُعَاوِيَةُ بِأَذْهَى مِنِّي، وَلَكِنَّهُ يَغْدِرُ وَيَنْفَجِرُ، وَلَوْلَا كَرَاهِيَةُ الْعَدْرِ لَكُنْتُ مِنْ أَذْهَى النَّاسِ، وَلَكِنْ كُلُّ عَدْرَةٍ فَجْرَةٌ، وَكُلُّ فَجْرَةٍ كَفْرَةٌ، وَلِكُلِّ عَادِرٍ لَوَاءٌ يُعْرَفُ بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ. وَاللَّهِ مَا أَسْتَعْفَلُ بِالْمَكِيدَةِ، وَلَا أُسْتَعْمَرُ بِالشَّدِيدَةِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 200

(1) *Al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, II, 336, 338.*

Notes

1. People who are ignorant of religion and ethics free from the shackles of religious law and unaware of the conception of punishment and reward find no paucity of excuses and means for the achievement of their objects. They can find ways of success at every stage; but when the dictates of humanity, or Islam, or the limitations imposed by ethics and religious law act as impediments, the chances of devising and finding means become narrow, and the possibility of action becomes restricted. Mu`awiyah's influence and control was the result of these devices and ways in following which he knew no impediment nor any obstacle of what is lawful or unlawful, nor did fear of the Day of Judgement prevent him from acting fearlessly. As al-`Allamah ar-Raghib al-Isfahani while taking account of his characters writes:

"His aim always was to achieve his object whether lawful or unlawful. He did not care for religion nor did he ever think of divine chastisement. Thus, in order to maintain his power he resorted to mis-statements and concoctions, practised all sorts of deceits and contrivances. When he saw that success was not possible without entangling Amir al-mu'minin in war he roused Talhah and az-Zubayr against him. When success could not be achieved by this means he instigated the Syrians and brought about the civil war of Siffin. And when his rebellious position had become known by the killing of `Ammar, he at once duped the people by saying that `Ali was responsible for killing him as he had brought him into the battlefield; and on another occasion he interpreted the words 'rebellious party' occurring in the saying of the Prophet to mean 'avenging party' intending to prove that `Ammar would be killed by the group that would seek revenge of `Uthman's blood, although the next portion of this saying namely 'he will call them towards Paradise while they will call him to Hell,' does not leave any scope for interpretation. When there was no hope of victory even by these cunning means, he contrived to raise the Qur'an on spears, although in his view neither the Qur'an nor its commandments carried any weight. If he had really aimed at a decision by the Qur'an, he should have put this demand before the

commencement of the battle, and when it became known to him that the decision had been secured by `Amr ibn al-`As by deceiving Abu Musa al-Ash`ari, and that it did not have even a remote connection with the Qur'an, he should not have accepted it and should have punished `Amr ibn al-`As for this cunning, or at least should have warned and rebuked him. But on the contrary, his performance was much appreciated and in reward he was made the Governor of Egypt."

In contrast to this Amir al-mu'minin's conduct was a high specimen of religious law and ethics. He kept in view the requirements of truth and righteousness even in adverse circumstances and did not allow his chaste life to be tarnished by the views of deceit and contrivance. If he wished he could face cunning by cunning, and Mu`awiyah's shameful activities could have been answered by similar activities. For example, when he put a guard on the Euphrates and stopped the supply of its water (to Amir al-mu'minin's men), then the supply of water could have been cut from them also on the grounds that since they had occupied the Euphrates it was lawful to retaliate, and in this way they could be overpowered by weakening their fighting power. But Amir al-mu'minin could never tarnish his hands with such an inhuman act which was not permitted by any law or code of ethics, although common people regard such acts against the enemy as lawful and call this duplicity of character for achievement of success, a stroke of policy and administrative ability. But Amir al-mu'minin could never think of strengthening his power by fraud or duplicity of behaviour on any occasion. Thus when people advised him to retain the officers of the days of `Uthman in their position and to befriend Talhah and az-Zubayr by assigning them governorship of Kufah and Basrah, and make use of Mu`awiyah's ability in administration by giving him the government of Syria, Amir al-mu'minin rejected the advice and preferred the commandments of religious law over worldly expediency, and openly declared about Mu`awiyah as follows:

If I allow Mu`awiyah to retain what he already has I would be one "who taketh those who lead (people) astray, as helpers" (Qur'an, 18:51). Those who look at apparent successes do not care to find out by what means the success has been achieved. They support anyone whom they see succeeding by means of cunning ways and deceitful means and begin to regard him an administrator, intelligent, a politician, intellectually brilliant and so on, while he who does not deploy cunning and fraudulent methods owing to his adherence to Islamic commandments and divine instructions and prefers failure to success secured through wrong methods is regarded as ignorant of politics and weak in foresight. They do not feel it necessary to think what difficulties and impediments exist in the way of a person who adheres to principles and laws which prevent him from proceeding forward even after approaching near success."

Sermon 201: O people! Do not be desolate at the small number...

One should not be afraid of the scarcity of those who tread on the right path (a counsel to tread the clear path of guidance)

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

يعظ بسلوك الطريق الواضح

O people! Do not be desolate at the small number of those who follow the right path, because people throng only round the table (of this world) where the duration of satiety is short and its hunger is prolonged.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، لَا تَسْتَوْحِشُوا فِي طَرِيقِ الْهُدَى لِقَلَّةِ أَهْلِهِ، فَإِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَيَّ مَائِدَةً شَبَعُهَا قَصِيرٌ، وَجُوعُهَا طَوِيلٌ.

O people, certainly, what gathers people together (in categories) is (their) agreement (to good or bad) and (their) disagreement, for only one individual killed the camel of Thamud ¹ but Allah held all of them in punishment because all of them consented to it. Thus, Allah, the Glorified, has said:

Then they hamstrung her, and turned (themselves) regretful. (Qur'an, 26:157).

Then their land declined by sinking (into the earth) as the spike of a plough pierces unploughed weak land. O people, he who treads the clear path (of guidance) reaches the spring of water, and whoever abandons it strays into waterless desert.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّمَا يَجْمَعُ النَّاسَ الرِّضَى وَالسُّخْطُ، وَإِنَّمَا عَقَرَ نَاقَةَ ثَمُودَ رَجُلٌ وَاحِدٌ فَعَمَّهُمْ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى بِالْعَذَابِ لَمَّا عَمَّوهُ بِالرِّضَى، فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ: (فَعَقَرُوهَا فَأَصْبَحُوا نَادِمِينَ)، فَمَا كَانَ إِلَّا أَنْ حَارَتْ أَرْضُهُمْ بِالْحَسْفَةِ حُورًا لِبَيْكَةِ الْمُحَمَّاتِ فِي الْأَرْضِ الْحَوَّارَةِ. أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، مَنْ سَلَكَ الطَّرِيقَ الْوَاضِحَ وَرَدَّ الْمَاءَ، وَمَنْ خَالَفَ وَقَعَ فِي النَّيْبِ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 201

- (1) Al-Barqi, al-Mahasin, 208;
- (2) al-Nu'mani, al-Ghaybah, 9;
- (3) al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 300;
- (4) al-Tabari, al-Mustarshid, 76;
- (5) al-Bahrani, al-Burhan, IV, 260;
- (6) al-Majlisi, Bihar, II, 266.

Notes

1. Thamud, in ancient Arabia, a tribe or group of tribes, seems to have been prominent from about the 4th Century B.C. to the first half of the 7th Century A.D. Their place of stay and homeland was at a place lying on the way between the Hijaz and Syria called the Valley of al-Qura and bore this name because it consisted of several townships. Allah deputed for their guidance and directions the Prophet Salih who preached to them as Allah relates in his story:

And unto (the people of) Thamud (We did send) their brother Salih, he said: "O' my people! Worship ye Allah (alone). Ye have no god other than Him; indeed came unto you a clear proof from your Lord; this is the She-camel of Allah (which) unto you is a sign, so leave it (free) to pasture in Allah's earth and touch her not with any harm, or ye shall be seized with a painful chastisement. And remember when He made you successors after the (people) `Ad and settled you in the earth, ye build mansions on its plain and hew the mountains into dwellings. So remember ye the bounties of Allah, and see ye not evil in the earth, making mischief." Said the chiefs of those who were puffed up with pride among his people to those who were reckoned weak, to those who believed from among them; "Know ye that Salih is sent by his Lord?" Said they: "Verily, in what he hath been sent with, we are believers." Said those who were puffed up with pride; "Verily we, in that which ye believe are disbelievers." They hamstrung the She-camel and rebelled against the command of their Lord, and they said: "O' Salih! bring us what thou didst, threaten us with, if thou art of the apostles." Then seized them (unawares) the earthquake, so became they in their dwellings, motionless (dead). Then he turned away from them and said: "O' my people! Indeed I did deliver unto you the message of my Lord, and did admonish you, but ye love not the admonishers." (Qur'an, 7:73-79).

(The people of) Thamud belied the warners, and said they: "What! a single man, from among us! and we to follow him? Verily then we shall be astray and in distress. It is that (the duty of) reminding hath been bestowed on him (alone), of all the (people) among us? Nay! he is a great liar, an insolent one!" "Soon they shall know on the morrow, (as to) who is the liar, the insolent one! (O' Our Apostle Salih!) verily We are going to send the She-camel as a trial for them; so watch them and be patient. And (thou O' Salih!) make them aware (beforehand) that the water is (to be) divided between them; and every drinking share shall be witnessed (on it)." But they called their companions, then he pursued (her) and hamstrung (her). How (great) was My chastisement and My warning? Verily sent We upon them a single (violent) blast, and they were (all) like the dry stubble used by a fencer in a fence. (Qur'an, 54:23-31).

Sermon 202: O Prophet of Allah, peace be upon you...

What Amir al-mu'minin said on the occasion of the burial of Sayyidatu'n-nisa' (Supreme lady) Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) while addressing the Holy Prophet at his grave.

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

روي عنه أنه قاله عند دفن سيده النساء فاطمة صلى الله عليها، كالمناجي به رسول الله

(صلى الله عليه وآله) عند قبره

O Prophet of Allah, peace be upon you from me and from your daughter who has come to you and who has hastened to meet you. O Prophet of Allah, my patience about your chosen (daughter) has been exhausted, and my power of endurance has weakened, except that I have ground for consolation in having endured the great hardship and heart-rending event of your separation. I laid you down in your grave when your last breath had passed (when your head was) between my neck and chest.

... *Verily we are Allah's and verily unto Him shall we return. (Qur'an 2:156)*

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ عَنِّي، وَعَنِ ابْنَتِكَ النَّازِلَةِ فِي جِوَارِكَ، وَالسَّرِيعَةِ اللَّحَاقِ بِكَ! قَلَّ
يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، عَن صَفِيَّتِكَ صَبْرِي، وَرَقَّ عَنِّي بِجُلْدِي، إِلَّا أَنَّ لِي فِي النَّأْسِي بَعْضُ فُرْقَتِكَ،
وَفَادِحِ مُصِيبَتِكَ، مَوْضِعَ تَعَزٍّ، فَلَقَدْ وَسَدُّتُكَ فِي مَلْحُودَةِ قَبْرِكَ، وَفَاضَتْ بَيْنَ نَحْرِي وَصَدْرِي
نَفْسُكَ. (إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ).

Now. the trust has been returned and what had been given has been taken back. As to my grief, it knows no bounds, and as to my nights. They will remain sleepless till Allah chooses for me the house in which you are now residing.

فَلَقَدْ اسْتَرْجَعَتِ الْوَدِيعَةُ، وَأُخِذَتِ الرَّهْيِينَةُ! أَمَّا حُزْنِي فَسَرْمَدٌ، وَأَمَّا لَيْلِي فَمُسَهَّدٌ، إِلَى أَنْ
يَخْتَارَ اللَّهُ لِي دَارَكَ الَّتِي أَنْتَ بِهَا مُقِيمٌ.

Certainly, your daughter would apprise you of the joining together of your ¹ ummah (people) for oppressing her. You ask her in detail and get all the news about the position. This has happened when a long time had not elapsed and your remembrance had not disappeared. My salam (salutation) be on you both, the salutation of one bidding farewell, neither in aversion nor in dislike, for if I go away it is not because I am weary (of you), and if I stay it is not due to lack of belief in what Allah has promised the endurers.

وَسَتْنَبِّئُكَ ابْنَتُكَ بِتَضَاوُرِ أُمَّتِكَ عَلَى هَضْمِهَا، فَأَخْفِهَا السُّؤَالَ، وَاسْتَحْزِرْهَا الْحَالَ، هَذَا وَلَمْ
يَطُلِ الْعَهْدُ، وَلَمْ يَخُلْ مِنْكَ الدِّكْرُ.

وَأَسْلَامٌ عَلَيْكُمَا سَلَامٌ مُؤَدَّعٍ، لَا قَالَ وَلَا سَعَمٌ، فَإِنْ أَنْصَرَفَ فَلَا عَنْ مَلَائِكَةٍ، وَإِنْ أُؤِمَّ فَلَا عَنْ سُوءِ ظَنٍّ بِمَا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الصَّابِرِينَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 202

- (1) *Al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, I, 458;*
- (2) *al-Tabari, Dala'il, 47;*
- (3) *al-Mufid, al-Majalis, 165;*
- (4) *al-Tusi, al-'Amali, I, 108;*
- (5) *al-'Irbili, Kashf, II, 147;*
- (6) *Sibt, Tadhkirah, 318.*

Notes

1. The treatment meted out to the daughter of the Prophet after his death was extremely painful and sad. Although Sayyidatu'n-nisa' Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) did not live in this world more than a few months after the death of the Prophet yet even this short period has a long tale of grief and woe (about her). In this connection, the first scene that strikes the eyes is that arrangements for the funeral rites of the Prophet had not yet been made when the contest for power started in the Saqifah of Banu Sa'idah. Naturally, their leaving the body of the Prophet (without burial) must have injured Sayyidatu'n-nisa' Fatimah's grief-stricken heart when she saw that those who had claimed love and attachment (with the Prophet) during his life became so engrossed in their machinations for power that instead of consoling his only daughter they did not even know when the Prophet was given a funeral ablution and when he was buried, and the way they condoled her was that they crowded at her house with material to set fire to it and tried to secure allegiance by force with all the display of oppression, compulsion and violence. All these excesses were with a view to so obliterate the prestigious position of this house that it might not regain its lost prestige on any occasion. With this aim in view, in order to crush her economic position, her claim for (the estate of) Fadak was turned down by dubbing it as false, the effect of which was that Sayyidatu'n-nisa' Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) made the dying will that none of them should attend her funeral.

Sermon 203: O people, certainly this world is a passage...

Transience of this world and importance of collecting provisions for the next life

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في التزهيد من الدنيا والترغيب في الآخرة

O people, certainly this world is a passage while the next world is a place of permanent abode. So, take from the passage (all that you can) for the permanent abode. Do not tear away your curtain before Him Who is aware of your secrets. Take away from this world your hearts before your bodies go out of it, because herein you have been put on trial, and you have been created for the other world.

When a man dies people ask what (property) he has left while the angels ask what (good actions) he has sent forward. May Allah bless you; send forward something, it will be a loan for you, and do not leave everything behind, for that would be a burden on you.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّمَا الدُّنْيَا دَارُ مَجَازٍ، وَالْآخِرَةُ دَارُ قَرَارٍ، فَخُذُوا مِنْ مَمْرِكُمْ لِمَقَرِّكُمْ، وَلَا تَهْتِكُوا
أَسْتَارَكُمْ عِنْدَ مَنْ يَعْلَمُ أَسْرَارَكُمْ، وَأَخْرِجُوا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا قُلُوبَكُمْ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَخْرُجَ مِنْهَا أَبْدَانُكُمْ،
فَفِيهَا احْتَبِرْتُمْ، وَلِغَيْرِهَا حُلِفْتُمْ.

إِنَّ الْمَرْءَ إِذَا هَلَكَ قَالَ النَّاسُ: مَا تَرَكَ؟ وَقَالَتِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ: مَا قَدَّمَ؟ اللَّهُ آبَاؤُكُمْ! فَقَدِمُوا
بَعْضًا يَكُنْ لَكُمْ قَرْضًا، وَلَا تُخَلِّفُوا كَلًّا فَيَكُونَ عَلَيْكُمْ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 203

- (1) *Al-Saduq, al-'Amali, 132;*
- (2) *al-Saduq, `Uyun akhbar al-Rida, I, 298;*
- (3) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 139;*
- (4) *al-Tabarsi, Mishkat, 243;*
- (5) *Ibn Qutaybah, `Uyun, II, 253;*
- (6) *al-Mubarrad, al-Kamil;*
- (7) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, II, 200;*
- (8) *Warram, Majmu`ah, 66;*
- (9) *al-Qali, al-'Amali, I, 258;*
- (10) *al-Bayhaqi, al-Mahasin, II, 31; see `Arshi.*

Sermon 204: May Allah have mercy on you!....

What Amir al-mu'minin said generally to his companions warning them about the dangers of the Day of Judgement

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

كان كثيراً ما ينادي به أصحابه

May Allah have mercy on you! Provide yourselves for the journey because the call for departure has been announced. Regard your stay in the world as very short, and return (to Allah) with the best provision that is with you, because surely, in front of you lies a valley, difficult to climb, and places of stay full of fear and dangers.

You have to reach there and stay in them. And know that the eyes of death are approaching towards you. It is as though you are (already) in its talons and it has struck itself against you. Difficult affairs and distressing dangers have crushed you into it. You should therefore cut away all the attachments of this world and assist yourselves with the provision of Allah's fear.

بَجَهَّزُوا رَحِمَكُمُ اللَّهُ! فَقَدْ تُودِي فِيكُمْ بِالرَّحِيلِ، وَأَقْلُوا الْعُرْجَةَ عَلَى الدُّنْيَا، وَانْقَلِبُوا بِصَالِحِ مَا بَحَضَّرْتَكُمْ مِنَ الزَّادِ، فَإِنَّ أَمَامَكُمْ عَقَبَةً كَثُوداً، وَمَنَازِلَ مَخُوفَةً مَهُولَةً، لَا بُدَّ مِنَ الْوُجُودِ عَلَيْهَا، وَالْوُقُوفِ عِنْدَهَا. وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ مَلَاحِظَ الْمَنِيَّةِ نَحْوَكُمْ دَائِيَّةٌ، وَكَأَنَّكُمْ بِمَخَالِبِهَا وَقَدْ نَشِبَتْ فِيكُمْ، وَقَدْ دَهَمَتْكُمْ فِيهَا مُفْظِعَاتُ الْأُمُورِ، وَمُعْضَلَاتُ الْمَحْدُورِ. فَقَطِّعُوا عِلَاقَتِ الدُّنْيَا، وَاسْتَظْهِرُوا بَرَادِ التَّقْوَى.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: A part of this saying has been quoted before through another narration.

وقد مضى شيء من هذا الكلام فيما تقدم، بخلاف هذه الرواية.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 204

- (1) *Al-Saduq, al-'Amali, majlis 75;*
- (2) *al-Mufid, al-Majalis, 116;*
- (3) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 110;*
- (4) *al-Tabarsi, Mishkat, 275.*

Sermon 205: Both of you frown over a small matter...

After swearing allegiance to Amir al-mu'minin, Talhah and az-Zubayr complained to him that he had not consulted them or sought their assistance in the affairs (of state).

Amir al-mu'minin replied:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

كَلَّمْ بِهِ طَلْحَةَ وَالزُّبَيْرَ بَعْدَ بَيْعَتِهِ بِالْخِلَافَةِ

وقد عتبا من ترك مشورتهم، والاستعانة في الامور بهما

Both of you frown over a small matter and leave aside big ones. Can you tell me of anything wherein you have a right of which I have deprived you or a share which was due to you and which I have held away from you, or any Muslim who has laid any claim before me and I have been unable to decide it or been ignorant of it, or committed a mistake about it?

لَقَدْ نَقَمْتُمَا يَسِيرًا، وَأَرْجَأْتُمَا كَثِيرًا، أَلَا تُخْبِرَانِي، أَيُّ شَيْءٍ لَكُمَا فِيهِ حَقٌّ دَفَعْتُمَا عَنْهُ؟ وَأَيُّ قَسَمٍ اسْتَأْذَنْتُمْ عَلَيْنَا بِهِ؟ أَمْ أَيُّ حَقٍّ رَفَعْتُمْ إِلَيَّ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ ضَعَفْتُ عَنْهُ، أَمْ جَهَلْتُمَا، أَمْ أَخْطَأْتُ بَابَهُ؟!

By Allah, I had no liking for the caliphate nor any interest in government, but you yourselves invited me to it and prepared me for it. When the caliphate came to me, I kept the Book of Allah in my view and all that Allah had put therein for us, and all that according to which He has commanded us to take decisions; and I followed it, and also acted on whatever the Prophet - may Allah bless him and his descendants - had laid down as his sunnah. In this matter I did not need your advice or the advice of anyone else, nor has there been any order of which I was ignorant so that I ought to have consulted you or my Muslim brethren. If it were so I would not have turned away from you or from others.

وَاللَّهِ مَا كَانَتْ لِي فِي الْخِلَافَةِ رَغْبَةٌ، وَلَا فِي الْوِلَايَةِ إِزْبَةٌ، وَلَكِنَّكُمْ دَعَوْتُمُونِي إِلَيْهَا، وَحَمَلْتُمُونِي عَلَيْهَا، فَلَمَّا أَفْضَتْ إِلَيَّ نَظَرْتُ إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَمَا وَضَعَ لَنَا، وَأَمَرْنَا بِالْحُكْمِ بِهِ فَاتَّبَعْتُهُ، وَمَا اسْتَسَنَّ النَّبِيُّ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) فَافْتَدَيْتُهُ، فَلَمْ أَحْتَجْ فِي ذَلِكَ إِلَى رَأْيِكُمَا، وَلَا رَأْيِ غَيْرِكُمَا، وَلَا وَقَعَ حُكْمٌ جَهْلْتُمَا، فَأَسْتَشِيرُكُمَا وَإِخْوَانِي مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ; وَلَوْ كَانَ ذَلِكَ لَمْ أَرْعَبْ عَنْكُمَا، وَلَا عَنْ غَيْرِكُمَا.

As regards your reference to the question of equality (in distribution of shares from the Muslim common fund), this is a matter in which I have not taken a decision by my own opinion, nor have I done it by my caprice. But I found, and you too (must have) found, that whatever the Prophet - may Allah bless him and his descendants - brought had been finalised.

Therefore, I felt no need to turn towards you about a share which had been determined by Allah and in which His verdict has been passed. By Allah, in this matter, therefore, you two or anyone else can have no favour from me. May Allah keep our hearts and your hearts in righteousness, and may He grant us and you endurance.

وَأَمَّا مَا ذَكَرْتُمَا مِنْ أَمْرِ الْأَسْوَةِ، فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ أَمْرٌ لَمْ أَحْكُمْ أَنَا فِيهِ بِرَأْيِي، وَلَا وَلِيَّتُهُ هُوَئِ مَعِي، بَلْ وَجَدْتُ أَنَا وَأَنْتُمَا مَا جَاءَ بِهِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) قَدْ فُرِعَ مِنْهُ، فَلَمْ أَسْتَجِ إِلَى كُفْرِكُمَا فِيمَا قَدْ فُرِعَ اللَّهُ مِنْ قَسَمِهِ، وَأَمَضَى فِيهِ حُكْمَهُ، فَلَيْسَ لَكُمَا، وَاللَّهِ، عِنْدِي وَلَا لِعَيْرِكُمَا فِي هَذَا عُنْتِي. أَخَذَ اللَّهُ بِقُلُوبِنَا وَقُلُوبِكُمْ إِلَى الْحَقِّ، وَأَهْمَمْنَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ الصَّبْرَ.

Then Amir al-mu'minin added: May Allah have mercy on the person who, when he sees the truth, supports it, when he sees the wrong, rejects it, and who helps the truth against him who is on the wrong.

ثم قال عليه السلام:

رَحِمَ اللَّهُ رَجُلًا رَأَى حَقًّا فَأَعَانَ عَلَيْهِ، أَوْ رَأَى جَوْرًا فَرَدَّهُ، وَكَانَ عَوْنًا بِالْحَقِّ عَلَى صَاحِبِهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 205

(1) Abu Ja'far al-'Iskafi, *Naqd al-'Uthmaniyyah*; see *Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh, II, 173*.

Sermon 206: I dislike you starting to abuse them...

During the battle of Siffin Amir al-mu'minin heard some of his men abusing the Syrians, then he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)
وقد سمع قوماً من اصحابه يسبون أهل الشام
أيام حرهم بصفين

I dislike you starting to abuse them, but if you describe their deeds and recount their situations that would be a better mode of speaking and a more convincing way of arguing. Instead of abusing them you should say, "O Allah! Save our blood and their blood, produce reconciliation between us and them, and lead them out of their misguidance so that he who is ignorant of the truth may know it, and he who inclines towards rebellion and revolt may turn away from it."

إِنِّي أَكْرَهُ لَكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونُوا سَبَّابِينَ، وَلَكِنَّكُمْ لَوْ وَصَفْتُمْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ، وَذَكَرْتُمْ حَالَهُمْ، كَانَ أَصَوَّبَ فِي الْقَوْلِ، وَأَبْلَغَ فِي الْعُدْرِ، وَقُلْتُمْ مَكَانَ سَبِّكُمْ إِيَّاهُمْ: اللَّهُمَّ احْفَظْ دِمَاءَنَا وَدِمَاءَهُمْ، وَأَصْلِحْ ذَاتَ بَيْنِنَا وَبَيْنَهُمْ، وَاهْدِهِمْ مِنْ ضَلَالَتِهِمْ، حَتَّى يَعْرِفَ الْحَقَّ مَنْ جَهَلَهُ، وَيَرْعُوِي عَنِ الْعَيِّ وَالْعُدْوَانِ مَنْ هَبَّجَ بِهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 206

- (1) *Al-Dinawari, al-'Akhbar, 155;*
- (2) *Nasr, Siffin, 103;*
- (3) *Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, Tadhkirah, 154.*

Sermon 207: Hold back this young man on my behalf...

In the battle of Siffin Amir al-mu'minin saw Imam al-Hasan proceeding rapidly to fight, then he said:

وقال (عليه السلام)

في بعض أيام صفين وقد رأى الحسن (عليه السلام) يتسرع إلى الحرب

Hold back this young man on my behalf, lest he causes my ruin, because I am loath to send these two (meaning al-Hasan and al-Husayn) towards death, lest the descending line of the Prophet - may Allah bless him and his descendants - is cut away by their death.

امْلِكُوا عَنِّي هَذَا الْغُلَامَ لَا يَهْدِينِي، فَإِنِّي أَنفَسُ بِهِدَيْنِ . يَعْنِي الْحَسَنَ وَالْحُسَيْنَ (عليهما

السلام) عَلَى الْمَوْتِ، لِئَلَّا يَنْقَطِعَ بِهِمَا نَسْلُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله).

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Amir al-mu'minin's words "amliku `anni hadha'l- ghulam" (i.e. "Hold back this young man on my behalf") represents the highest and the most eloquent form of expression.

قوله (عليه السلام): «املكوا عني هذا الغلام» من أعلى الكلام وأفصح.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 207

(1) *Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 34, events of 37 H.; V, 196, events of 36 H.*

Sermon 208: O people, matters between me and you...

When Amir al-mu'minin's companions expressed displeasure about his attitude concerning Arbitration, ¹ he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

قاله لما اضطرب عليه أصحابه في أمر الحكومة

O people, matters between me and you went as I wished till war exhausted you. By Allah, it has overtaken some of you and left others, and has completely weakened your enemy. Till yesterday I was giving orders but today I am being given orders, and till yesterday I was dissuading people (from wrong acts) but today I am being dissuaded. You have now shown liking to live in this world, and it is not for me to bring you to what you dislike.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّهُ لَمْ يَزَلْ أَمْرِي مَعَكُمْ عَلَى مَا أَحْبَبْتُ، حَتَّى نَهَكْتُمْ الْحَرْبَ، وَقَدْ، وَاللَّهِ
أَخَذْتُ مِنْكُمْ وَتَرَكْتُ، وَهِيَ لِعَدُوِّكُمْ أَنْهَكُ. لَقَدْ كُنْتُ أَمْسِ أَمِيرًا، فَأَصْبَحْتُ الْيَوْمَ مَأْمُورًا!
وَكُنْتُ أَمْسِ نَاهِيًا، فَأَصْبَحْتُ الْيَوْمَ مَنهِيًا! وَقَدْ أَحْبَبْتُمُ الْبَقَاءَ، وَلَيْسَ لِي أَنْ أَجْمَلْكُمْ عَلَى مَا
تَكْرَهُونَ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 208

- (1) *Nasr, Siffin, 484;*
- (2) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-'Imamah, I, 118;*
- (3) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, II, 400.*

Notes

1. When the surviving forces of the Syrians lost ground and were ready to run away from the field Mu`awiyah changed the whole phase of the battle by using the Qur'an as his instrument of strategy, and succeeded in creating such a division among the Iraqis that, despite Amir al-mu'minin's efforts at counselling, they were not prepared to take any forward step, but insisted on stopping the war, whereupon Amir al-mu'minin too had to agree to arbitration. Among these people some had actually been duped and believed that they were being asked to abide by the Qur'an but there were others who had become weary of the long period of war and had lost courage. Then people got a good opportunity to stop the war, and so they cried hoarse for its postponement. There were others who had accompanied Amir al-mu'minin because of his temporal authority but did not support him by heart, nor did they aim at victory for him. There were some people who had expectations with Mu`awiyah, and had started attaching hopes to him for this, while there were some who were, from the very beginning, in league with him. In these circumstances and with this type of the army it was really due to Amir al-mu'minin's political ability and competence of military control and administration that he carried the war up to this stage, and if Mu`awiyah had not adopted this trick there could have been no doubt in Amir al-mu'minin's victory because the military power of the Syrian forces had been exhausted and defeat was hovering over its head. In this connection, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes:

Malik al-Ashtar had reached Mu`awiyah and grabbed him by the neck. The entire might of the Syrians had been smashed. Only so much movement was discernible in them as remains in the tail of a lizard which is killed, but the tail continues hopping right and left. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 11, pp.30-31)

Sermon 209: What will you do with this vast house in this world...

Amir al-mu'minin went to enquire about the health of his companion al-`Ala' ibn Ziyad al-Harithi and when he noticed the vastness of his house he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

بالبصرة، وقد دخل على العلاء بن زياد الحارثي . وهو من أصحابه . يعوده، فلما رأى

سعة داره قال:

What will you do with this vast house in this world, although you need this house more in the next world. If you want to take it to the next world you could entertain in it guests and be regardful of kinship and discharge all (your) obligations according to their accrual. In this way you will be able to take it to the next world.

مَا كُنْتُ تَصْنَعُ بِسَعَةِ هَذِهِ الدَّارِ فِي الدُّنْيَا، أَنْتَ إِلَيْهَا فِي الْآخِرَةِ كُنْتُ أَحْوَجُ؟ وَبَلَى إِنَّ شِئْتَ بَلَعْتَ بِهَا الْآخِرَةَ، تَقْرِي فِيهَا الضَّيْفَ، وَتَصِلُ فِيهَا الرَّحِمَ، وَتُطْلِعُ مِنْهَا الْحُقُوقَ مَطَالِعَهَا، فَإِذَا أَنْتَ قَدْ بَلَعْتَ بِهَا الْآخِرَةَ.

Then al-`Ala' said to him: O' Amir al-mu'minin, I want to complain to you about my brother `Asim ibn Ziyad.

Amir al-mu'minin enquired: What is the matter with him?

al-`Ala' said: He has put on a woollen coat and cut himself away from the world.

Amir al-mu'minin said: Present him to me.

فقال له العلاء: يا أميرالمؤمنين، أشكو إليك أخي عاصم بن زياد. قال: وما له؟ قال:

لبس العباءة وتخلّى من الدنيا. قال: عليّ به.

When he came Amir al-mu'minin said: O enemy of yourself. Certainly, the evil (Satan) has misguided you. Do you feel no pity for your wife and your children? Do you believe that if you use those things which Allah has made lawful for you, He will dislike you? You are too unimportant for Allah to do so.

He said: O Amir al-mu'minin, you also put on coarse dress and eat rough food.

Then he replied: Woe be to you, I am not like you. Certainly, Allah, the Sublime, has made it obligatory on true leaders that they should maintain themselves at the level of low people so that the poor do not cry over their poverty.¹

فلما جاء قال: يَا غَدِيّ نَفْسِيهِ! لَقَدْ اسْتَهَمَ بِكَ الْحَيْثُ! أَمَا رَحِمْتَ أَهْلَكَ وَوَلَدَكَ! أَتَرَى

اللَّهَ أَحَلَ لَكَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ، وَهُوَ يَكْرَهُ أَنْ تَأْخُذَهَا! أَنْتَ أَهْوَنُ عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ! قال: يا

أميرالمؤمنين، هذا أنت في خشونة ملبسك وجشوبة مأكلك! قال: وَيُحْك، إِيّ لَسْتُ كَأَنْتَ،

إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى فَرَضَ عَلَى أُمَّةِ الْعَدْلِ أَنْ يُقَدِّرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ بِضَعْفَةِ النَّاسِ، كَيْلًا يَتَّبِعَ بِالْفَقِيرِ
فَقْرُهُ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 209

- (1) *Abu Talib al-Makki, Qut, I, 531;*
- (2) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, I, 329;*
- (3) *al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, I, 410;*
- (4) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, IV, bab al-lahw wa al-ladhdhat;*
- (5) *al-Mufid, al-Ikhtisas, 152;*
- (6) *Ibn al-Jawzi, Talbis Iblis, 194.*

Notes

1. From ancient days asceticism and the abandonment of worldly attachments has been regarded as a means of purification of the spirit and important for the character. Consequently, those who wished to lead a life of abstemiousness and meditation used to go out of the cities and towns to stay in forests and caves in the mountains and stay there concentrating on Allah according to their own conception. They would eat only if a casual traveller or the inhabitant of nearby dwellings gave them anything to eat, otherwise they remained contented with the fruits of wild trees and the water of the streams, and thus they passed their life. This way of worship commenced in a way that was forced by the oppression and hardships of rulers. Certain people left their houses and, in order to avoid their grip, hid themselves in some wilderness or cave in a mountain, engaging themselves in worship of and devotion to Allah. Later on, this forced asceticism acquired a voluntary form and people began to retire to caves and hollows of their own volition. Thus it became an accepted way that whoever aimed at spiritual development retired to some corner after severing himself from all worldly ties. This method remained in vogue for centuries and even now some traces of this way of worship are found among the Buddhists and the Christians.

The moderate views of Islam do not, however, accord with the monastic life, because for attaining spiritual development it does not advocate the abandonment of worldly enjoyments and successes, nor does it view with approbation that a Muslim should leave his house and fellow men and busy himself in formal worship, hiding in some corner. The conception of worship in Islam is not confined to a few particular rites, but it regards the earning of one's livelihood through lawful means, mutual sympathy and good behaviour, and co-operation and assistance also to be important constituents of worship. If an individual ignores worldly rights and obligations and does not fulfil his responsibility towards his wife and children, nor occupies himself in efforts to earn a livelihood, but all the time stays in meditation, he ruins his life and does not fulfil the purpose of living. If this were Allah's aim, what would have the need for creating and populating the world when there was already a category of creatures who were all the time engaged in worshipping and adoration.

Nature has made man to stand on the cross-roads at which the midway is the centre of guidance. If he deviates from this point of moderateness even a bit, this way or that way, there is sheer misguidance for him. That midway is that he should neither bend towards this world to such an extent as to ignore the next life, devoting himself entirely to this one, nor should he abstain from this world so as not to have any connection with anything of it, confining himself to some corner leaving everything else. Since Allah has created man in this world he should follow the code of life for living in this world, and should partake of the comforts and pleasures bestowed by Allah within moderate limits. The eating and using of things made lawful by Allah is not against Allah's worship, but rather Allah has created these things for the very purpose that they should be taken advantage of. That is why those who were the chosen of Allah lived in this world with others and ate and drank like others. They did not feel the need to turn their faces away from the people of the world, and to adopt the wilderness or the caves of mountains as their abodes, or to live in distant spots.

On the other hand they remembered Allah, remained disentangled from worldly affairs, and did not forget death despite the pleasures and comforts of life.

The life of asceticism sometimes produces such evils as ruin the next life also as well as this one, and such an individual proves to be the true picture of "the looser in this life as well as the next." When natural impulses are not satisfied in the lawful and legal way the mind turns into a centre of evil-ideas and becomes incapable of performing worship with peace and concentration; and sometimes passions so overcome the ascetic that breaking all moral fetters, he devotes himself completely to their satisfaction and consequently falls in an abyss of ruin for which it is impossible to extract himself. That is why religious law accords a greater position to the worship performed by a family man than that by a non-family man, because the former can exercise mental peace and concentration in the worship and rituals.

Individuals who put on the cloak of Sufism and make a loud show of their spiritual greatness are cut off from the path of Islam and are ignorant of its wide teachings. They have been misled by Satan and, relying on their self-formed conceptions, tread wrongful paths. Eventually their misguidance becomes so serious that they begin to regard their leaders as having attained such a level that their word is as the word of Allah and their act is as the act of Allah. Sometimes they regard themselves beyond all the bounds and limitations of religious law and consider every evil act to be lawful for them. This deviation from faith and irreligiousness is named Sufism (complete devotion to Allah). Its unlawful principles are called "at-tariqah" (ways of achieving communion with Allah) and the followers of this cult are known as Sufis. First of all Abu Hashim al-Kufi and Shami adopted this nickname. He was of Umayyad descent and a fatalist (believing that man is bound to act as pre-ordained by Allah). The reason for giving him this name was that, in order to make a show of his asceticism and fear for Allah, he put on a woollen cloak. Later on this nickname became common and various grounds were put forth as the basis of this name. For example, one ground is that 'Sufi' has three letters, "sad", "waw" and "fa". "sad" stands for "sabr" (endurance), "sidq" (truthfulness) and "safa" (purity of heart); "waw" stands for "wudd" (love), "wird" (repeating Allah's name) and "wafa" (faithfulness to Allah), and "fa" stands for "fard" (unity), "faqr" (destitution) and "fana" (death or absorption in Allah's Self). The second view is that it has been derived from "as-Suffah", which was a platform near the Prophet's mosque which had a covering of date-palm leaves. Those who stayed there were called Ashabu'Suffah (people of the platform). The third view is that the name of the progenitor of an Arab tribe was Sufah, and this tribe performed the duties of serving the pilgrims and the Ka'bah, and it is with reference to their connection with this tribe that these people were called Sufis. This group is divided among various sects but the basic sects are seven only.

1) al-Wahdatiyyah (unitarian):

This sect believes in the oneness of all existence. Its belief is that everything of this world is Allah, so much so that they assign to even polluted things the same godly position. They liken Allah with the river and the waves rising in it, and argue that the waves which sometimes rise and sometimes fall have no separate existence other than the river, but their existence is exactly the existence of the river. Therefore, nothing can be separated from its own existence.

2) al-Ittihadhiyyah (the unitists):

They believe that they have united with Allah and Allah has united with them. They liken Allah with fire and themselves with iron that lies in the fire and acquires its form and property.

3) al-Hululiyyah (the formists):

Their belief is that Allah takes the form of those who claim to know Him and the perfect ones, and their bodies are places of His stay. In this way, they are seemingly men but really Allah.

4) al-Wasiliyyah (the combiners):

This sect considers itself to have combined with Allah. Their belief is that the laws of the shari'ah are a means of development of human personality and character, and that when the human self combines with Allah it no more needs perfection or development. Consequently, for the "wasilin", worship and ritual become useless, because they hold that

when truth and reality is achieved shari`ah remains of no avail. Therefore, they can do anything and they cannot be questioned.

5) az-Zarraqiyyah (the revellers):

This sect regards vocal and instrumental music as worship, and earns the pleasures of this world through a show of asceticism and begging from door to door. They are ever engaged in relating concocted stories of miraculous performances of their leaders to overawe the common people.

6) al-`Ushshaqiyyah (the lovers):

The theory of this sect is that apparency is the means to reality, meaning that carnal love is the means to achieve love of Allah. That is, in order to reach the stage of Allah's love it is necessary to have love with some human beauty. But the love which they regard as love for Allah is just the product of mental disorder through which the lover inclines to one individual with all his attention and his final aim is to have access to the beloved. This love can lead to the way of evil and vice, but it has no connection with the love of Allah.

A Persian couplet says: The truth of the fact is that carnal love is like a jinn and a jinn cannot give you guidance.

7) at-Talqiniyyah (the encounterers):

According to this sect, the reading of religious sciences and books of scholarship is thoroughly unlawful. Rather, the position that is achieved by an hour of spiritual effort of the Sufis cannot be achieved by seventy years of reading books.

According to Shi`ah `Ulama' all these sects are on the wrong path and out of the fold of Islam. In this connection, numerous sayings of the Imams are related. In this sermon also Amir al-mu'minin has regarded the severance of `Asim ibn Ziyad from this world as the mischief of Satan, and he forcefully dissuaded him from adopting that course. (For further study, see Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, al-Hajj Mirza Habibu'llah al-Khu'i, vol. 13, pp. 132-417; vol. 14, pp. 2-22).

Sermon 210: Certainly what is current among the people...

Someone ¹ asked Amir al-mu'minin about concocted traditions and contradictory sayings of the Prophet current among the people, whereupon he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

وقد سأله سائل عن أحاديث البدع، وعما في أيدي الناس من اختلاف الخير

فقال (عليه السلام)

Certainly what is current among the people is both right and wrong, true and false, repealing and repealed, general and particular, definite and indefinite, exact and surmised. Even during the Prophet's days false sayings had been attributed to him, so much so that he had to say during his sermon that, "Whoever attributes falsehoods to me makes his abode in Hell." Those who relate traditions are of four categories, ² no more.

إِنَّ فِي أَيْدِي النَّاسِ حَقًّا وَبَاطِلًا، وَصِدْقًا وَكُذِبًا، وَنَاسِخًا وَمُنْسُوخًا، وَعَامًّا وَخَاصًّا،
وَمُحْكَمًا وَمُتَشَابِهًا، وَحِفْظًا وَوَهْمًا، وَقَدْ كُذِبَ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (ﷺ) عَلَى عَهْدِهِ، حَتَّى قَامَ
خَطِيْبًا، فَقَالَ: «مَنْ كَذَبَ عَلَيَّ مُتَعَمِّدًا فَلْيَتَبَوَّأْ مَقْعَدَهُ مِنَ النَّارِ». وَإِنَّمَا أَتَاكَ بِالْحَدِيثِ أَرْبَعَةٌ
رِجَالٌ لَيْسَ لَهُمْ خَامِسٌ:

First: The lying hypocrites

المنافقون

The hypocrite is a person who makes a show of faith and adopts the appearance of a Muslim; he does not hesitate in sinning nor does he keep aloof from vice; he wilfully attributes false things against the Messenger of Allah - may Allah bless him and his descendants. If people knew that he was a hypocrite and a liar, they would not accept anything from him and would not confirm what he says.

رَجُلٌ مُنَافِقٌ مُظْهِرٌ لِلْإِيمَانِ، مُتَّصِنٌ بِالْإِسْلَامِ، لَا يَتَأَنَّمُ وَلَا يَتَحَرَّجُ، يَكْذِبُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ
(صلى الله عليه وآله) مُتَعَمِّدًا، فَلَوْ عَلِمَ النَّاسُ أَنَّهُ مُنَافِقٌ كَاذِبٌ لَمْ يَقْبَلُوا مِنْهُ، وَلَمْ يُصَدِّقُوا
قَوْلَهُ،

Rather they say that he is the companion of the Prophet, has met him, heard (his sayings) from him and acquired (knowledge) from him. They therefore accept what he says. Allah too had warned you well about the hypocrites and described them fully to you. They have continued after the Holy Prophet. They gained positions with the leaders of misguidance and callers towards Hell through falsehoods and slanderings. So, they put them in high posts and made them officers over the heads of the people, and amassed wealth through them. People are always with the rulers and after this world, except those to whom Allah affords protection. This is the first of the four categories.

وَلَكِنَّهُمْ قَالُوا: صَاحِبُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) رَأَاهُ، وَسَمِعَ مِنْهُ، وَلَقِفَ عَنْهُ، فَيَأْخُذُونَ بِقَوْلِهِ، وَقَدْ أَخْبَرَكَ اللَّهُ عَنِ الْمُنَاقِقِينَ بِمَا أَخْبَرَكَ، وَوَصَفَهُمْ بِمَا وَصَفَهُمْ بِهِ لَكَ، ثُمَّ بَشُّوا بَعْدَهُ (عليه السلام)، فَتَقَرَّبُوا إِلَى أَيْمَةِ الضَّلَالَةِ، وَالِدُعَاةِ إِلَى النَّارِ بِالزُّورِ وَالْبُهْتَانِ، فَوَلَّوهُمْ الْأَعْمَالَ، وَجَعَلُوهُمْ عَلَى رِقَابِ النَّاسِ، وَأَكَلُوا بِهِمُ الدُّنْيَا، وَإِنَّمَا النَّاسُ مَعَ الْمُلُوكِ وَالِدُّنْيَا، إِلَّا مَنْ عَصَمَ اللَّهُ، فَهَذَا أَحَدُ الْأَرْبَعَةِ.

Second: Those who are mistaken

الخاطئون

Then there is the individual who heard (a saying) from the Holy Prophet but did not memorise it as it was, but surmised it. He does not lie wilfully. Now, he carries the saying with him and relates it, acts upon it and claims that: "I heard it from the Messenger of Allah." If the Muslims come to know that he has committed a mistake in it, they will not accept it from him, and if he himself knows that he is on the wrong he will give it up.

وَرَجُلٌ سَمِعَ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) شَيْئاً لَمْ يَحْفَظْهُ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ، فَوَهَمَ فِيهِ، وَلَمْ يَتَعَمَّدْ كَذِباً، فَهُوَ فِي يَدَيْهِ، يَرُويهِ وَيَعْمَلُ بِهِ، وَيَقُولُ: أَنَا سَمِعْتُهُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، فَلَوْ عَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ أَنَّهُ وَهَمَ فِيهِ لَمْ يَقْبَلُوهُ مِنْهُ، وَلَوْ عَلِمَ هُوَ أَنَّهُ كَذَلِكَ لَرَفَضَهُ.

Third: Those who are ignorant

أهل الشبهة

The third man is he who heard the Prophet ordering to do a thing and later the Prophet refrained the people from doing it, but this man did not know it, or he heard the Prophet refraining people from a thing and later he allowed it, but this man did not know it. In this way he retained in his mind what had been repealed, and did not retain the repealing tradition. If he knew that it had been repealed he would reject it, or if the Muslims knew, when they heard it from him, that it had been repealed they would reject it.

وَرَجُلٌ ثَالِثٌ، سَمِعَ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) شَيْئاً يَأْمُرُ بِهِ، ثُمَّ نَهَى عَنْهُ وَهُوَ لَا يَعْلَمُ، أَوْ سَمِعَهُ يَنْهَى عَنْ شَيْءٍ، ثُمَّ أَمَرَ بِهِ وَهُوَ لَا يَعْلَمُ، فَحَفِظَ الْمَنْسُوحَ، وَلَمْ يَحْفَظِ النَّاسِحَ، فَلَوْ عَلِمَ أَنَّهُ مَنْسُوحٌ لَرَفَضَهُ، وَلَوْ عَلِمَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ إِذْ سَمِعُوهُ مِنْهُ أَنَّهُ مَنْسُوحٌ لَرَفَضُوهُ.

Fourth: Those who memorise truthfully

الصادقون الحافظون

The last, namely the fourth man, is he who does not speak a lie against Allah or against His Prophet. He hates falsehood out of fear for Allah and respect for the Messenger of Allah, and does not commit mistakes, but retains (in his mind) exactly what he heard (from the Prophet), and he relates it as he heard it without adding anything or omitting anything. He heard the repealing tradition, he retained it and acted upon it, and he heard the repealed tradition and rejected it. He also understands the particular and

the general, and he knows the definite and indefinite, and gives everything its due position.

وَأَخْرَجُ رَابِعًا، لَمْ يَكْذِبْ عَلَى اللَّهِ، وَلَا عَلَى رَسُولِهِ، مُبْغِضٌ لِلْكَذِبِ، خَوْفًا لِلَّهِ، وَتَعْظِيمًا لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ، وَمَنْ يَهْمُ، بَلَنْ خَفِظَ مَا سَمِعَ عَلَى وَجْهِهِ، فَجَاءَ بِهِ عَلَى مَا سَمِعَهُ، لَمْ يَزِدْ فِيهِ وَمَنْ يَنْقُصُ مِنْهُ، وَخَفِظَ النَّاسِخَ فَعَمِلَ بِهِ، وَخَفِظَ الْمُنْسُوخَ فَجَنَّبَ عَنْهُ، وَعَرَفَ الْخَاصَّ وَالْعَامَّ، فَوَضَعَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ مَوْضِعَهُ، وَعَرَفَ الْمِثْلَابَةَ وَتَحَكَّمَ.

The sayings of the Prophet used to be of two types. One was particular and the other common. Sometimes a man would hear him but he would not know what Allah, the Glorified, meant by it or what the Messenger of Allah meant by it. In this way the listener carries it and memorises it without knowing its meaning and its real intention, or what was its reason.

Among the companions of the Messenger of Allah all were not in the habit of putting him questions and ask him the meanings, indeed they always wished that some Bedouin or stranger might come and ask him (peace be upon him) so that they would also listen. Whenever any such thing came before me, I asked him about its meaning and preserved it. These are the reasons and grounds of differences among the people in their traditions.

وَقَدْ كَانَ يَكُونُ مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) الْكَلَامُ لَهُ وَجْهَانِ: فَكَلَامٌ خَاصٌّ، وَكَلَامٌ عَامٌّ، فَيَسْمَعُهُ مَنْ لَا يَعْرِفُ مَا عَنَى اللَّهُ بِهِ، وَلَا مَا عَنَى بِهِ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَيَحْمِلُهُ السَّامِعُ، وَيُوجِّهُهُ عَلَى غَيْرِ مَعْرِفَةِ بَمَعْنَاهُ، وَمَا قُصِدَ بِهِ، وَمَا خَرَجَ مِنْ أَجْلِهِ، وَلَيْسَ كُلُّ أَصْحَابِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) مَنْ كَانَ يَسْأَلُهُ وَيَسْتَفْهِمُهُ، حَتَّى إِنْ كَانُوا لَيُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَجِيءَ الْأَعْرَابِيُّ أَوْ الطَّارِئُ، فَيَسْأَلُهُ (عليه السلام) حَتَّى يَسْمَعُوا، وَكَانَ لَا يَمُرُّ بِي مِنْ ذَلِكَ شَيْءٌ إِلَّا سَأَلْتُ عَنْهُ وَخَفِظْتُهُ. فَهَذِهِ وَجُوهٌ مَا عَلَيهِ النَّاسُ فِي اخْتِلَافِهِمْ، وَعَلَلِهِمْ فِي رَوَايَاتِهِمْ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 210

- (1) *Kitab Sulaym ibn Qays*;
- (2) *Al-Kulayni, Usul al-Kafi, II, 62*;
- (3) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf, 136*;
- (4) *al-Saduq, al-Khisal, I, 333*;
- (5) *al-Tawhidi, al-Imta', III, 197*;
- (6) *al-Nu'mani, al-Ghaybah, 26*;
- (7) *al-Tabari, al-Mustarshid, 30*;
- (8) *Sibt ibn al-Jawzi, Tadhkirah, 142*;
- (9) *al-Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj, I, 293*;
- (10) *al-Karajiki, al-Intisar, 10*;
- (11) *al-Shaykh al-Baha'i, al-'Arba'in, 98*.

Notes

1. This was Sulaym ibn Qays al-Hilali who was one of the relaters of traditions through Amir al-mu'minin.

2. In this sermon Amir al-mu'minin has divided the traditionists into four categories.

The first category is that of a man concocts a tradition and attributes it to the Prophet. Traditions were in fact falsified and attributed to him, and this process continued, with the result that numerous novel traditions came into being. This is a fact which cannot be denied but if anyone does deny it his basis would be not knowledge or sagacity by oratory or argumentative necessity. Thus, once, `Alamu'l-huda (Ensign of Guidance) as-Sayyid al-Murtada had a chance of meeting the Sunni `ulama' (scholars) in confrontation and on this occasion as-Sayyid al-Murtada proved by historical facts that the traditions related about the merits of the great companions are concocted and counterfeit. On this, the (Sunni) `ulama' argued that it was impossible that someone should dare speak a lie against the Prophet and prepare a tradition himself and attribute it to him. as-Sayyid al-Murtada said there is a tradition of the Prophet that:

A lot of false things will be attributed to me after my death and whoever speaks a lie against me would be preparing his abode in Hell. (al-Bukhari, vol.1, p.38; vol.2, p.102; vol.4, p.207; vol.8, p.54; Muslim, vol.8, p.229; Abu Dawud, vol.3, pp.319-320; at-Tirmidhi, vol.4, p.524; vol.5, pp.35-36, 40, 199, 634; Ibn Majah, vol.1, pp.13-15)

If you regard this tradition as true then you should agree that false things have been attributed to the Prophet, but if you regard it false, this would prove our point. However, these were people whose hearts were full of hypocrisy and who used to prepare traditions of their own accord in order to create mischief and dispersion in religion and to misguide Muslims of weak convictions. They remained mixed with them as they used to do during the lifetime of the Prophet; and just as they remained busy in activities of mischief and destruction in those days, in the same way, even after the Prophet, they were not unmindful of deforming the teachings of Islam and metamorphosing its features. Rather, in the days of the Prophet they were always afraid lest he unveiled them and put them to shame, but after the Prophet their hypocritical activities increased and they attributed false things to the Prophet without demur for their own personal ends, and those who heard them believed in them because of their status as companions of the Prophet, thinking that whatever they said was correct and whatever they gave out was true. Afterwards also, the belief that all the companions are correct put a stopper on their tongues, as a result of which they were taken to be above criticism, questioning, discussion and censure. Besides, their conspicuous performance had made them prominent in the eyes of the government, and also because of this it needed courage and daring to speak against them. This is proved by Amir al-mu'minin's words:

These people gained positions with the leaders of misguidance and callers towards Hell, through falsehood and slanderings. So, they put them in high posts and made them officers over the heads of the people.

Along with the destruction of Islam, the hypocrites also aimed at amassing wealth, and they were doing so freely by claiming to be Muslims, because of which they did not want to remove the veil of Islam (from their faces) and to come out openly, but they wanted to continue their Satanic activities under the garb of Islam and engaged themselves in its basic destruction and spreading of division and dispersal by concocting traditions. In this connection, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written:

When they were left free they too left many things. When people observed silence about them they also observed silence about Islam, but they continued their underground activities such as the fabrication of falsehoods to which Amir al-mu'minin has alluded, because a lot of untrue matters had been mixed with the traditions by the group of people of wrong beliefs, while some of them also aimed at extolling some particular party with whom they had other worldly aims as well.

On the expiry of this period, when Mu`awiyah took over the leadership of religion and occupied the throne of temporal authority, he opened an official department for the fabrication of false traditions, and ordered his officers to fabricate and popularise traditions in disparagement of the Ahul Bayt (the Household of the Holy Prophet) and in extolment of `Uthman and the Umayyads, and announced rewards and grants of land for this work. Consequently, a lot of traditions about self-made distinctions gained entry in the books of traditions. Thus, Abu'l-Hasan al-Mada'ini has written in his book Kitab al-ahdath and Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has quoted it, namely:

Mu`awiyah wrote to his officers that they should take special care of those who were adherents of `Uthman, his well-wishers and lovers and to award high positions, precedence and honour to those who related traditions about his merits and distinctions, and to convey to him whatever is so related by any person, along with his name, the name of his father and the name of his tribe. They did accordingly and heaped up traditions about the merits and distinctions of `Uthman because Mu`awiyah used to award them rewards, clothes, grants and lands.

When the fabricated traditions about the merits of `Uthman had been spread throughout the realm, with the idea that the position of the earlier Caliphs should not remain low, Mu`awiyah wrote to his officers:

As soon as you receive this order of mine you should call upon the people to prepare traditions about the distinctions of the companions and other caliphs also, and take care that if any Muslim relates any tradition about Abu Turab (`Ali) you should prepare a similar tradition about the companions to contradict it because this gives me great pleasure and cools my eyes, and it weakens the position of Abu Turab and his partymen. and is more severe to them than the merits and distinctions of `Uthman.

When his letters were read to the people, a large number of such traditions were related extolling the companions that are all fabricated with no truth at all. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 11, pp. 43-47)

In this connection Abu `Abdillah Ibrahim ibn Muhammad ibn `Arafah known as Niftawayh (244/858-323/935) who was one of the prominent scholars and traditionists has written, and Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has quoted him, that:

Most of the false traditions about the merits of the companions were fabricated during the days of Mu`awiyah in order to gain position in his audience because his view was that in this way he could disgrace Banu Hashim and render them low. (ibid.)

After that, fabrication of traditions became a habit, the world seekers made it a means of securing position with kings and nobles and to amass wealth. For example, Ghiyath ibn Ibrahim an-Nakha`i (2nd cent. A.H.) fabricated a tradition about the flight of pigeons, in order to please al-Mahdi ibn al-Mansur (the `Abbasid Caliph) and to secure position near him. (Tarikh Baghdad, vol.12, pp.323-327; Mizan al-`itidal, vol.3) pp.337-338; Lisan al-mizan, vol.4, p.422). Abu Sa`id al-Mada'ini and others made it a means of livelihood. The limit was reached when the al-Karramiyyah and some of the al-Mutasawwifah gave the ruling that the fabrication of traditions for the prevention of sin or for persuasion towards obedience was lawful. Consequently, in connection with persuading and dissuading, traditions were fabricated quite freely, and this was not regarded against the religious law or morality. Rather, this work was generally done by those who bore the appearance of asceticism or fear of Allah and who passed their nights in praying and days in filling their registers with false traditions. An idea about the number of these fabricated traditions can be had from the fact that out of six hundred thousand traditions al-Bukhari selected only two thousand seven hundred and sixty-one traditions, (Tarikh Baghdad, vol.2, p.8; al-Irshad as-sari, vol.1, p.28; Sifatu's-safwah, vol.4, p.143). Muslim thought fit for selection only four thousand out of three hundred thousand (Tarikh Baghdad, vol.13, p.101; al-Muntazam, vol.5, p.32; Tabaqat al-huffaz, vol.2, pp.151,157; Wafayat al-a`yan, vol.5, p.194). Abu Dawud took four thousand and eight hundred out of five hundred thousand (Tarikh Baghdad, vol.9, p.57; Tabaqat al-huffaz, vol.2, p.154; al-Muntazam, vol.5, p.97; Wafayat al-a`yan, vol.2, p.404), and Ahmad ibn Hanbal took thirty thousand out of nearly on million traditions (Tarikh Baghdad, vol.4, p.419-420; Tabaqat al-huffaz, vol.2, p.17; Wafayat al-a`yan, vol.1, p.64; Tahdhib at-tahdhib, vol.1, p. 74). But when this selection is studied some traditions which come across can, in no circumstances, be attributed to the Prophet. The result is that a group of considerable number has cropped up among Muslims who, in view of these (so-called) authoritative collections and true traditions, completely reject the evidentiary value of the traditions, (For further reference see al-Ghadir, vol.5, pp. 208-378).

The second category of relaters of traditions are those who, without appreciating the occasion or context, related whatever they could recollect, right or wrong. Thus, in al-Bukhari (vol.2, pp.100-102; vol.5, p.98); Muslim (vol.3, pp. 41-45); at-Tirmidhi (vol.3, pp. 327-329); an-Nasa'i (vol.4, p.18); Ibn Majah (vol.1, pp.508-509); Malik ibn Anas (al-Muwatta' vol.1, p.234); ash-Shafi'i (Ikhtilaf'l-hadith, on the side lines of "al-Umm", vol.7, p.266); Abu Dawud (vol.3, p.194); Ahmad ibn Hanbal (vol.1, pp.41,42) and al-Bayhaqi

(vol.4, pp.72-74) in the chapter entitled 'weeping over the dead' it is stated that when Caliph `Umar was wounded Suhayb came weeping to him, then `Umar said:

O' Suhayb, you weep over me, while the Prophet had said that the dead person is punished if his people weep over him.

When after the death of Caliph `Umar this was mentioned to `A'ishah, she said: "May Allah have mercy on `Umar. The Messenger of Allah did not say that weeping of relations causes punishment on the dead. but he said that the punishment of an unbeliever increases if his people weep over him." After this `A'ishah said that according to the Holy Qur'an no person has to bear the burden of another, so how could the burden of those who weep be put on the dead. After this the following verse was quoted by `A'ishah:

. . . And no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another; (Qur'an, 6:164; 17:15; 35:18; 39:7; 53:38).

The wife of the Holy Prophet `A'ishah relates that once the Prophet passed by a Jewish woman over whom her people were weeping. The Prophet then remarked, "Her people are weeping over her but she is undergoing punishment in the grave."

The third category of the relaters of traditions is of those who heard some repealed traditions from the Prophet but could not get any chance to hear the repealing traditions which he could relate to others. An example of a repealing tradition is the saying of the Prophet which also contains a reference to the repealed tradition, namely: "I had disallowed you to visit graves, but now you can visit them." (Muslim, vol.3, p.65; at-Tirmidhi, vol.3, p.370; Abu Dawud, vol.3, pp. 218, 332; an-Nasa'i, vol.4, p. 89; Ibn Majah, vol.1, pp. 500-501; Malik ibn Anas, vol.2, p. 485; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.1, pp.145, 452; vol.3, pp.38, 63, 66, 237, 350; vol.5, pp. 350, 355, 356, 357, 359, 361; al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak, vol.1, pp. 374-376; and al-Bayhaqi, vol.4, pp. 76-77). Herein the permission to visit graves has repealed the previous restriction on it. Now, those who heard only the repealed tradition continued acting according to it.

The fourth category of relaters of traditions is of those who were fully aware of the principles of justice, possessed intelligence and sagacity, knew the occasion when a tradition was first uttered (by the Prophet) and were also acquainted with the repealing and the repealed traditions, the particular and the general, and the timely and the absolute. They avoided falsehood and fabrication. Whatever they heard remained preserved in their memory, and they conveyed it with exactness to others. It is they whose traditions are the precious possession of Islam, free from fraud and counterfeit and worthy of being trusted and acted upon. That collection of traditions which has been conveyed through trustworthy bosoms like that of Amir al-mu'minin and has remained free from cutting, curtailing, alteration or change particularly present Islam in its true form. The position of Amir al-mu'minin in Islamic knowledge has been most certainly proved through the following traditions narrated from the Holy Prophet such as:

Amir al-mu'minin, Jabir ibn `Abdullah, Ibn `Abbas and `Abdullah ibn `Umar have narrated from the Holy Prophet that he said:

I am the city of knowledge and `Ali is its door. He who wants to acquire (my) knowledge should come through its door. (al-Mustadrak, vol.3, pp. 126-127; al-Isti`ab, vol.3, p.1102; Usd al-ghabah, vol.4, p.22; Tarikh Baghdad, vol.2, p.377; vol.4, p.348; vol.7, p.172; vol.11, pp. 48-50; Tadhkirah al-huffaz; vol.4, p.28; Majma` az-zawa'id, vol.9, p.114; Tahdhib at-tahdhib, vol.6, p.320; vol.7, p.337; Lisan al-mizan, vol.2, pp.122-123; Tarikh al-khulafa', p.170; Kanz al-ummal, vol.6, pp.152,156,401; `Umdah al-qari, vol.7, p.631; Sharh al-mawahib al-ladunniyyah, vol.3, p.143).

Amir al-mu'minin and Ibn `Abbas have also narrated from the Holy Prophet that:

I am the store-house of wisdom and `Ali is its door. He who wants to acquire wisdom should come through its door. (Hilyah al-awliya', vol.1, p.64; Masabih as-sunnah, vol.2, p.275; Tarikh Baghdad, vol.11, p.204; Kanz al-ummal, vol.6, p.401; ar-Riyad an-nadira, vol.2, p.193).

If only people could take the Prophet's blessings through these sources of knowledge. But it is a tragic chapter of history that although traditions are accepted through the Kharijites and enemies of the Prophet's family, whenever the series of relaters includes the name of any individual from among the Prophet's family there is hesitation in accepting the tradition.

Sermon 211: It is through the strength of Allah's greatness...

The greatness of Allah and the creation of the Universe

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في عجب صنعة الكون

It is through the strength of Allah's greatness and His subtle power of innovation that He made solid dry earth out of the water of the fathomless, compact and dashing ocean. Then He made from it layers and separated them into seven skies after they had been joined together. So, they became stationary at His command and stopped at the limit fixed by Him. He so made the earth that it is born by deep blue, surrounded and suspended water which is obedient to His command and has submitted to His awe while its flow has stopped due to fear of Him.

وَكَانَ مِنْ اقْتِنَادِ جَبْرُوتِهِ، وَيَبْدِيعِ لَطَائِفِ صَنَعَتِهِ، أَنْ جَعَلَ مِنْ مَاءِ الْبَحْرِ الرَّاحِرِ الْمُتَرَكِمِ الْمُتَقَاصِفِ، يَبَسًا جَامِدًا، ثُمَّ فَطَرَ مِنْهُ أَطْبَاقًا، فَفَتَقَهَا سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ بَعْدَ ارْتِنَاقِهَا، فَاسْتَمْسَكَتْ بِأَمْرِهِ، وَقَامَتْ عَلَى حَدِّهِ، [وَأَرْسَى أَرْضًا] يَحْمِلُهَا الْأَخْضَرُ الْمُتَعَنِّجِرُ، وَالْقَمَمَقَامُ الْمُسَحَّرُ، فَذَلَّ لِأَمْرِهِ، وَأَدْعَنَ لِهَيْبَتِهِ، وَوَقَفَ الْجَارِي مِنْهُ لِحَشِيَّتِهِ،

He also created its high hills, rocks of stones and lofty mountains. He put them in their positions and made them remain stationary. Their peaks rose into the air while their roots remained in the water. In this way He raised the mountains above the plains and fixed their foundations in the vast expanse wherever they stood. He made their peaks high and made their bodies lofty. He made them like pillars for the earth and fixed them in it like pegs. Consequently, the earth became stationary; otherwise it might bend with its inhabitants or sink inwards with its burden, or shift from its positions.

وَجَبَلَ جَلَامِيدَهَا، وَنُشُورَ مُتُونِهَا وَأَطْوَادِهَا، فَأَرْسَاهَا فِي مَرَاسِيهَا، وَأَلْزَمَهَا قَرَارَاتِهَا، فَمَصَّتْ رُؤُسَهَا فِي الْهَوَاءِ، وَرَسَتْ أَصْوُهَا فِي الْمَاءِ، فَأَنْهَدَ جِبَالَهَا عَنْ سُهُولِهَا، وَأَسَاحَ قَوَاعِدَهَا فِي مَتُونِ أَقْطَارِهَا، وَمَوَاضِعِ أَنْصَابِهَا، فَأَشْهَقَ قِالِهَا، وَأَطَالَ أَنْشَارَهَا، وَجَعَلَهَا لِلْأَرْضِ عِمَادًا، وَأَرْزَهَا فِيهَا أَوْتَادًا، فَسَكَنْتْ عَلَى حَرَكَتِهَا مِنْ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِأَهْلِهَا، أَوْ تَسِيحَ بِحَمْلِهَا، أَوْ تَرُؤَلَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهَا.

Therefore, Glorified is He who made it firm after the surging of its waters and solidified it after the watery state of its sides. In this way He made it a cradle for His creatures and spread it for them in the form of a floor over the deep ocean which is stationary and does not move and is fixed and does not flow. Severe winds move it here and there and clouds draw up water from it.

Verily in this there is a lesson unto him who feareth (Allah) (Qur'an, 79:26)

فَسُبْحَانَ مَنْ أَمْسَكَهَا بَعْدَ مَوْجَانِ مِيَاهِهَا، وَأَجْمَدَهَا بَعْدَ رُطُوبَةِ أَكْنَافِهَا، فَجَعَلَهَا لِحْلُوقِهِ
مِهَاداً، وَبَسَطَهَا هُمْ فِرَاشاً! فَوْقَ بَحْرِ لِحْيِي رَاكِدٌ لَا يَجْرِي، وَقَائِمٌ لَا يَسْرِي، تُكَرِّهُهُ الرِّيَاحُ
الْعَوَاصِفُ، وَتَمَحُّصُهُ الْعَمَامُ الدَّوَارِفُ، (إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِمَنْ يَخْشَى)

Alternative Sources for Sermon 211

- (1) *Al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, bab al-sama' wa al-kawakib;*
- (2) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 27 (a.z.r).*

Sermon 212: O My God! Whoever listens to our utterance...

About those who give up supporting right (Attempting To Mobilise His Followers For Jihad Against The Syrians)

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

كان يستنهض بها أصحابه إلى جهاد أهل الشام في زمانه

O My God! Whoever listens to our utterance which is just and which seeks the prosperity of religion and the worldly life and does not seek mischief, but rejects it after listening, then he certainly turns away from Thy support and desists from strengthening Thy religion. We make Thee a witness over him and Thou art the greatest of all witnesses, and we make all those who inhabit Thy earth and Thy skies witness over him. Thereafter, Thou alone can make us needless of his support and question him for his sin.

اللَّهُمَّ أَيُّمَا عَبْدٍ مِنْ عِبَادِكَ سَمِعَ مَقَالَتَنَا الْعَادِلَةَ عَيْرَ الْجَائِزَةَ، وَالْمُصْلِحَةَ فِي الدِّينِ وَالدُّنْيَا
عَيْرَ الْمُفْسِدَةَ، فَأَبَى بَعْدَ سَمْعِهِ لَهَا إِلَّا النُّكُوصَ عَنْ نُصْرَتِكَ، وَالْأَبْطَاءَ عَنْ إِعْزَازِ دِينِكَ، فَإِنَّا
نَسْتَشْهَدُكَ عَلَيْهِ يَا أَكْبَرَ الشَّاهِدِينَ شَهَادَةً، وَنَسْتَشْهَدُ عَلَيْهِ جَمِيعَ مَا أَسْكَنْتَهُ أَرْضَكَ
وَسَمَاوَاتِكَ، ثُمَّ أَنْتَ بَعْدَ الْمُعْنَى عَنْ نَصْرِهِ، وَالْأَخِذُ لَهُ بِدَنْبِهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 212

No sources mentioned.

Sermon 213: Praise be to Allah who is above all similarity to the creatures...

The Sublimity of Allah and a eulogy of the Prophet

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في تمجيد الله وتعظيمه

Praise be to Allah who is above all similarity to the creatures, is above the words of describers, who displays the wonders of His management for the on-lookers, is hidden from the imagination of thinkers by virtue of the greatness of His glory, has knowledge without acquiring it, adding to it or drawing it (from someone), and Who is the ordainer of all matters without reflecting or thinking. He is such that gloom does not concern Him, nor does He seek light from brightness, night does not overtake Him nor does the day pass over Him (so as to affect Him in any manner). His comprehension (of things) is not through eyes and His knowledge is not dependent on being informed.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ عَنِ شَبِّهِ الْمَخْلُوقِينَ، الْعَالِبِ لِمَقَالِ الْوَاصِفِينَ، الظَّاهِرِ بَعَجَائِبِ تَدْبِيرِهِ
لِلنَّاطِرِينَ، الْبَاطِنِ بِجَلَالِ عِزَّتِهِ عَنِ فِكْرِ الْمُتَوَهِّمِينَ، الْعَالِمِ بِأَكْتِسَابِ وَلَا أَرْذِيَادِ، وَلَا عِلْمِ
مُسْتَفَادِ، الْمُقَدِّرِ لِجَمِيعِ الْأُمُورِ بِأَلَا رَوِيَّةٍ وَلَا ضَمِيرٍ، الَّذِي لَا تَعُشَاهُ الظُّلْمُ، وَلَا يَسْتَضِيءُ
بِالْأَنْوَارِ، وَلَا يَرْهَقُهُ لَيْلٌ، وَلَا يَجْرِي عَلَيْهِ نَهَارٌ، لَيْسَ إِذْرَأُكُهُ بِالْأَبْصَارِ، وَلَا عِلْمُهُ بِالْأَحْبَارِ.

A part of the same sermon about the Prophet

منها: في ذكر النبي (صلى الله عليه وآله)

Allah deputised the Prophet with light, and accorded him the highest precedence in selection. Through him Allah united those who were divided, overpowered the powerful, overcame difficulties and levelled rugged ground, and thus removed misguidance from right and left.

أَرْسَلَهُ بِالضِّيَاءِ، وَقَدَّمَهُ فِي الْأَصْطِفَاءِ، فَرْتَقَى بِهِ الْمَفَاتِقَ، وَسَاوَرَ بِهِ الْمُعَالِبَ، وَذَلَّلَ بِهِ
الصُّعُوبَةَ، وَسَهَّلَ بِهِ الْحَزُونََةَ، حَتَّى سَرَّحَ الضَّلَالَ، عَنْ يَمِينٍ وَشِمَالِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 213

(1) *Al-Majlisi, Bihar, IV, 319.*

Sermon 214: I stand witness that He is just and does justice...

The Prophet's nobility of descent

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يصف جوهر الرسول، ويصف العلماء، ويعظ بالتقوى

I stand witness that He is just and does justice; He is the arbiter Who decides (between right and wrong). I also stand witness that Muhammad is His slave. His Messenger and the Chief of His creatures. Whenever Allah divided the line of descent, He put him in the better one, and therefore, no evil-doer ever shared with him nor was any vicious person his partner. Beware! Surely Allah, the Glorified, has provided for virtue those who are suited to it, for truth pillars (that support it), and for obedience protection (against deviation). In every matter of obedience you will find Allah, the Glorified's succour that will speak through tongues and accord firmness to hearts. It has sufficiency for those who seek sufficiency, and a cure for those who seek cure.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّهُ عَدْلٌ عَدَلٌ، وَحَكَمٌ فَصَلٌ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، وَسَيِّدُ عِبَادِهِ، كُلَّمَا نَسَخَ اللَّهُ الْخَلْقَ فِرْقَتَيْنِ جَعَلَهُ فِي خَيْرِهِمَا، لَمْ يُسْهِمْ فِيهِ عَاهِرٌ، وَلَا ضَرَبَ فِيهِ فَاجِرٌ. أَلَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ جَعَلَ لِلْخَيْرِ أَهْلًا، وَلِلْحَقِّ دَعَائِمَ، وَلِلطَّاعَةِ عِصْمًا، وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ طَاعَةٍ عَوْنًا مِنَ اللَّهِ يَقُولُ عَلَى الْأَلْسِنَةِ، وَيُتَبَّتُ الْأَفْعِدَّةَ، فِيهِ كِفَاءٌ لِمُكْتَفٍ، وَشِفَاءٌ لِمُسْتَشْفٍ.

The characteristics of the virtuous whose guidance must be followed

صفة العلماء

Know that, certainly, those creatures of Allah who preserve His knowledge offer protection to those things which He desires to be protected and make His springs flow (for the benefit of others). They contact each other with friendliness and meet each other with affection. They drink water from cups that quench the thirst and return from the watering places fully satiated. Misgiving does not affect them and backbiting does not gain ground with them. In this way Allah has tied their nature with good manners. Because of this they love each other and meet each other. They have become superior, like seeds which are selected by taking some and throwing away others. This selection has distinguished them and the process of choosing has purified them.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمُسْتَحْفَظِينَ عِلْمَهُ، يَصُونُونَ مَصُونَتَهُ، وَيُفَجِّرُونَ عُيُونَهُ، يَتَوَاصَلُونَ بِالْوِلَايَةِ، وَيَتَلَقَّوْنَ بِالْمَحَبَّةِ، وَيَتَسَاقَوْنَ بِكَأْسِ رَوْيَةِ، وَيَصْدُرُونَ بِرِيَّةٍ، لَا تَشْوِيهِمُ الرِّيَّةَ، وَلَا تُسْرِغُ فِيهِمُ الْغَيْبَةَ. عَلَى ذَلِكَ عَقَدَ خَلْقَهُمْ وَأَخْلَاقَهُمْ، فَعَلَيْهِ يَتَحَابُّونَ، وَبِهِ يَتَوَاصَلُونَ، فَكَانُوا كَتَفَاضِلِ الْبَدْرِ يُنْتَقَى، فَيُؤَخَذُ مِنْهُ وَيُلْقَى، قَدْ مَيَّرَهُ التَّخْلِيصُ، وَهَدَّيْتَهُ التَّمْحِيصُ.

Therefore, man should secure honour by adopting these qualities. He should fear the day of Doom before it arrives, and he should appreciate the shortness of his life and the shortness of his sojourn in the place of stay which has only to last for his change over to the next place. He should therefore do something for his change over and for the known stages of his departure. Blessed be he who possesses a virtuous heart, obeys one who guides him, keeps away from one who takes him to ruin, catches the path of safety with the help of him who provides him light (of guidance) and by obeying the leader who commands him, hastens towards guidance before its doors are closed, gets open the door of repentance and removes the (stain of) sins. He has certainly been put on the right path and guided towards the straight road.

فَلْيُقْبَلِ امْرُؤٌ كَرَامَةً بِقُبُولِهَا، وَلْيَحْدَرْ قَارِعَةً قَبْلَ خُلُوقِهَا، وَلْيَنْظُرِ امْرُؤٌ فِي قَصِيرِ أَيَّامِهِ، وَقَلِيلِ مُقَامِهِ، فِي مَنْزِلٍ حَتَّى يَسْتَبْدِلَ بِهِ مَنْزِلًا، فَلْيَصْنَعْ لِمُنْحَوِّلِهِ، وَمَعَارِفِ مُنْتَقِلِهِ فَطُوبَى لِمَنْ لَدَى قَلْبٍ سَلِيمٍ، أَطَاعَ مَنْ يَهْدِيهِ، وَتَجَنَّبَ مَنْ يُرْدِيهِ، وَأَصَابَ سَبِيلَ السَّلَامَةِ بِبَصَرٍ مَنْ بَصَرَهُ، وَطَاعَةَ هَادٍ أَمْرَهُ، وَبَادَرَ الْهُدَى قَبْلَ أَنْ تُغْلَقَ أَبْوَابُهُ، وَتُقَطَعَ أَسْبَابُهُ، وَاسْتَفْتَحَ التَّوْبَةَ، وَأَمَاطَ الْحُوبَةَ، فَقَدْ أُفِيمَ عَلَى الطَّرِيقِ، وَهُدِيَ نَهْجَ السَّبِيلِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 214

(1) *Al-'Amidi, Ghurar;*

(2) *Ibn Abi al-Hadid, Sharh, III, 23.*

Sermon 215: Praise be to Allah! Who made me such...

A prayer which Amir al-mu'minin often recited

ومن دعائه (عليه السلام)

كان يدعو به كثيراً

Praise be to Allah! Who made me such that I have not died nor am I sick, nor have my veins been infected with disease, nor have I been hauled up for my evil acts, nor am I without progeny, nor have I forsaken my religion, nor do I disbelieve in my Lord, nor do I feel strangeness with my faith, nor is my intelligence affected, nor have I been punished with the punishment of peoples before me. I am a slave in Thy possession, I have been guilty of excesses over myself. Thou hast exhausted Thy pleas over me and I have no plea (before Thee). I have no power to take except what Thou givest me, and I cannot evade except what Thou savest me from.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَمْ يُصَبِّحْ بِي مَيِّتاً وَلَا سَقِيماً، وَلَا مَضْرُوباً عَلَى عُرْوِقِي بِسُوءٍ، وَلَا مَأْخُوداً بِأَسْوَأِ عَمَلِي، وَلَا مَقْطُوعاً دَابِرِي، وَلَا مُزْتَدّاً عَن دِينِي، وَلَا مُنْكَرّاً لِرَبِّي، وَلَا مُسْتَوْحِشاً مِنْ إِيْمَانِي، وَلَا مُلْتَبِساً عَقْلِي، وَلَا مُعَذِّباً بِعَذَابِ الْأَمَمِ مِنْ قَبْلِي. أَصْبَحْتُ عَبْدًا مَمْلُوكًا ظَالِمًا لِنَفْسِي، لَكَ الْحُجَّةُ عَلَيَّ وَلَا حُجَّةَ لِي، لَا أَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ آخُذَ إِلَّا مَا أَعْطَيْتَنِي، وَلَا أَتَّعِي إِلَّا مَا وَفَيْتَنِي.

O My God! I seek Thy protection from becoming destitute despite Thy riches, from being misguided despite Thy guidance, from being molested in Thy realm and from being humiliated while authority rests with Thee. O My God! Let my spirit be the first of those good objects that Thou takest from me and the first trust out of Thy favours held in trust with me.

O My God! We seek Thy protection from turning away from Thy command or revolting against Thy religion, or being led away by our desires instead of by guidance that comes from Thee.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ أَفْتَقِرَ فِي غِنَاكَ، أَوْ أَضِلَّ فِي هُدَاكَ، أَوْ أُضَامَ فِي سُلْطَانِكَ، أَوْ أُضْطَهَدَ وَالْأَمْرُ لَكَ! اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْ نَفْسِي أَوَّلَ كَرِيْمَةٍ تَنْتَرِعُهَا مِنْ كَرَامِي، وَأَوَّلَ وَدِيْعَةٍ تَرْجِعُهَا مِنْ وَدَائِعِ نَعْمِكَ عِنْدِي! اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَعُوذُ بِكَ أَنْ نَذْهَبَ عَن قَوْلِكَ، أَوْ نُفْتَنَ عَن دِينِكَ، أَوْ تَتَابَعَ بِنَا أَهْوَاؤُنَا دُونَ الْهُدَى الَّذِي جَاءَ مِنْ عِنْدِكَ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 215

(1) *Al-Sayyid Ibn al-Baqi, al-Ikhtibar;*

(2) *al-Majlisi, Bihar, vol. 94, 226.*

Sermon 216: So now, Allah, the Glorified, has...

Delivered at the battle of Siffin. About mutual rights of the ruler and the ruled

ومن خطبة له عليه السلام

خطبها بصفين

So now, Allah, the Glorified, has, by placing me over your affairs, created my right over you, and you too have a right over me like mine over you. A right is very vast in description but very narrow in equitability of action. It does not accrue to any person unless it accrues against him also, and right does not accrue against a person unless it also accrues in his favour. If there is any right which is only in favour of a person with no (corresponding) right accruing against him it is solely for Allah, the Glorified, and not for His creatures by virtue of His might over His creatures and by virtue of the justice permeating all His decrees. Of course, He the Glorified, has created His right over creatures that they should worship Him, and has laid upon Himself (the obligation of) their reward equal to several times the recompense as a mark of His bounty and the generosity that He is capable of.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ حَقًّا بِوِلَايَةِ أَمْرِكُمْ، وَلَكُمْ عَلَيَّ مِنَ الْحَقِّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي لِي عَلَيْكُمْ، فَالْحَقُّ أَوْسَعُ الْأَشْيَاءِ فِي التَّوَاصُفِ، وَأَضْيَقُهَا فِي التَّنَاصُفِ، لَا يَجْرِي لِإِحْدٍ إِلَّا جَرَى عَلَيْهِ، وَلَا يَجْرِي عَلَيْهِ إِلَّا جَرَى لَهُ وَلَوْ كَانَ لِإِحْدٍ أَنْ يَجْرِيَ لَهُ وَلَا يَجْرِيَ عَلَيْهِ، لَكَانَ ذَلِكَ خَالِصًا لِلَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ دُونَ خَلْقِهِ، لِقُدْرَتِهِ عَلَى عِبَادِهِ، وَلِعَدْلِهِ فِي كُلِّ مَا جَرَتْ عَلَيْهِ صُرُوفُ قَضَائِهِ، وَلَكِنَّهُ جَعَلَ حَقَّهُ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ أَنْ يُطِيعُوهُ، وَجَعَلَ جَزَاءَهُمْ عَلَيْهِ مُضَاعَفَةَ الثَّوَابِ تَفَضُّلاً مِنْهُ، وَتَوْسَعاً بِمَا هُوَ مِنَ الْمَزِيدِ أَهْلُهُ.

حق الوالي وحق الرعية

Then, from His rights, He, the Glorified, created certain rights for certain people against others. He made them so as to equate with one another. Some of these rights produce other rights. Some rights are such that they do not accrue except with others. The greatest of these rights that Allah, the Glorified, has made obligatory is the right of the ruler over the ruled and the right of the ruled over the ruler. This is an obligation which Allah, the Glorified, has placed on each other. He has made it the basis of their (mutual) affection, and an honour for their religion. Consequently, the ruled cannot prosper unless the rulers are sound, while the rulers cannot be sound unless the ruled are steadfast. If the ruled fulfil the rights of the ruler and the ruler fulfils their rights, then right attains the position of honour among them, the ways of religion become established, signs of justice become fixed and the sunnah gains currency.

ثُمَّ جَعَلَ . سُبْحَانَهُ . مِنْ حُقُوقِهِ حُقُوقاً افْتَرَضَهَا لِبَعْضِ النَّاسِ عَلَى بَعْضٍ، فَجَعَلَهَا تَتَكَافَأُ فِي وُجُوهِهَا، وَيُوجِبُ بَعْضُهَا بَعْضاً، وَلَا يُسْتَوْجَبُ بَعْضُهَا إِلَّا بِبَعْضٍ. وَأَعْظَمُ مَا افْتَرَضَ . سُبْحَانَهُ . مِنْ تِلْكَ الحُقُوقِ حَقُّ الوَالِي عَلَى الرَّعِيَّةِ، وَحَقُّ الرَّعِيَّةِ، عَلَى الوَالِي، فَرِيضَةٌ فَرَضَهَا اللهُ . سُبْحَانَهُ . لِكُلِّ عَلَى كُلِّ، فَجَعَلَهَا نِظَاماً لِأَلْفَتِهِمْ، وَعِزّاً لِدِينِهِمْ، فَلَيْسَتْ تَصْلُحُ الرَّعِيَّةُ إِلَّا بِصَلَاحِ الوَلَاةِ، وَلَا تَصْلُحُ الوَلَاةُ إِلَّا بِاسْتِقَامَةِ الرَّعِيَّةِ. فَإِذَا أَدَّتِ الرَّعِيَّةُ إِلَى الوَالِي حَقَّهُ، وَأَدَّى الوَالِي إِلَيْهَا حَقَّهَا، عَزَّ الحَقُّ بَيْنَهُمْ، وَقَامَتْ مَنَاهِجُ الدِّينِ، وَاعْتَدَلَتْ مَعَالِمُ العَدْلِ، وَجَرَتْ عَلَى أَذْلَاهَا السُّنَنُ .

In this way time will improve, the continuance of government will be expected, and the aims of the enemies will be frustrated. But if the ruled gain sway over the ruler, or the ruler oppresses the ruled, then difference crops up in every word, signs of oppression appear, mischief enters religion and the ways of the sunnah are forsaken. Then desires are acted upon, the commands (of religion) are discarded, diseases of the spirit become numerous and there is no hesitation in disregarding even great rights, nor in committing big wrongs. In such circumstances, the virtuous are humiliated while the vicious are honoured, and there are serious chastisements from Allah, the Glorified, onto the people.

فَصَلَحَ بِذَلِكَ الزَّمَانُ، وَطَمِعَ فِي بَقَاءِ الدَّوْلَةِ، وَبَسَسَتْ مَطَامِعُ الأَعْدَاءِ. وَإِذَا عَكَبَتِ الرَّعِيَّةُ وَالِيَهَا، أَوْ أَجْحَفَ الوَالِي بِرِعْيَتِهِ احْتَلَقَتْ هُنَالِكَ الكَلِمَةُ، وَظَهَرَتْ مَعَالِمُ الجُورِ، وَكَثُرَ الأَدْعَاؤُ فِي الدِّينِ، وَتُرِكَتْ مَحَاجُّ السُّنَنِ، فُعْمِلَ بِأَهْوَى، وَعُطِّلَتِ الأَحْكَامُ، وَكَثُرَتْ عِلَلُ النُّفُوسِ، فَلَا يُسْتَوْحَشُ لِعَظِيمِ حَقِّ عَطَلٍ، وَلَا لِعَظِيمِ بَاطِلٍ فُعِلَ! فَهُنَالِكَ تَذَلُّ الأَبْرَارِ، وَعِزُّ الأَشْرَارِ، وَتَعْظُمُ تَبَعَاتُ اللهِ عِنْدَ العِبَادِ

You should therefore counsel each other (for the fulfilment of your obligations) and co-operate with each other. However extremely eager a person may be to secure the pleasure of Allah, and however fully he strives for it, he cannot discharge (his obligation for) obedience to Allah, the Glorified, as is really due to Him, and it is an obligatory right of Allah over the people that they should advise each other to the best of their ability and co-operate with each other for the establishment of truth among them.

No person, however great his position in the matter of truth, and however advanced his distinction in religion may be, is above co-operation in connection with the obligations placed on him by Allah. Again, no man, however small he may be regarded by others, and however humble he may appear before eyes, is too low to co-operate or to be afforded co-operation in this matter.

فَعَالِيكُمْ بِالتَّنَاصُحِ فِي ذَلِكَ، وَحَسَنِ التَّعَاوُنِ عَلَيْهِ، فَلَيْسَ أَحَدٌ . وَإِنْ اشْتَدَّ عَلَى رِضَى اللهِ حِرْصُهُ، وَطَالَ فِي العَمَلِ اجْتِهَادُهُ . بِبَالِغِ حَقِيقَةِ مَا اللهُ سُبْحَانَهُ أَهْلُهُ مِنَ الطَّاعَةِ لَهُ، وَلَكِنْ مِنْ

وَاجِبِ حُقُوقِ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ النَّصِيحَةَ بِمَبْلَغِ جُهِدِهِمْ، وَالتَّعَاوُنُ عَلَى إِقَامَةِ الْحَقِّ بَيْنَهُمْ. وَلَيْسَ امْرُؤٌ . وَإِنْ عَظُمَتْ فِي الْحَقِّ مَنَزِلَتُهُ، وَتَقَدَّمَتْ فِي الدِّينِ فَضِيلَتُهُ . بِفَوْقِ أَنْ يُعَانَ عَلَى مَا حَمَلَهُ اللَّهُ مِنْ حَقِّهِ . وَلَا امْرُؤٌ . وَإِنْ صَغُرَتْهُ النَّفُوسُ، وَاقْتَحَمَتْهُ الْعُيُونُ . بِدُونِ أَنْ يُعِينَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ أَوْ يُعَانَ عَلَيْهِ.

One of Amir al-mu'minin's companions replied to him by a long speech wherein he praised him much and mentioned his own listening to him and obeying him, whereupon Amir al-mu'minin said:

فأجابه عليه السلام رجل من أصحابه بكلام طويل، يكثر فيه الثناء عليه، ويذكر سمعه وطاعته فقال عليه السلام:

If a man in his mind regards Allah's glory as being high and believes in his heart that Allah's position is sublime, then it is his right that on account of the greatness of these things he should regard all other things small. Among such persons, he on whom Allah's bounty is great and Allah's favours are kind has a greater obligation, because Allah's bounty over any person does not increase without an increase in Allah's right over him.

إِنَّ مِنْ حَقِّ مَنْ عَظُمَ جَلَالُ اللَّهِ فِي نَفْسِهِ، وَجَلَّ مَوْضِعُهُ مِنْ قَلْبِهِ، أَنْ يَصْغُرَ عِنْدَهُ . لِعَظَمِ ذَلِكَ . سِوَاهُ، وَإِنَّ أَحَقَّ مَنْ كَانَ كَذَلِكَ لَمَنْ عَظُمَتْ نِعْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ، وَأَلْطَفَ إِحْسَانُهُ إِلَيْهِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ تَعْظُمْ نِعْمَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى أَحَدٍ إِلَّا أَزَادَ حَقُّ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ عَظْمًا،

In the view of virtuous people, the worst position of rulers is that it may be thought about them that they love glory, and their affairs may be taken to be based on pride. I would really hate that it may occur to your mind that I love high praises or to hear eulogies. By the grace of Allah, I am not like this. Even If I had loved to be mentioned like this, I would have given it up in submissiveness before Allah, the Glorified, rather than accept greatness and sublimity to which He is more entitled.

Generally, people feel pleased at praise after good performances; but do not mention for me handsome praise for the obligations I have discharged towards Allah and towards you, because of (my) fear about those obligations which I have not discharged and for issuing injunctions which could not be avoided, and do not address me in the manner despots are addressed.

Do not evade me as the people of passion are (to be) evaded, do not meet me with flattery and do not think that I shall take it ill if a true thing is said to me, because the person who feels disgusted when truth is said to him or a just matter is placed before him would find it more difficult to act upon them. Therefore, do not abstain from saying a truth or pointing out a matter of justice because I do not regard myself above erring¹.

I do not escape erring in my actions but that Allah helps me (in avoiding errors) in matters in which He is more powerful than I. Certainly, I and you are slaves owned by Allah, other than Whom there is no Lord except Him. He owns our selves which we do not own. He took us from where we were

towards what means prosperity to us. He altered our straying into guidance and gave us intelligence after blindness.

وَإِنَّ مِنْ أَسْحَفِ حَالَاتِ الْوَلَاةِ عِنْدَ صَالِحِ النَّاسِ، أَنْ يُظَنَّ بِهِمْ حُبُّ الْفَخْرِ، وَيُوضَعَ
أَمْرُهُمْ عَلَى الْكِبَرِ، وَقَدْ كَرِهَتْ أَنْ يَكُونَ جَالَ فِي ظَنِّكُمْ أَلِّي أَحِبُّ الْأَطْرَاءَ، وَاسْتِمَاعِ النَّعَاءِ،
وَلَسْتُ . بِحَمْدِ اللَّهِ . كَذَلِكَ، وَلَوْ كُنْتُ أَحِبُّ أَنْ يُقَالَ ذَلِكَ لَتَرَكْتُهُ انْحِطَاطًا لَلَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ عَن
تَنَاوُلِ مَا هُوَ أَحَقُّ بِهِ مِنَ الْعِظَمَةِ وَالْكَبَرِيَاءِ . وَرَبَّمَا اسْتَحَلَى النَّاسُ النَّعَاءَ بَعْدَ الْبَلَاءِ فَلَا تُثْنُوا
عَلَيَّ بِجَمِيلِ نَعَاءٍ، لِأَخْرَاجِي نَفْسِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنَ التَّيْبَةِ فِي حُقُوقِ لَمْ أَفْرُغْ مِنْ أَدَائِهَا،
وَفَرَائِضَ لَا بُدَّ مِنْ إِمضَائِهَا فَلَا تُكَلِّمُونِي بِمَا تُكَلِّمُونَ بِهِ الْجَبَّارَةَ، وَلَا تَتَحَفَّطُوا مِنِّي بِمَا يُتَحَفَّطُ
بِهِ عِنْدَ أَهْلِ الْبَادِرَةِ وَلَا تُخَالِطُونِي بِالْمُصَانَعَةِ وَلَا تَظُنُّوا بِي اسْتِقْلَالًا فِي حَقِّ قِيلِ لِي، وَلَا
النَّمَسَ إِعْظَامِ لِنَفْسِي، فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ اسْتَقْلَلَ الْحَقَّ أَنْ يُقَالَ لَهُ أَوْ الْعَدْلَ أَنْ يُعْرَضَ عَلَيْهِ، كَانَ
الْعَمَلُ بِهِمَا أَثْقَلَ عَلَيْهِ . فَلَا تُكْفُوا عَن مَقَالَةٍ بِحَقِّ، أَوْ مَشُورَةٍ بَعْدَلٍ، فَإِنِّي لَسْتُ فِي نَفْسِي
بِقَوْلِ أَنْ أُحْطِيَءَ، وَلَا آمَنْ ذَلِكَ مِنْ فِعْلِي، إِلَّا أَنْ يَكْفِيَنِي اللَّهُ مِنْ نَفْسِي مَا هُوَ أَمْلَكُ بِهِ مِنِّي
فَأَيُّمَا أَنَا وَأَنْتُمْ عِبِيدٌ مَمْلُوكُونَ لِرَبِّ لَا رَبَّ غَيْرُهُ، بِمَلِكٍ مِنَّا مَا لَا مَلِكُ مِنْ أَنْفُسِنَا، وَأَخْرَجْنَا بِمَا
كُنَّا فِيهِ إِلَى مَا صَلَحْنَا عَلَيْهِ، فَأَبْدَلْنَا بَعْدَ الضَّلَالَةِ بِالهُدَى، وَأَعْطَانَا الْبَصِيرَةَ بَعْدَ الْعَمَى .

Alternative Sources for Sermon 216

(1) *Al-Kulayni, Rawdah, 352.*

Notes

1. That the innocence of angels is different from the innocence of man needs no detailed discussion. The innocence of angels means that they do not possess the impulse to sin, but the innocence of man means that, although he has human frailties and passions, yet he possesses a peculiar power to resist them and he is not over-powered by them so as to commit sins. This very ability is called innocence and it prevents the rising up of personal passions and impulses. Amir al-mu'minin's saying that "I do not regard myself above erring" refers to those human dictates and passions, and his saying that "Allah helps me in avoiding 'errors'" refers to innocence. The same tone is found in the Qur'an in the words of Prophet Yusuf that:

I exculpate not myself, verily (one's) self is wont to bid (him to) evil, except such as my Lord hath had mercy on; verily my Lord is Oft-forgiving, All-merciful. (12:53)

Just as in this verse, because of the existence of exception, its firstpart cannot be used to argue against his innocence, similarly, due to the existence of the exception "but that Allah helps me in avoiding errors" in Amir al-mu'minin's saying, its first part cannot be used to argue against his innocence, otherwise the Prophet's innocence too will have to be rejected. In the same way, the last sentence of this sermon should not be taken to mean that before the proclamation of prophethood he had been under the influence of pre-Islamic beliefs, and that just as others had been unbelievers he too might have been in darkness and misguidance, because from his very birth Amir al-mu'minin was brought-up by the Prophet and the effect of his training and up-bringing permeated him. It cannot therefore be imagined that he who had from infancy trod in the foot-prints of the Prophet would deviate from guidance even for a moment. Thus, al-Mas`udi has written:

Amir al-mu'minin never believed in any other god than Allah so that there could be the question of his accepting Islam. He rather followed the Prophet in all his actions and (virtually) initiated him, and in this very state he attained majority. (Muruj adh-dhahab, vol. 2, p. 3).

Here, by those whom Allah led from darkness into guidance, the reference is to the persons whom Amir al-mu'minin was addressing. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes in this connection:

The reference here is not to his own self because he had never been an unbeliever so as to have accepted Islam after that, but in these words he is referring to those group of people whom he was addressing. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 11, p. 108)

Sermon 217: O My God! I beseech Thee...

About the excesses of the Quraysh

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في التظلم والتشكي من قريش

O My God! I beseech Thee to take revenge on the Quraysh and those who are assisting them, for they have cut asunder my kinship and overturned my cup and have joined together to contest a right to which I was entitled more than anyone else. They said to me: "If you get your right, that will be just, but if you are denied the right, that too will be just. Endure it with sadness or kill yourself in grief." I looked around but found no one to shield me, protect me or help me except the members of my family. I refrained from flinging them into death and therefore closed my eyes despite the dust, kept swallowing saliva despite (the suffocation of) grief and endured pangs of anger although it was more bitter than colocynth and more grievous than the bite of knives.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَعْدِيكَ عَلَى قُرَيْشٍ، فَإِنَّهُمْ قَدْ قَطَعُوا رَحِمِي، وَأَكْفَأُوا إِنَائِي، وَأَجْمَعُوا عَلَيَّ
مُنَازَعَتِي حَقًّا كُنْتُ أَوْلَى بِهِ مِنْ غَيْرِي، وَقَالُوا: أَلَا إِنَّ فِي الْحَقِّ أَنْ تَأْخُذَهُ، وَفِي الْحَقِّ أَنْ تُنْعَهُ،
فَأَصْبِرْ مَعْمُومًا، أَوْ مِتْ مُتَأَسِّفًا.

فَنَظَرْتُ فَإِذَا لَيْسَ لِي زَافِدٌ، وَلَا ذَابٌّ وَلَا مُسَاعِدٌ، إِلَّا أَهْلَ بَيْتِي، فَصَنَنْتُ بِهِمْ عَنِ الْمَنِيَّةِ،
فَأَعْضَيْتُ عَلَى الْقَدَى، وَجَرَعْتُ رَيْقِي عَلَى الشَّجَا، وَصَبَّرْتُ مِنْ كَظْمِ الْعَيْظِ عَلَى أَمْرٍ مِنَ
الْعَلْمِ، وَالْمَ لِلْقَلْبِ مِنْ حَزِّ السِّقَارِ

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This utterance of Amir al-mu'minin has already appeared in an earlier Sermon (172), but I have repeated it here because of the difference of versions.

قال الشريف عليه السلام: وقد مضى هذا الكلام في أثناء خطبة متقدمة، إلا أنني كررته هاهنا لاختلاف الروايتين.

A part of the same sermon about those who went to Basrah to fight Amir al-Mu'minin

ومنه:

في ذكر السائرين إلى البصرة لحره (عليه السلام)

They marched on my officers and the custodians of the public treasury which is still under my control and on the people of a metropolis, all of whom were obedient to me and were in allegiance to me. They created division among them, instigated their party against me and attacked my followers. They killed a group of them by treachery, while another group

took up swords against them and fought with the swords till they met Allah as adherents to truth.

فَقَدِمُوا عَلَى عُمَّالِي، وَحُزَّانِ بَيْتِ مَالِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ الَّذِي فِي يَدَيَّ، وَعَلَى أَهْلِ مِصْرَ، كُلُّهُمْ فِي طَاعَتِي وَعَلَى بَيْعَتِي، فَسَتَّتُوا كَلِمَتَهُمْ، وَأَفْسَدُوا عَلَيَّ جَمَاعَتَهُمْ، وَوَبَّوْا عَلَيَّ شِيعَتِي، فَقَتَلُوا طَائِفَةً مِنْهُمْ عَدْرًا، وَطَائِفَةً عَضُوا عَلَى أَسْيَافِهِمْ، فَضَارَبُوا بِهَا حَتَّى لَقُوا اللَّهَ صَادِقِينَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 217

- (1) *Al-Kulayni, al-Rasa'il, see (2)*
- (2) *Ibn Tawus, Kashf, 173;*
- (3) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-'Imamah, I, 154;*
- (4) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat;*
- (5) *al-Tabari, al-Mustarshid, 95;*
- (6) *Safwah, Jamharah.*

Sermon 218: Abu Muhammad (Talhah) lies....

When Amir al-mu'minin passed by the corpses of Talhah ibn `Ubaydullah and `Abd ar-Rahman ibn `Attab ibn Asid who were both killed in the battle of Jamal, he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

لما مر بطلحة وعبدالرحمن بن عتاب بن أسيد وهما قتيلان يوم الجمل

Abu Muhammad (Talhah) lies here away from his own place. By Allah, I did not like that the Quraysh should lie killed under the stars. I have avenged myself with the descendants of `Abd Manaf, but the chief persons of Banu Jumah¹ have escaped me. They had stretched their necks towards a matter for which they were not suited, and therefore their necks were broken before they reached the goal.

لَقَدْ أَصْبَحَ أَبُو مُحَمَّدٍ بِهَذَا الْمَكَانِ غَرِيْبًا! أَمَا وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ كُنْتُ أَكْرَهُ أَنْ تَكُونَ قُرَيْشٌ قَتَلِي
تَحْتَ بُطُونِ الْكَوَاكِبِ! أَدْرَكْتُ وَثْرِي مِنْ بَنِي عَبْدِ مَنَافٍ، وَأَفْلَتَنِي أَعْيَانُ بَنِي جُمَحٍ، لَقَدْ أَتَلَعُوا
أَعْنَاقَهُمْ إِلَى أَمْرِ لَمْ يَكُونُوا أَهْلَهُ فَوَقَصُوا دُونَهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 219

- (1) *Abu al-Faraj, al-'Aghani, XXI, 246;*
- (2) *al-Mubarrad, al-Kamil, I, 126;*
- (3) *al-Bayhaqi, al-Mahasin, II, 53;*
- (4) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-'Iqd, II, 279;*
- (5) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, I, 192;*
- (6) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, II, 261;*
- (7) *al-Mas`udi, Muruj, II, 371.*

Notes

1. In the battle of Jamal a group of Banu Jumah was with `A'ishah, but the chief men of this group fled away from the battle-field. Some of them were: `Abdullah al-Tawil ibn Safwan, Yayá ibn Hakim, `Amir ibn Mas`ud and Ayyub ibn Habib. From this group (Banu Jumah) only two persons were killed.

Sermon 219: He (the believer) kept his mind alive...

Qualities of the God-fearing and the pious

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في وصف السالك الطريق إلى الله سبحانه

He (the believer) kept his mind alive and killed (the desires of) his heart till his body became thin, his bulk turned light and an effulgence of extreme brightness shone for him. It lighted the way for him and took him on the (right) path. Different doors led him to the door of safety and the place of (his permanent) stay. His feet, balancing his body became fixed in the position of safety and comfort, because he kept his heart (in good acts) and pleased his Allah.

قَدْ أَحْيَا عَقْلَهُ، وَأَمَاتَ نَفْسَهُ، حَتَّى دَقَّ جَلِيلُهُ، وَلَطَفَ غَلِيظُهُ، وَبَرَقَ لَهُ لَامِعٌ كَثِيرُ الْبَرَقِ،
فَأَبَانَ لَهُ الطَّرِيقَ، وَسَلَكَ بِهِ السَّبِيلَ، وَتَدَاغَعَتْهُ الْأَبْوَابُ إِلَى بَابِ السَّلَامَةِ، وَدَارَ الْأَقَامَةِ،
وَتَبَتَّتْ رِجْلَاهُ بِطُمَأْنِينَةٍ بَدَنِهِ فِي قَرَارِ الْأَمْنِ وَالرَّاحَةِ، بِمَا اسْتَعْمَلَ قَلْبُهُ، وَأَرْضَى رَبَّهُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 219

(1) *Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 233.*

Sermon 220: How distant (from achievement) is their aim...

Amir al-mu'minin recited the verse:

Engage (your) vying in exuberance, until ye come to the graves. ¹
(Qur'an, 102:1-2)

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

قال بعد تلاوته: (أهالكُم التَّكَاثُرُ * حَتَّى زُرْتُمُ الْمَقَابِرَ)

Then he said:

How distant (from achievement) is their aim, how neglectful are these visitors and how difficult is the affair. They have not taken lessons from things which are full of lessons, but they took them from far off places. Do they boast on the dead bodies of their fore-fathers, or do they regard the number of dead persons as a ground for feeling boastful of their number? They want to revive the bodies that have become spiritless and the movements that have ceased. They are more entitled to be a source of lesson than a source of pride. They are more suitable for being a source of humility than of honour.

يَا لَهُ مَرَامًا مَا أَبْعَدَهُ! وَزُورًا مَا أَغْفَلَهُ! وَخَطَرًا مَا أَفْطَعَهُ! لَقَدْ اسْتَحْلَوْا مِنْهُمْ أَيَّ مُذَكَّرٍ، وَتَنَاوَشُوهُمْ مِنْ مَكَانٍ بَعِيدٍ! أَفِيْمَصَارِعِ آبَائِهِمْ يَفْخَرُونَ! أَمْ بِعَدِيدِ الْهَلَكِي يَتَكَاثِرُونَ! يَزْبَجِعُونَ مِنْهُمْ أَجْسَادًا حَوَتْ، وَحَرَكَاتٍ سَكَنْتْ، وَلَا أَنْ يَكُونُوا عِبْرًا، أَحَقُّ مِنْ أَنْ يَكُونُوا مُفْتَحِرًا، وَلَا أَنْ يَهَيِّطُوا بِهِمْ جَنَابَ ذِلَّةٍ، أَحَجَى مِنْ أَنْ يَفُومُوا بِهِمْ مَقَامَ عِزَّةٍ!

They looked at them with weak-sighted eyes and descended into the hollow of ignorance. If they had asked about them from the dilapidated houses and empty courtyards, they would have said that they went into the earth in the state of misguidance and you too are heading ignorantly towards them. You trample their skulls, want to raise constructions on their corpses, you graze what they have left and live in houses which they have vacated. The days (that lie) between them and you are also bemoaning you and reciting elegies over you.

لَقَدْ نَظَرُوا إِلَيْهِمْ بِأَبْصَارِ الْعَشْوَةِ، وَضَرَبُوا مِنْهُمْ فِي عَمْرَةِ جَهَالَةٍ، وَلَوْ اسْتَنْطَفُوا عَنْهُمْ عَرَصَاتِ تِلْكَ الدِّيَارِ الْحَاوِيَةِ، وَالرُّبُوعِ الْحَالِيَةِ، لَقَالَتْ: ذَهَبُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ضَالًّا، وَذَهَبْتُمْ فِي أَغْفَائِهِمْ جُهَالًا، تَطَاوَنَ فِي هَامِهِمْ، وَتَسْتَنْبِتُونَ فِي أَجْسَادِهِمْ، وَتَزْتَعُونَ فِيمَا لَفَطُوا، وَتَسْكُنُونَ فِيمَا حَرَّبُوا، وَإِنَّمَا الْأَيَّامُ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ بَوَاكٍ وَنَوَائِحُ عَلَيْكُمْ.

They are your fore-runners in reaching the goal and have arrived at the watering places before you. They had positions of honour and plenty of pride. They were rulers and holders of positions. Now they have gone into the interstice where earth covers them from above and is eating their flesh and drinking their blood. They lie in the hollows of their graves lifeless, no more growing, and hidden, not to be found. The approach of dangers does

not frighten them, and the adversity of circumstances does not grieve them. They do not mind earthquakes, nor do they pay heed to thunders. They are gone and not expected back. They are existent but unseen. They were united but are now dispersed. They were friendly and are now separated.

أُولَئِكَمْ سَلَفٌ غَايِبِكُمْ، وَفُرَاطٌ مَنَاهِلِكُمْ، الَّذِينَ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ مَقَاوِمُ الْعِزِّ، وَحَلَبَاتُ الْفَخْرِ، مُلُوكًا وَسُوقًا، سَلَكَوا فِي بُطُونِ الْبَرْزَخِ سَبِيلًا سَلَّطَتِ الْأَرْضُ عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهِ، فَأَكَلَتْ مِنْ حُومِهِمْ، وَشَرِبَتْ مِنْ دِمَائِهِمْ، فَأَصْبَحُوا فِي فَجَوَاتِ قُبُورِهِمْ جَمَادًا لَا يَنُمُونَ، وَضِمَارًا لَا يُوجِدُونَ، لَا يُفْزِعُهُمْ وُرُودُ الْأَهْوَالِ، وَلَا يَحْزِنُهُمْ تَنَكُّرُ الْأَحْوَالِ، وَلَا يَحْفَلُونَ بِالرَّوَاحِفِ، وَلَا يَأْذَنُونَ لِلْقَوَاصِفِ، غَيِّبًا لَا يُنْتَظَرُونَ، وَشُهُودًا لَا يَحْضُرُونَ، وَإِنَّمَا كَانُوا جَمِيعًا فَتَشَتَّتُوا، وَالْأَفَا فَاْفْتَرَّتُوا،

Their accounts are unknown and their houses are silent, not because of length of time or distance of place, but because they have been made to drink the cup (of death) which has changed their speech into dumbness, their hearing into deafness and their movements into stillness. It seems as though they are fallen in slumber. They are neighbours not feeling affection for each other, or friends who do not meet each other. The bonds of their knowing each other have been worn out and the connections of their friendship have been cut asunder.

Everyone of them is therefore alone although they are a group, and they are strangers, even though friends. They are unaware of morning after a night and of evening after a day. The night or the day when they departed has become ever existent for them.² They found the dangers of their placed of stay more serious than they had apprehended, and they witnessed that its signs were greater than they had guessed. The two objectives (namely paradise and hell) have been stretched for them upto a point beyond the reach of fear or hope. Had they been able to speak they would have become dumb to describe what they witnessed or saw.

وَمَا عَن طُولِ عَهْدِهِمْ، وَلَا بَعْدِ مَحَلِّهِمْ، عَمِيَتْ أَحْبَابُهُمْ، وَصَمَّتْ دِيَارُهُمْ، وَلَكِنَّهُمْ سَفُوا كَأَسَا بَدَّلْتَهُمْ بِالنُّطْقِ حَرَسًا، وَبِالسَّمْعِ صَمَمًا، وَبِالْحَرَكَاتِ سُكُونًا، فَكَانَتْهُمْ فِي ارْتِحَالِ الصِّفَةِ صَرَغَى سُبَاتٍ، حَيْرَانٌ لَا يَتَأَنَّنُونَ، وَأَحْبَاءٌ لَا يَتَزَاوَرُونَ، بَلِيَّتْ بَيْنَهُمْ عُرَا التَّعَارُفِ، وَانْقَطَعَتْ مِنْهُمْ أَسْبَابُ الْأَحْيَاءِ، فَكُلُّهُمْ وَحِيدٌ وَهُمْ جَمِيعٌ، وَبِجَانِبِ الْأَهْجَرِ وَهُمْ أَخِلَاءٌ، لَا يَتَعَارَفُونَ لِلنَّيْلِ صَبَاحًا، وَلَا لِنَهَارِ مَسَاءً. أَيُّ الْجُدَيْدِينَ طَعَنُوا فِيهِ كَانَ عَلَيْهِمْ سَرْمَدًا، شَاهَدُوا مِنْ أخطَارِ دَارِهِمْ أَفْطَعَ بِمَا خَافُوا، وَرَأَوْا مِنْ آيَاتِهَا أَعْظَمَ بِمَا قَدَّرُوا، فَكَلِمَاتُ الْعَايِنِينَ مُدَّتْ لَهُمْ إِلَى مَبَاءَةِ، فَاتَتْ مَبَالِغَ الْخَوْفِ وَالرَّجَاءِ. فَلَوْ كَانُوا يَنْطِقُونَ بِمَا لَعِبُوا بِصِفَةِ مَا شَاهَدُوا وَمَا عَايَنُوا،

Even though their traces have been wiped out and their news has stopped (circulating), eyes are capable of drawing a lesson, as they looked at them, ears of intelligence heard them and they spoke without uttering words. So, they said that handsome faces have been destroyed and delicate bodies have been smeared with earth. We have put on a worn-out shroud. The narrowness of the grave has overwhelmed us and strangeness has spread

among us. Our silent abodes have been ruined. The beauty of our bodies has disappeared. Our known features have become hateful. Our stay in the places of strangeness has become long. We do not get relief from pain, nor widening from narrowness.

وَأَلَيْنَ عَمِيَّتْ آثَارُهُمْ، وَأَنْقَطَعَتْ أَحْبَابُهُمْ، لَقَدْ رَجَعَتْ فِيهِمْ أَبْصَارُ الْعَيْرِ، وَسَمِعَتْ عَنْهُمْ
أَذَانُ الْعُقُولِ، وَتَكَلَّمُوا مِنْ غَيْرِ جِهَاتِ النُّطْقِ، فَقَالُوا: كَلَّحَتِ الْوُجُوهُ النَّوَاضِرُ، وَخَوَّتِ
الْأَجْسَادُ النَّوَاعِمِ، وَلَبَسْنَا أَهْدَامَ الْبَلْبَى، وَتَكَاءَ دَنَا ضَيْقِ الْمَضْجَعِ، وَتَوَارَتْنَا الْوَحْشَةَ،
وَتَهَكَّمَتْ عَلَيْنَا الرُّبُوعُ الصُّمُوثُ، فَأَمَمَحَتْ مَحَاسِنُ أَجْسَادِنَا، وَتَنَكَّرَتْ مَعَارِفُ صُورِنَا،
وَطَالَتْ فِي مَسَاكِنِ الْوَحْشَةِ إِقَامَتُنَا، وَمَنْ نَجِدُ مِنْ كَرْبٍ فَرَجًا، وَلَا مِنْ ضَيْقٍ مُتَّسَعًا!

Now. if you portray them in your mind, or if the curtains concealing them are removed from them for you, in this state when their ears have lost their power and turned deaf, their eyes have been filled with dust and sunk down, their tongues which were very active have been cut into pieces, their hearts which were ever wakeful have become motionless in their chests, in every limb of theirs a peculiar decay has occurred which has deformed it, and has paved the way for calamity towards it, all these lie powerless, with no hand to help them and no heart to grieve over them, (then) you would certainly notice the grief of (their) hearts and the dirt of (their) eyes.

فَلَوْ مَثَّلْتُهُمْ بِعَقْلِكَ، أَوْ كُشِفَ عَنْهُمْ مَحْجُوبُ الْغِطَاءِ لَكَ، وَقَدْ ارْتَسَخَتْ أَسْمَاعُهُمْ بِأَهْوَامِ
فَأَسْتَكَّتْ، وَانْتَحَلَتْ أَبْصَارُهُمْ بِالتُّرَابِ فَحَسَفَتْ، وَتَقَطَّعَتِ الْإِلْسِنَةُ فِي أَفْوَاهِهِمْ بَعْدَ
ذَلَّاقَتِهَا، وَهَمَدَتِ الْقُلُوبُ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ بَعْدَ يَقْظَتِهَا، وَعَاثَ فِي كُلِّ جَارِحَةٍ مِنْهُمْ جَدِيدٌ بَلِيٌّ
سَمَّجَهَا، وَسَهَّلَ طُرُقَ الْأَفَةِ إِلَيْهَا، مُسْتَسْلِمَاتٌ فَلَا أَيْدٍ تَدْفَعُ، وَلَا قُلُوبَ تَجْرَعُ، لَرَأَيْتَ أَشْجَانَ
قُلُوبِ، وَأَقْدَاءَ عُيُونِ،

Every trouble of theirs is such that its position does not change and the distress does not clear away. How many a prestigious body and amazing beauty the earth has swallowed, although when in the world he enjoyed abundant pleasures and was nurtured in honour. He clung to enjoyments (even) in the hour of grief. If distress befell him he sought refuge in consolation (derived) through the pleasures of life and playing and games.

While he was laughing at the world and the world was laughing at him in his life full of forgetfulness, time trampled him like thorns, the days weakened his energy and death began to look at him from near. Then he was overtaken by a grief which he had never felt, and ailments appeared in place of the health he had previously possessed.

لَهُمْ فِي كُلِّ فَطَاعَةِ صِفَةٌ حَالٌ لَا تَنْتَقِلُ، وَعَمْرَةٌ لَا تَنْجَلِي. فَكَمْ أَكَلَتِ الْأَرْضُ مِنْ عَزِيْزِ
جَسَدِ، وَأَنْبِقَ لَوْنِ، كَانَ فِي الدُّنْيَا عَذِيٍّ تَرَفٍ، وَرَيْبِ شَرَفٍ! يَتَعَلَّلُ بِالشُّرُورِ فِي سَاعَةِ حُزْنِهِ،
وَيَفْرَعُ إِلَى السَّلْوَةِ إِنْ مُصِيبَةٌ نَزَلَتْ بِهِ، ضَنْناً بِعَضَارَةِ عَيْشِهِ، وَشَحَاحَةً بِلَهْوِهِ وَلَعِبِهِ! فَبَيْنَا هُوَ
يَضْحَكُ إِلَى الدُّنْيَا وَتَضْحَكُ إِلَيْهِ فِي ظِلِّ عَيْشِ عَمُولِ، إِذْ وَطِئَ الدَّهْرُ بِهِ حَسَكَهُ، وَتَقْصَبَتْ

الأيام فؤاه، ونظرت إليه الخُوف من كتب، فخالطه بث لا يعرفه، ونجى هم ما كان يجده،
وتولدت فيه فترات علل، آسن ما كان بصحته،

He then turned to that with which the physician had made him familiar, namely suppressing the hot (diseases) with cold (medicines) and curing the cold with hot doses, but the cold things did nothing save aggravate the hot ailments, while the hot ones did nothing except increasing the coldness. Nor did he acquire temperateness in his constitution but rather every ailment of his increased till his physicians became helpless, his attendants grew neglectful and his own family lacked the ability to describe his disease, and were unable to answer those who enquired about him.

They disputed in front of him about the serious news which they were concealing from him. Thus, someone would say "his condition is what it is" and would console them with hopes of his recovery, while another one would advocate patience on missing him, recalling to them the calamities that had befallen the earlier generations.

ففرغ إلى ما كان عوده الأطباء من تسكين الحار بالبارد، وتحرير البارد بالحار، فلم
يطفىء ببارد إلا ثور حارة، ولا حرّك بحار إلا هيج بؤودة، ولا اعتدل بمزاج لتلك الطبائع
إلا أمد منها كل ذات داء، حتى فتر معلله، وذهل ممرضه، وتعايا أهله بصفة دائه، وخرسوا
عن جواب السائلين عنه، وتنازعوا دونه شجي خبر يكتنونه، فقائل [يقول] هو لما به،
وممن لهم إياب عافيته، ومصيرهم على فقده، يذكّرهم أسي الماضين من قبله.

In this state when he was getting ready to depart from the world and leave his beloved ones, such a serious choking overtook him that his senses became bewildered and the dampness of his tongue dried up. Now, there was many an important question whose reply he knew about he could not utter it, and many a voice that was painful for his heart that he heard but remained (unmoved) as though he was deaf to the voice of either an elder whom he used to respect or of a younger whom he used to caress. The pangs of death are too hideous to be covered by description or to be appreciated by the hearts of the people in this world.

فبينما هو كذلك على جناح من فراق الدنيا، وترك الأحبة، إذ عرض له عارض من
عصبه، فتحيرت نوافذ فطنته، ويسست رطوبة لسانه، فكمن من مهم من جوابه عرفه فعي
عن رده، ودعاء مؤلم لقلبه سمعه فتصام عنه، من كبير كان يعظمه، أو صغير كان يرحمه! وإن
للموت لعمرات هي أقطع من أن تستعرق بصفة، أو تعتدل على عقول أهل الدنيا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 220

- (1) *Al-Wasiti, `Uyun al-hikam, see Bihar, vol. 77, 432;*
- (2) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, II, 398;*
- (3) *Abu Nu`aym, Hilyah, II, 132.*

Notes

1. The genesis of the descending of this verse is that the tribes of Banu `Abd Manaf and Banu Sahn began to boast against each other over the abundance of their wealth and the

number of their tribesmen, and in order to prove they had a greater number each one began to include their dead as well, whereupon this verse was revealed to the effect that abundance of riches and majority in numbers has made you so forgetful that you count the dead also with the living. This verse is also taken to mean that abundance of riches and progeny has made you forgetful till you reached the graves, but the utterance of Amir al-mu'minin supports the first meaning.

2. This means that for him he who dies in the day it is always day whereas for him who dies in the night the darkness of night never dispels, because they are at a place where there is no turning of the moon and the sun and no rotation of the nights and the days. The same meaning has been expressed by a poet like this:

There is sure to be a day without a night,
Or a night that would come without a day.

Sermon 221: Certainly, Allah has made His remembrance...

Delivered after reciting the verse:

. . . therein declare glory unto Him in the mornings and the evenings; Men whom neither merchandise nor any sale diverteth from the remembrance of Allah and constancy in prayer and paying the poor-rate; they fear the day when the hearts and eyes shall writhe of the anguish. (Qur'an, 24:36-37)

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

قاله عند تلاوته :

(يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ فِيهَا بِالْغُدُوِّ وَالْآصَالِ رِجَالٌ لَا تُلْهِيهِمْ تِجَارَةٌ وَلَا بَيْعٌ عَنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ)

Certainly, Allah, the Glorified, the Sublime, has made His remembrance the light for hearts which hear with its help despite deafness, see with its help despite blindness and become submissive with its help despite unruliness.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ جَعَلَ الذِّكْرَ جِلَاءً لِلْقُلُوبِ، تَسْمَعُ بِهِ بَعْدَ الْوَقْفَةِ، وَتُبْصِرُ بِهِ بَعْدَ الْعَشْوَةِ، وَتَنْقَادُ بِهِ بَعْدَ الْمَعَانِدَةِ،

In all the periods and times when there were no prophets, there have been persons with whom Allah, precious are His bounties, whispered through their wits and spoke through their minds. With the help of the bright awakening of their ears, eyes and hearts they keep reminding others of the remembrance of the days of Allah and making others feel fear for Him like guide-points in wildernesses. Whoever adopts the middle way, they praise his ways and give him the tidings of deliverance, but whoever goes right and left they vilify his ways and frighten him with ruin. In this way, they served as lamps in these darknesses and guides through these doubts.

وَمَا بَرِحَ اللَّهُ . عَزَّتْ آلاؤُهُ فِي الْبُرْهَةِ بَعْدَ الْبُرْهَةِ، وَفِي أَرْزَامِ الْفَتْرَاتِ، عِبَادًا نَاجَاهُمْ فِي فِكْرِهِمْ، وَكَلَّمَهُمْ فِي ذَاتِ عُقُوبِهِمْ، فَاسْتَصْبَحُوا بِنُورِ يَقْظَةِ فِي السَّمْعِ وَالْأَبْصَارِ وَالْأَفْئِدَةِ، يُذَكِّرُونَ بِأَيَّامِ اللَّهِ، وَيُخَوِّفُونَ مَقَامَهُ، بِمَنْزِلَةِ الْأَدْلَةِ فِي الْفَلَوَاتِ، مَنْ أَخَذَ الْقَصْدَ حَمِدُوا إِلَيْهِ طَرِيقَهُ، وَبَشَّرُوهُ بِالنَّجَاةِ، وَمَنْ أَخَذَ يَمِينًا وَشِمَالًا دُمُوا إِلَيْهِ الطَّرِيقِ، وَحَدَّرُوهُ مِنَ الْهَلَكَةِ، فَكَانُوا كَذَلِكَ مَصَابِيحَ تِلْكَ الظُّلُمَاتِ، وَأَدْلَةَ تِلْكَ الشُّبُهَاتِ.

There are some people devoted to the remembrance (of Allah) who have adopted it in place of worldly matters so that commerce or trade does not turn them away from it. They pass their life in it. They speak into the ears of neglectful persons warning against matters held unlawful by Allah, they order them to practise justice and themselves keep practising it, and they refrain them from the unlawful and themselves refrain from it. It is as though they have finished the journey of this world towards the next world and have beheld what lies beyond it.

Consequently, they have become acquainted with all that befell them in the interstice during their long stay therein, and the Day of Judgement fulfils its promises for them. Therefore, they removed the curtain from these things for the people of the world, till it was as though they were seeing what people did not see and were hearing what people did not hear.

وَإِنَّ لِلذِّكْرِ لَأَهْلًا أَحَدُوهُ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا بَدَلًا، فَلَمْ تَشْعَلْهُمْ بِتِجَارَةٍ وَلَا يَبِيعُ عَنْهُ، يَفْطَعُونَ بِهِ أَيَّامَ الْحَيَاةِ، وَيَهْتَفُونَ بِالزَّوْجِرِ عَنِ مَحَارِمِ اللَّهِ، فِي أَسْمَاعِ الْعَافِلِينَ، وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَيَأْتُمِرُونَ بِهِ، وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَيَتَنَاهَوْنَ عَنْهُ، فَكَأَنَّمَا قَطَعُوا الدُّنْيَا إِلَى الْآخِرَةِ وَهُمْ فِيهَا، فَشَاهَدُوا مَا وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ، فَكَأَنَّمَا أَطْلَعُوا غُيُوبَ أَهْلِ الْبُرْزِخِ فِي طَوْلِ الْأَقَامَةِ فِيهِ، وَحَقَّقَتِ الْقِيَامَةُ عَلَيْهِمْ عِدَاتِهِمْ، فَكَشَفُوا غِطَاءَ ذَلِكَ لِأَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا، حَتَّى كَأَنَّهُمْ يَرَوْنَ مَا لَا يَرَى النَّاسُ، وَيَسْمَعُونَ مَا لَا يَسْمَعُونَ.

If you picture them in your mind in their admirable positions and well-known sittings, when they have opened the records of their actions and are prepared to render an account of themselves in respect of the small as well as the big things they were ordered to do but they failed to do, or were ordered to refrain from but they indulged therein, and they realised the weight of their burden (of bad acts) on their backs, and they felt too weak to bear them, then they wept bitterly and spoke to each other while still crying and bewailing to Allah in repentance and acknowledgement (of their shortcomings), you would find them to be emblems of guidance and lamps in darkness, angels would be surrounding them, peace would be descending upon them, the doors of the sky would be opened for them and positions of honour would be assigned to them in the place of which Allah had informed them.

فَلَوْ مَثَّلْتَهُمْ لِعِقْلِكَ فِي مَقَامِهِمُ الْمَحْمُودَةِ، وَمَجَالِسِهِمُ الْمَشْهُودَةِ، وَقَدْ نَشَرُوا دَوَابِرَ أَعْمَالِهِمْ، وَفَرَعُوا لِمُحَاسَبَةِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ، وَعَلَى كُلِّ صَغِيرَةٍ وَكَبِيرَةٍ أُمُرًا بِهَا فَمَضَرُوا عَنْهَا، أَوْ هُوَ عَنْهَا فَفَرَطُوا فِيهَا، وَحَمَلُوا ثِقَلَ أَوْزَارِهِمْ ظُهُورَهُمْ، فَضَعُفُوا عَنِ الْأَسْتِقْلَالِ بِهَا، فَنَشَجُوا نَشِيجًا، وَتَحَاوَبُوا نَحِيبًا، يَعْجُونَ إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ مِنْ مَقَامِ نَدَمٍ وَاعْتِرَافٍ، لَرَأَيْتَ أَعْلَامَ هُدًى، وَمَصَابِيحَ دُجَى، قَدْ حَفَّتْ بِهِنَّ الْمَلَائِكَةُ، وَتَنَزَّلَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّكِينَةُ، وَفُتِحَتْ لَهُمْ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ، وَأَعِدَّتْ لَهُمْ مَقَاعِدَ الْكَرَامَاتِ، فِي مَقْعَدِ أَطَّلَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ فِيهِ،

Therefore, He has appreciated their actions and praised their position. They call Him and breathe in the air of forgiveness, they are ever needy of His bounty and remain humble before His greatness, The length of their grief has pained their hearts, and the length of weeping their eyes. They knock at every door of inclination towards Allah. They ask Him Whom generosity does not make destitute and from Whom those who approach Him do not get disappointed.

Therefore, take account of yourself for your own sake because the account of others will be taken by one other than you.

فَرَضِي سَعِيهِمْ، وَحَمِدَ مَقَامَهُمْ، يَتَنَسَّمُونَ بِدُعَائِهِ رَوْحَ التَّجَاوُزِ، رَهَائِنُ فَاقَةَ إِلَى فَضْلِهِ،
وَأَسَارَى ذِلَّةَ لِعَظَمَتِهِ، جَرَحَ طُولُ الْأَسَى قُلُوبَهُمْ، وَطُولُ الْبُكَاءِ عُيُونَهُمْ. لِكُلِّ بَابِ رَغْبَةٍ إِلَى
اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ مِنْهُمْ يَدُّ قَارِعَةٍ، يَسْأَلُونَ مَنْ لَا تَضْبِقُ لَدَيْهِ الْمَنَادِحُ، وَلَا يَحِيبُ عَلَيْهِ الرَّاعِبُونَ .
فَحَاسِبْ نَفْسَكَ لِنَفْسِكَ، فَإِنَّ غَيْرَهَا مِنَ الْأَنْفُسِ لَهَا حَسِيبٌ غَيْرُكَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 221

(1) Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 81.

Sermon 222: The addressee (in this verse) is devoid of argument

Amir al-mu'minin recited the verse:

O thou man! What hath beguiled thee from thy Lord, the Most Gracious One. (Qur'an, 82:6)

Then he said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

قاله عند تلاوته:

(يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ مَا غَرَّبَكَ بِرَبِّكَ الْكَرِيمِ)

The addressee (in this verse) is devoid of argument and his excuse is most deceptive. He is detaining himself in ignorance.

أَدْخَضُ مَسْئُولٍ حُجَّةً، وَأَقْطَعُ مُعْتَرٍ مَعْدِرَةً، لَقَدْ أَبْرَحَ جَهَالَةً بِنَفْسِهِ.

O man! What has emboldened you to (commit) sins, what has deceived you about your Allah and what has made you satisfied with the destruction of yourself? Is there no cure for your ailment or no awakening from your sleep? Do you not have pity on yourself as you have on others? Generally, when you see anyone exposed to the heat of the sun you cover him with shade, or if you see anyone afflicted with grief that pains his body you weep out of pity for him.

What has then made you patient over your own disease, what has made you firm in your own afflictions, and what has consoled you from weeping over yourself although your life is the most precious of all lives to you, and why does not the fear of an ailment that may befall you in the night keep you wakeful although you lie on the way to Allah's wrath due to your sins?

يَا أَيُّهَا الْإِنْسَانُ، مَا جَرَّأَكَ عَلَى ذَنْبِكَ، وَمَا غَرَّبَكَ بِرَبِّكَ، وَمَا آتَسَكَ بِهَلَكَةِ نَفْسِكَ؟ أَمَا مِنْ دَائِكَ بُلُولٌ، أَمْ لَيْسَ مِنْ نَوْمَتِكَ بَقِظَةٌ؟ أَمَا تَرْحَمُ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ مَا تَرْحَمُ مِنْ غَيْرِكَ؟ فَلَرُبَّمَا تَرَى الصَّاحِيَّ مِنْ حَرِّ الشَّمْسِ فَتُظِلُّهُ، أَوْ تَرَى الْمُبْتَلَى بِأَلَمِ جِسَدِهِ فَتَبْكِي رَحْمَةً لَهُ! فَمَا صَبَّرَكَ عَلَى دَائِكَ، وَجَلَّدَكَ عَلَى مُصَابِكَ، وَغَرَّكَ عَنِ الْبُكَاءِ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ وَهِيَ أَعَزُّ الْأَنْفُسِ عَلَيْكَ! وَكَيْفَ لَا يُوقِظُكَ خَوْفُ بَيَاتِ نِقْمَةٍ، وَقَدْ تَوَرَّطَتْ بِمَعَاصِيهِ مَدَارِحَ سَطَوَاتِهِ!

You should cure the disease of languor in your heart by determination, and the sleep of neglectfulness in your eyes by wakefulness. Be obedient to Allah, and love His remembrance, and picture to yourself that you are running away while He is approaching you. He is calling you to His forgiveness and concealing your faults with His kindness, while you are fleeing away from Him towards others.

Certainly, Great is Allah the powerful, Who is so generous, and how humble and weak are you and still so bold to commit His disobedience although you live in His protection and undergo changes of life in the expanse of His kindness. He does not refuse you His kindness and does not remove His protection from you. In fact, you have not been without His kindness even for a moment, whether it be a favour that He conferred upon

you or a sin of yours that He has concealed or a calamity that He has warded off from you.

What is your idea about Him if you had obeyed Him? By Allah, if this had been the case with two persons equal in power and matching in might (one being inattentive and the other showering favours upon you) then you would have been the first to adjudge yourself to be of bad behaviour and evil deeds.

فَتَدَاوٍ مِنْ دَاءِ الْفِتْرَةِ فِي قَلْبِكَ بِعَزِيمَةٍ، وَمِنْ كَرَى الْعُمَّلَةِ فِي نَاطِرِكَ بِيَقْظَةٍ، وَكُنْ لِلَّهِ مُطِيعًا،
وَبِدْرَكِهِ أَنْسَاءً، وَمَثَلٌ فِي حَالِ تَوَلِّيكَ عَنْهُ إِقْبَالُهُ عَلَيْكَ، يَدْعُوكَ إِلَى عَفْوِهِ، وَيَتَعَمَّدُكَ بِفَضْلِهِ،
وَأَنْتَ مُتَوَلِّ عَنَّهُ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ.

فَتَعَالَى مِنْ قَوِيٍّ مَا أَكْرَمَهُ! وَتَوَاضَعْتَ مِنْ ضَعِيفٍ مَا أَجْرَأَكَ عَلَى مَعْصِيَتِهِ! وَأَنْتَ فِي
كَفِّ سِتْرِهِ مُقِيمٌ، وَفِي سَعَةِ فَضْلِهِ مَتَقَلِّبٌ، فَلَمْ يَمْنَعْكَ فَضْلُهُ، وَلَمْ يَهْتِكْ عَنْكَ سِتْرَهُ، بَلْ لَمْ
تُخَلِّ مِنْ لُطْفِهِ مَطْرَفَ عَيْنٍ فِي نِعْمَةٍ يُحْدِثُهَا لَكَ، أَوْ سَيِّئَةً يَسْتُرُهَا عَلَيْكَ، أَوْ بَلِيَّةَ يَصْرِفُهَا
عَنْكَ، فَمَا ظَنُّكَ بِهِ لَوْ أَطْعَمْتَهُ! وَإِيْمَ اللَّهِ لَوْ أَنَّ هَذِهِ الصِّفَةَ كَانَتْ فِي مُتَّفَقَيْنِ فِي الْقُوَّةِ، مُتَوَازِيَيْنِ
فِي الْقُدْرَةِ، لَكُنْتَ أَوَّلَ حَاكِمٍ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ بِدَمِيمِ الْأَخْلَاقِ، وَمَسَاوِيءِ الْأَعْمَالِ.

I truthfully say that the world has not deceived you but you have had yourself deceived by it. The world had opened to you the curtains and divulged to you (everything) equally. And in all that it foretold you about the troubles befalling your bodies and the decay in your power, it has been too true and faithful in promise, and did not speak a lie to you or deceive you.

There are many who advise you about it but they are blamed, and speak the truth about it but they are opposed. If you understand the world by means of dilapidated houses and forlorn abodes, then with your good understanding and far reaching power of drawing lessons you will find it like one who is kind over you and cautious about you. It is good abode for him who does not like it as an abode, and a good place of stay for him who does not regard it a permanent home for stay. Only those who run away from this world today will be regarded virtuous tomorrow.

وَحَقًّا أَقُولُ! مَا الدُّنْيَا غَرَّتْكَ، وَلَكِنْ بِهَا اغْتَرَزْتَ، وَلَقَدْ كَاشَفْتَنَا الْعِظَاتِ، وَآذَنْتَنَا عَلَى
سَوَاءٍ، وَهِيَ بِمَا تَعِدُّكَ مِنْ نُزُولِ الْبَلَاءِ بِجِسْمِكَ، وَالنَّفْصِ فِي فُوتِكَ، أَصْدَقُ وَأَوْفَى مِنْ أَنْ
تُكْذِبَنَّكَ، أَوْ تُعْرِكَ، وَلَزَبَتْ نَاصِحٌ لَهَا عِنْدَكَ مُتَّهَمٌ، وَصَادِقٌ مِنْ حَبْرِهَا مُكْذَّبٌ، وَلَيْتَن تَعْرِفْنَهَا
فِي الدِّيَارِ الْحَاوِيَةِ، وَالرُّبُوعِ الْحَالِيَةِ، لَتَجِدَنَّهَا مِنْ حُسْنِ تَذَكِيرِكَ، وَبِلَاغِ مَوْعِظَتِكَ، بِمَحَلَّةِ
الشَّفِيقِ عَلَيْكَ، وَالشَّحِيحِ بِكَ! وَلِنَعْمَ دَارٌ مَنْ لَمْ يَرْضَ بِهَا دَارًا، وَمَحَلٌّ مَنْ لَمْ يُؤْطِنَهَا مَحَلًّا! وَإِنَّ
السُّعْدَاءَ بِالدُّنْيَا عَدَاءٌ هُمْ الْهَارِبُونَ مِنْهَا الْيَوْمَ.

When the earthquake occurs, the Day of Resurrection approaches with all its severities, the people of every worshipping place cling to it, all the devotees cling to the object of their devotion and all the followers cling to

their leader. Then on that day even the opening of an eye in the air and the sound of a footstep on the ground will be assigned its due through His Justice and His Equity. On that day many an argument will prove void and a contention for excuses will stand rejected.

إِذَا رَجَعْتَ الرَّاجِعُ، وَحَقَّتْ بِجَلَالِهَا الْقِيَامَةُ، وَلِحَقِّ بِكُلِّ مَنْسَكِ أَهْلُهُ، وَبِكُلِّ مَعْبُودِ
عَبْدَتُهُ، وَبِكُلِّ مُطَاعِ أَهْلِ طَاعَتِهِ، فَلَمْ يُجْزِ فِي عَدْلِهِ وَقِسْطِهِ يَوْمَئِذٍ حَرْقُ بَصَرٍ فِي الْهَوَاءِ، وَلَا
هَمْسُ قَدَمٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا بِحَقِّهِ، فَكَمْ حُجَّةَ يَوْمَ ذَلِكَ دَاحِضَةً، وَعَلَاتِقَ عُذْرٍ مُنْقَطِعَةً!

Therefore, you should now adopt for yourself the course with which your excuse may hold good and your plea may be proved. Take from the transient things of this world that which will stay for you (in the next world), provide for your journey, keep (your) gaze on the brightness of deliverance and keep ready the saddles (for setting off).

فَتَحَرَّرْ مِنْ أَمْرِكَ مَا يُفُومُ بِهِ عُذْرُكَ، وَتَثَبُّتْ بِهِ حُجَّتُكَ، وَخُذْ مَا يَبْقَى لَكَ مِمَّا لَا تَبْقَى لَهُ،
وَتَيَسَّرْ لِسَفَرِكَ، وَشَمَّ بَرَقَ النَّجَاةِ، وَارْحَلْ مَطَايَا التَّشْمِيرِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 222

(1) *Al-Yamani, al-Taraz, II, 272;*

(2) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 232.*

Sermon 223: By Allah, I would rather pass a night...

About keeping aloof from oppression and misappropriation. `Aqil's condition of poverty and destitution

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

يتبرأ من الظلم

By Allah, I would rather pass a night in wakefulness on the thorns of as-sa`dan (a plant having sharp prickles) or be driven in chains as a prisoner than meet Allah and His Messenger on the Day of Judgement as an oppressor over any person or a usurper of anything out of worldly wealth. And how can I oppress any one for (the sake of a life) that is fast moving towards destruction and is to remain under the earth for a long time?

وَاللَّهِ لَأَنْ أَيْتَ عَلَيَّ حَسَبُكَ السَّعْدَانِ مُسَهَّداً، أَوْ أُجْرَّ فِي الْأَغْلَالِ مُصَفَّداً، أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ أَلْقَى اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ظَالِماً لِنِعْضِ الْعِبَادِ، وَعَاصِماً لَشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْخَطَامِ، وَكَيْفَ أَظْلِمُ أَحَدًا لِنَفْسٍ يُسْرِعُ إِلَى الْبَلَى فُقُوهَا، وَيَطُولُ فِي الثَّرَى خُلُوهَا؟!

By Allah, I certainly saw (my brother) `Aqil fallen in destitution and he asked me a sa` (about three kilograms in weight) out of your (share of) wheat, and I also saw his children with dishevelled hair and a dusty countenance due to starvation, as though their faces had been blackened by indigo. He came to me several times and repeated his request to me again and again. I heard him, and he thought I would sell my faith to him and follow his tread leaving my own way.

Then I (just) heated a piece of iron and took it near his body so that he might take a lesson from it, then he cried as a person in protracted illness cries with pain and he was about to get burnt with its branding. Then I said to him, "Moaning women may moan over you, O `Aqil. Do you cry on account of this (heated) iron which has been made by a man for fun while you are driving me towards the fire which Allah, the Powerful, has prepared for (a manifestation of) His wrath? Should you cry from pain, but I should not cry from the flames?"

وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ رَأَيْتُ عَقِيلاً وَقَدْ أَمْلَقَ حَتَّى اسْتَمَاحَنِي مِنْ بُرْكُمْ صَاعاً، وَرَأَيْتُ صَبِيَانَهُ شُعْثَ الشُّعُورِ، غُبِرَ الْأَلْوَانَ، مِنْ فُقْرِهِمْ، كَأَنَّمَا سُودَتْ وُجُوهُهُمْ بِالْعِظْلِمِ، وَعَاوَدَنِي مُؤَكِّداً، وَكَرَّرَ عَلَيَّ الْقَوْلَ مُرَدِّداً، فَأَصْعَيْتُ إِلَيْهِ سَمْعِي، فَظَنَّ أَنِّي أَبِيعُهُ دِينِي، وَأَتَّبِعُ قِيَادَهُ، مُفَارِقاً طَرِيقِي، فَأَحْمَيْتُ لَهُ حَدِيدَةً، ثُمَّ أَدْنَيْتُهَا مِنْ جِسْمِهِ لِيَعْتَبَرَ بِهَا، فَضَجَّ ضَجِيحَ ذِي دَنْفٍ مِنْ أَلْمِهَا، وَكَادَ أَنْ يَخْتَرِقَ مِنْ مَيْسِمِهَا، فُقُلْتُ لَهُ: تَكَلَّتْكَ النَّوَاكِلُ، يَا عَقِيلُ! أَتَيْتُ مِنْ حَدِيدَةِ أَحْمَاهَا إِنْسَانَهَا لِلْعَيْهِ، وَتَجَرَّبَنِي إِلَى نَارٍ سَجَرَهَا جَبَّارُهَا لِعَضْبِهِ! أَتَيْتُ مِنَ الْأَدَى وَلَا أَتِي مِنْ لَطْيٍ؟

A stranger incident than this is that a man¹ came to us in the night with a closed flask full of honey paste but I disliked it as though it was the saliva of

a serpent or its vomit. I asked him whether it was a reward, or zakat (poor-tax) or charity, for these are forbidden to us members of the Prophet's family. He said it was neither this nor that but a present. Then I said, "Childless women may weep over you. Have you come to deviate me from the religion of Allah, or are you mad, or have you been overpowered by some jinn, or are you speaking without senses? "

وَأَعْجَبُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ طَارِقٌ طَرَقَنَا بِمَلْمُوفَةٍ فِي وَعَائِهَا، وَمَعْجُونَةٍ سَنَنْتُهَا، كَأَنَّمَا عُجِنَتْ بِرَبِيقِ حَيَّةٍ أَوْ قَيْئِهَا، فَعُلْتُ: أَصِلَّةٌ، أَمْ زَكَاةٌ، أَمْ صَدَقَةٌ؟ فَذَلِكَ مُحَرَّمٌ عَلَيْنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ! فَقَالَ: لَا ذَا وَلَا ذَاكَ، وَلَكِنَّهَا هَدِيَّةٌ، فَعُلْتُ: هَيْلَتَكَ الْهُبُولُ! أَعَنْ دِينَ اللَّهِ أَتَيْتَنِي لِتُحَدِّعَنِي؟ أَمْحَتَبْتُ أَنْتَ أَمْ دُوجِنَّةٌ، أَمْ تَهْجُرُ؟

By Allah, even if I am given all the domains of the seven (stars) with all that exists under the skies in order that I may disobey Allah to the extent of snatching one grain of barley from an ant I would not do it. For me your world is lighter than the leaf in the mouth of a locust that is chewing it. What has `Ali to do with bounties that will pass away and pleasures that will not last? We seek protection of Allah from the slip of wisdom and the evils of mistakes, and from Him we seek succour.

وَاللَّهِ لَوْ أُعْطِيتُ الْأَقَالِيمَ السَّبْعَةَ بِمَا تَحْتُ أَفْلَاكِهَا، عَلَى أَنْ أَعْصِيَ اللَّهَ فِي مَمْلَةٍ أَسْأَلُهَا جِلْبَ شَعِيرَةٍ مَا فَعَلْتُهُ، وَإِنَّ دُنْيَاكُمْ عِنْدِي لَأَهْوَنُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ فِي فَمِ جَرَادَةٍ تَقْضُمُهَا، مَا لِعَلِيٍّ وَلِنَعِيمِ يَفِيٍّ، وَلَذَّةِ لَا تَبْقَى!
نَعُودُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ سُبَاتِ الْعَقْلِ، وَقُبْحِ الرَّئِلِ، وَبِهِ نَسْتَعِينُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 223

- (1) *Al-Saduq, al-'Amali*, 369;
- (2) *Sibt, Tadhkirah*, 155;
- (3) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`*, *bab al-khayr wa al-salah*;
- (4) *Ibn Shahr Ashub, al-Manaqib, II*, 109.

Notes

1. It was al-Ash`ath ibn Qays.

Sermon 224: O My God! Preserve (the grace of) my face...

Supplication (seeking sufficiency from Allah)

ومن دعاء له (عليه السلام)

يلتجىء إلى الله أن يغنيه

O My God! Preserve (the grace of) my face with easiness of life and do not disgrace my countenance with destitution, lest I may have to beg a livelihood from those who beg from Thee, try to seek the favour of Thy evil creatures, engage myself in praising those who give to me, and be tempted in abusing those who do not give to me, although behind all these Thou art the master of giving and denying.

. . . *Verily Thou over all things, art the All-powerful. (Qur'an, 66:8)*

اللَّهُمَّ صُنْ وَجْهِي بِالْيَسَارِ، وَلَا تَبْدُلْ جَاهِي بِالْإِقْتَارِ، فَاسْتَرْزِقْ طَالِبِي رِزْقِكَ، وَأَسْتَعِظْ
شِرَارَ خَلْقِكَ، وَأُبْتَغِي بِحَمْدِكَ مَنْ أَعْطَانِي، وَأُقْتِنَنَّ بِدَمِّ مَنْ مَنَعَنِي، وَأَنْتَ مِنْ وَرَاءِ ذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ وَلِيُّ
الْأَعْطَاءِ وَالْمَنْعِ، (إِنَّكَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ)

Alternative Sources for Sermon 224

(1) *Al-Rawandi, al-Da`awat, see Bihar, vol. 75, 297;*

(2) *al-Yamani, al-Taraz, I, 119.*

Sermon 225: This is a house surrounded by calamities...

Transience of the world and the helplessness of those in graves

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في التنفير من الدنيا

This is a house surrounded by calamities and well-known for deceitfulness. Its conditions do not last and those who inhabit it do not remain safe. Its conditions are variable and its ways changing. Life in it is blameworthy and safety in it is non-existent. Yet its people are targets; it strikes them with its arrows and destroys them through death.

دَارٌ بِالْبَلَاءِ مَحْفُوفَةٌ، وَبِالْعَدْرِ مَعْرُوفَةٌ، لَا تَدُومُ أَحْوَالُهَا، وَلَا يَسْلَمُ نَزْلُهَا. أَحْوَالٌ مُخْتَلِفَةٌ، وَتَارَاتٌ مُتَصَرِّفَةٌ، الْعَيْشُ فِيهَا مَذْمُومٌ، وَالْأَمَانُ مِنْهَا مَعْدُومٌ، وَإِنَّمَا أَهْلُهَا فِيهَا أَغْرَاضٌ مُسْتَهْدَفَةٌ، تَرْمِيهِمْ بِسَهَامِهَا، وَتُفْنِيهِمْ بِحِمَامِهَا .

Know, O creatures of Allah, that, certainly, you and all the things of this world that you have are (treading) on the lines of those (who were) before you. They were of longer ages, had more populated houses and were of more lasting traces. Their voices have become silent, their movements have become stationary, their bodies have become rotten, their houses have become empty and their traces have been obliterated.

Their magnificent places and spread-out carpets were changed to stones, laid-in-blocks and cave-like dug out graves whose very foundation is based on ruins and whose construction has been made with soil. Their positions are contiguous, but those settled in them are like far flung strangers. They are among the people of their area but feel lonely, and they are free from work but still engaged (in activity).

They feel no attachment with homelands nor do they keep contact among themselves like neighbours despite nearness of neighbourhood and priority of abodes. And how can they meet each other when decay has ground them with its chest, and stones and earth have eaten them.

وَأَعْلَمُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ أَنَّكُمْ وَمَا أَنْتُمْ فِيهِ مِنْ هَذِهِ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى سَبِيلِ مَنْ قَدْ مَضَى قَبْلَكُمْ، مِمَّنْ كَانَ أَطْوَلَ مِنْكُمْ أَعْمَارًا، وَأَعْمَرَ دِيَارًا، وَأَبْعَدَ آثَارًا، أَصْبَحَتْ أَصْوَاتُهُمْ هَامِدَةً، وَرِيَاخُهُمْ رَاكِدَةً، وَأَجْسَادُهُمْ بِالْيَةِ، وَدِيَارُهُمْ خَالِيَةً، وَأَثَارُهُمْ عَافِيَةً، فَاسْتَبَدَّلُوا بِالْفُصُورِ الْمُشَيَّدَةِ، وَالنَّمَارِقِ الْمُمَهَّدَةِ، الصُّحُورَ وَالْأَحْجَارَ الْمُسَنَّدَةَ، وَالْقُبُورَ اللَّاطِئَةَ الْمُلْحَدَةَ، الَّتِي قَدْ بُنِيَ عَلَى الْحُرَابِ فِنَاؤُهَا، وَشِيدَ بِالتَّرَابِ بِنَاؤُهَا، فَمَحَلُّهَا مُقْتَرَبٌ، وَسَاكِنُهَا مُعْتَرِبٌ، بَيْنَ أَهْلِ مَحَلَّةٍ مُوحِشِينَ، وَأَهْلِ فَرَاغٍ مُتَشَاعِلِينَ، لَا يَسْتَأْنِسُونَ بِالْأَوْطَانِ، وَلَا يَتَوَاصِلُونَ تَوَاصِلَ الْجِيرَانِ، عَلَى مَا بَيْنَهُمْ مِنْ قُرْبِ الْجَوَارِ، وَدُنُوِّ الدَّارِ، وَكَيْفَ يَكُونُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَؤُزٌ، وَقَدْ طَحَنَهُمْ بِكَلْكَلِهِ الْبَلَى، وَأَكَلَتْهُمْ الْجِنَادِلُ وَالتَّرَى؟

It is as though you too have gone where they have gone, the same sleeping place has caught you and the same place has detained you. What will then be your position when your affairs reach their end and graves are turned upside down (to throw out the dead)?

There shall every soul realise what it hath sent before, and they shall be brought back to Allah, their true Lord, and what they did fabricate (the false deities) will vanish (away) from them. (Qur'an, 10:30)

وَكَأَنَّ قَدْ صِرْتُمْ إِلَىٰ مَا صَارُوا إِلَيْهِ، وَأَزْتَهَنَكُمُ ذَلِكَ الْمَضْجَعُ، وَضَمَّكُمْ ذَلِكَ الْمُسْتَوْدَعُ،
فَكَيْفَ بِكُمْ لَوْ تَنَاهَتْ بِكُمْ الْأُمُورُ، وَبُعْثِرَتِ الْقُبُورُ؟ (هُنَالِكَ تَبْلُو كُلُّ نَفْسٍ مَا أَسْلَفَتْ
وَرُدُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ مَوْلَاهُمْ الْحَقِّ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ)

Alternative Sources for Sermon 225

- (1) *Sibt, Tadhkirah*, 122;
- (2) *al-Khwarazmi, al-Manaqib*, 267;
- (3) *al-Muttaqi, Kanz al-`ummal*, III, 511.

Sermon 226: O My God! Thou art the most attached...

Supplication (seeking guidance to the right path)

ومن دعاء له (عليه السلام)

يلجأ فيه إلى الله ليهديه إلى الرشاد

O My God! Thou art the most attached to Thy lovers and the most ready to assist those who trust in Thee. Thou seest them in their concealments, knowest whatever is in their consciences, and art aware of the extent of their intelligence. Consequently, their secrets are open to Thee and their hearts are eager from Thee. If loneliness makes them desolate, Thy remembrance gives them solace. If distresses befall them, they beseech Thy protection, because they know that the reins of affairs are in Thy hands, and that their movements depend upon Thy commands.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ أَنْسُ الْأَنْسِينَ لِأَوْلِيَائِكَ، وَأَحْضَرُهُمْ بِالْكَفَايَةِ لِلْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ عَلَيْكَ، تُشَاهِدُهُمْ فِي سَرَائِرِهِمْ، وَتَطَّلِعُ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي ضَمَائِرِهِمْ، وَتَعْلَمُ مَبْلَغَ بَصَائِرِهِمْ، فَأَسْرَارُهُمْ لَكَ مَكْشُوفَةٌ، وَقُلُوبُهُمْ إِلَيْكَ مَلْهُوفَةٌ، إِنْ أَوْحَشَتْهُمْ الْعُرْبَةُ أَنْسَهُمْ ذِكْرُكَ، وَإِنْ صَبَّتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَصَائِبُ لَجَأُوا إِلَى الْأَسْتِجَارَةِ بِكَ، عِلْمًا بَأَنَّ أَرْمَةَ الْأُمُورِ بِيَدِكَ، وَمَصَادِرُهَا عَنْ فَضَائِكَ.

O My God! If I am unable to express my request or cannot see my needs, then guide me towards my betterment and take my heart towards the correct goal, for this is not against (the mode of) Thy guidance nor anything new against Thy ways of support.

O My God! Deal with me through Thy forgiveness and do not deal with me according to Thy justice.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ فَهَيْتُ عَنْ مَسْأَلَتِي، أَوْ عَمِيتُ عَنْ طَلْبَتِي، فَذَلِّني عَلَى مَصَالِحِي، وَخُذْ بِقَلْبِي إِلَى مَرَادِي، فَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ بِنُكْرٍ مِنْ هِدَايَاتِكَ، وَلَا يَبْدَعُ مِنْ كِفَايَاتِكَ.
اللَّهُمَّ احْمِلْني عَلَى عَفْوِكَ، وَلَا تَحْمِلْني عَلَى عَذْلِكَ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 226

(1) *Al-Tusi, Misbah, 249;*

(2) *al-Samahiji, al-Sahifat al-'Alawiyyat al-'ula .*

Sermon 227: May Allah reward such and such man...

About a companion who passed away from this world before the occurrence of troubles.

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

يريد به بعض أصحابه

May Allah reward such and such man ¹ who straightened the curve, cured the disease, abandoned mischief and established the sunnah. He departed (from this world) with untarnished clothes and little shortcomings. He achieved good (of this world) and remained safe from its evils. He offered Allah's obedience and feared Him as He deserved. He went away and left the people in dividing ways wherein the misled cannot obtain guidance and the guided cannot attain certainty.

لله بلادُ فُلان، فَلَقَدْ قَوَّمَ الْأَوْدَ، وَدَاوَى الْعَمَدَ، وَأَقَامَ السُّنَّةَ، وَخَلَّفَ الْفِتْنَةَ! ذَهَبَ نَقِيَّ النَّوْبِ، قَلِيلَ الْعَيْبِ، أَصَابَ خَيْرَهَا، وَسَبَقَ شَرَّهَا، أَدَّى إِلَى اللَّهِ طَاعَتَهُ، وَأَتَّقَاهُ بِحَقِّهِ، رَحَلَ وَتَرَكَهُمْ فِي طُرُقٍ مَشْجَعَةٍ، لَا يَهْتَدِي بِهَا الضَّالُّ، وَلَا يَسْتَيْقِنُ الْمُهْتَدِي.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 227

(1) *Al-Rawandi, al-Da`awat;*

(2) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, V, 47;*

(3) *see also the commentaries of Ibn Abi al-Hadid, III, 92 and Ibn Maytham al-Bahrani, IV, 97.*

Notes

1. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written (in *Sharh Nahjul Balaghah*, vol. 14, pp. 3-4) that the reference here is to the second Caliph `Umar, and that these sentences have been uttered in his praise as indicated by the word "Umar" written under the word 'such and such' in as-Sayyid ar-Radi's own hand in the manuscript of *Nahjul Balaghah* written by him. This is Ibn Abi'l-Hadid's statement, but it is to be seen that if as-Sayyid ar-Radi had written the word "Umar" by way of explanation it should have existed, as other explanations by him have remained, in those versions which have been copied from his manuscript. Even now there exists in al-Musil (Iraq) university the oldest copy of *Nahjul Balaghah* written by the famous calligraphist Yaqut al-Musta`simi; but no one has afforded any clue to this explanation of as-Sayyid ar-Radi. Even if the view of Ibn Abi'l-Hadid is accepted it would be deemed to represent the personal opinion of as-Sayyid ar-Radi which may serve as a supplementary argument in support of an original argument but this personal view cannot be assigned any regular importance.

It is strange that two and a half centuries after as-Sayyid ar-Radi namely in the seventh century A.H., Ibn Abi'l Hadid makes the statement that the reference here is to Caliph `Umar and that as-Sayyid ar-Radi himself had so indicated, as a result of which some other annotators also followed the same line, but the contemporaries of as-Sayyid ar-Radi who wrote about *Nahjul Balaghah* have given no such indication in their writings although as contemporaries they should have had better information about as-Sayyid Ar-Radi's writing. Thus, al-Allamah `Ali ibn Nasir who was a contemporary of as-Sayyid ar-Radi and wrote an annotation of *Nahjul Balaghah* under the name of *A`lam Nahjul Balaghah* writes in connection with this sermon:

Amir al-mu'minin has praised one of his own companions for his good conduct. He had died before the troubles that arose after the death of the Prophet of Allah.

This is supported by the annotations of Nahjul Balaghah written by al-`Allamah Qutbu'd-Din ar-Rawandi (d. 573 A.H.). Ibn Abi'l-Hadid (vol. 14, p. 4) and Ibn Maytham al-Bahrani (in Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 4, p. 97) have quoted his following view.

By this Amir al-mu'minin refers to one of his own companions who died before the mischief and disruption that occurred following the death of the Prophet of Allah.

Al-`Allamah al-Hajj al-Mirza Habibu'llah al-Khu'i is of the opinion that the person is Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar on the ground that after the assassination of Malik the situation of the Muslim community was such as Amir al-mu'minin explains in this sermon.

al-Khu'i adds that:

Amir al-mu'minin has praised Malik repeatedly such as in his letter to the people of Egypt sent through Malik when he was made the governor of that place, and like his utterances when the news of Malik's assassination reached him, he said: "Malik! who is Malik? If Malik was a stone, he was hard and solid; if he was a rock, he was a great rock which had no parallel. Women have become barren to give birth to such as Malik." Amir al-mu'minin had even expressed in some of his utterances that, "Malik was to me as I was to the Holy Prophet." Therefore, one who possesses such a position certainly deserves such attributes and even beyond that. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 14, pp. 374-375)

If these words had been about Caliph `Umar and there was some trustworthiness about it Ibn Abi'l-Hadid would have recorded the authority or tradition and it would have existed in history and been known among the people. But here nothing is found to prove the statement except a few self-concocted events. Thus about the pronouns in the words "khayraha" and "sharraha" he takes them to refer to the caliphate and writes that these words can apply only to one who enjoys power and authority because without authority it is impossible to establish the sunnah or prevent innovation. This is the gist of the argument he has advanced on this occasion; although there is no proof to establish that the antecedent of this pronoun is the caliphate. It can rather refer to the world (when Amir al-mu'minin says, "He achieved good [of this world] and remained safe from its evils.") and that would be in accord with the context. Again, to regard authority as a condition for the safeguarding of people's interest and the propagation of the sunnah means to close the door to prompting others to good and dissuading them from evil, although Allah has assigned this duty to a group of the people without the condition of authority:

And that there should be among you a group who call (mankind) unto virtue and enjoin what is good and forbid wrong; and these are they who shall be successful. (Qur'an, 3:104)

Similarly it is related from the Prophet:

So long as people go on prompting for good and dissuading from evil and assisting each other in virtue and piety they will remain in righteousness.

Again, Amir al-mu'minin, in the course of a will, says in general terms: Establish the pillars of the Unity of Allah and the sunnah, and keep both these lamps aflame.

In these sayings there is no hint that this obligation cannot be discharged without authority. Facts also tell us that (despite army and force, and power and authority) the rulers and kings could not prevent evil or propagate virtue to the extent to which some unknown godly persons were able to inculcate moral values by imprinting their morality on heart and minds, although they were not backed by any army or force and they didn't have any equipment save destitution. No doubt authority and control can bend heads down before it, but it is not necessary that it should also pave the way for virtue in hearts. History shows that most of the rulers destroyed the features of Islam. Islam's existence and progress has been possible by the efforts of those helpless persons who possessed nothing save poverty and discomfiture.

If it is insisted that the reference here should only be to a ruler, then why should it not be taken to mean a companion of Amir al-mu'minin who had been the head of a Province such as Salman al-Farisi for whose burial Amir al-mu'minin went to al-Mada'in; and it is not implausible that Amir al-mu'minin might have uttered these words after his burial by way of comments on his life and way of governance. However, to believe that they are about Caliph `Umar is without any proof. In the end, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has quoted the following statements of (the historian) at-Tabari in proof of his hypothesis:

"It is related from al-Mughirah ibn Shu`bah that when Caliph `Umar died Ibnah Abi Hathmah said crying. "Oh `Umar, you were the man who straightened the curve, removed ills, destroyed mischief, revived the sunnah, remained chaste and departed without

entangling in evils.' (According to at-Tabari) al-Mughirah related that "When `Umar was buried I came to `Ali and I wanted to hear something from him about `Umar. So, on my arrival Amir al-mu'minin came out in this state that was wrapped in one cloth after bathing and was jerking the hair of his head and beard and he had no doubt that the Caliphate would come to him. On this occasion he said, "May Allah have mercy on `Umar." Ibnah Abi Hathmah has correctly said that he enjoyed the good of the Caliphate and remained safe from its evils. By Allah, she did not say it herself but was made to say so." (at-Tabari, vol. 1, p. 2763; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 12, p. 5; Ibn Kathir, vol. 7, p. 140)

The relater of this event is al-Mughirah ibn Shu`bah whose adultery with Umm Jamil, the Caliph `Umar's saving him from the penalty despite the evidence, and his openly abusing Amir al-mu'minin in Kufah under Mu`awiyah's behest are admitted facts of history. On this ground what weight his statements can carry is quite clear. From the factual point of view also, this story cannot be accepted. Al-Mughirah's statement that Amir al-mu'minin had no doubt about his Caliphate is against the facts. What were the factors from which he made this guess when the actual facts were to the contrary. If the caliphate was certain for any one, it was `Uthman. Thus, at the Consultative Committee `Abd ar-Rahman ibn `Awf said to Amir al-mu'minin: "O' `Ali! do not create a situation against yourself for I have observed and consulted the people and they all want `Uthman." (at-Tabari, vol. 1, p. 2786; Ibn al-Athir, vol. 3, p. 71; Abu'l-Fida', vol. 1, p. 166)

Consequently, Amir al-mu'minin was sure not to get the caliphate as has already been stated on the authority of at-Tabari's History, under the sermon of the Camel's Foam (ash-Shiqshiqiyah), namely that on seeing the names of the members of the Consultative Committee, Amir al-mu'minin had said to al-`Abbas ibn `Abd al-Muttalib that the caliphate could not be given to anyone except `Uthman since all the powers had been given to `Abd ar-Rahman ibn `Awf and he was `Uthman's brother-in-law (sister's husband) and Sa`d ibn Abi Waqqas was a relative and tribesman of `Abd ar-Rahman. These two would join in giving the caliphate to him.

At this stage, the question arises as to what the reason was that actuated al-Mughirah to prompt Amir al-mu'minin to say something about `Umar. If he knew that Amir al-mu'minin had good ideas about `Umar, he should have also known his impression; but if he thought that Amir al-mu'minin did not entertain good ideas about him then the purpose of his asking Amir al-mu'minin would be none other than that whatever he may say he would, by exposing it, create an atmosphere against him and make the members of the Consultative Committee suspicious of him. The views of the members of the Consultative Committee are well understood from the very fact that by putting the condition of following the conduct of the first two Caliphs in electing the caliph they had shown their adherence to them. In these circumstances when al-Mughirah tried to play this trick Amir al-mu'minin said just by way of relating a fact that `Umar achieved the good (of this world) and remained safe from its evil. This sentence has no connection with praise or eulogy. `Umar did in his days enjoy all kinds of advantages while his period was free from the mischiefs that cropped up later. After recording this statement Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes:

From this event the belief gains strength that in this utterance the allusion is towards `Umar.

If the utterance means the word uttered by Ibnah Abi Hathmah about which Amir al-mu'minin has said that they are not her own heart's voice but she was made to utter them, then doubtlessly the reference is to `Umar, but the view that these words were uttered by Amir al-mu'minin in praise of `Umar is not at all established. Rather, from this tradition it is evidently shown that these words were uttered by Ibnah Abi Hathmah. Allah alone knows on what ground the words of Ibnah Abi Hathmah are quoted and then it is daringly argued that these words were uttered by Amir al-mu'minin about `Umar. It seems Amir al-mu'minin had uttered these words about someone on some occasion, then Ibnah Abi Hathmah used similar words on `Umar's death and then even Amir al-mu'minin's words were taken to be in praise of `Umar. Otherwise, no mind except a mad one can argue that the words uttered by Ibnah Abi Hathmah should be deemed a ground to hold that Amir al-mu'minin said these words in praise of `Umar. Can it be expected, after (a glance at) the sermon of the Camel's Foam, that Amir al-mu'minin might have uttered these words. Again, it is worth consideration that if these words had been uttered by Amir al-mu'minin on `Umar's death, then at the Consultative Committee when he refused to follow the conduct

of the (first) two Caliphs it should have been said to him that only the other day he has said that `Umar had established the sunnah and banished innovations, so that when his conduct was in accord with the sunnah what was the sense in accepting the sunnah but refusing to follow his conduct.

Sermon 228: You drew out my hand towards you for allegiance...

About allegiance to Amir al-mu'minin for the Caliphate (A similar sermon in somewhat different version has already appeared earlier)

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في وصف بيعته بالخلافة

(وقد تقدم مثله بألفاظ مختلفة)

You drew out my hand towards you for allegiance but I held it back and you stretched it but I contracted it. Then you crowded over me as the thirsty camels crowd on the watering cisterns on their being taken there, so much so that shoes were torn, shoulder-cloths fell away and the weak got trampled, and the happiness of people on their allegiance to me was so manifested that small children felt joyful, the old staggered (up to me) for it, the sick too reached for it helter skelter and young girls ran for it without veils.

وَبَسَطْتُمْ يَدِي فَكَفَفْتُمُوهَا، وَمَدَدْتُمُوهَا فَقَبَضْتُمُوهَا، ثُمَّ تَدَاكُكْتُمْ عَلَيَّ تَدَاكُ الْإِبِلِ الْهَيْمِ عَلَى حِيَاضِهَا يَوْمَ وِرْدِهَا، حَتَّى انْقَطَعَتِ النَّعْلُ، وَسَقَطَ الرِّدَاءُ، وَوُطِئَ الضَّعِيفُ، وَبَلَغَ مِنْ سُرُورِ النَّاسِ بِنَيْعَتِهِمْ إِتْيَايَ أَنْ ابْتَهَجَ بِهَا الصَّغِيرُ، وَهَدَجَ إِلَيْهَا الْكَبِيرُ، وَتَحَامَلَ نَحْوَهَا الْعَلِيلُ، وَحَسَرَتْ إِلَيْهَا الْكِعَابُ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 228

- (1) *Al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 142;*
- (2) *al-Mufid, al-Jamal, 128, from (3);*
- (3) *al-Waqidi, al-Jamal;*
- (4) *al-Thaqafi, al-Gharat, I, 310;*
- (5) *Ibn Tawus, Kashf, 173;*
- (6) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-'Imamah, I, 154;*
- (7) *al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, V, 28;*
- (8) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-'Iqd, II, 165;*
- (9) *al-Kulayni, al-Rasa'il;*
- (10) *al-Tabari, al-Mustarshid, 95.*

Sermon 229: Certainly, fear of Allah is the key to guidance....

Advice about fear of Allah, and an account of those who remain apprehensive of death and adopt abstemiousness

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)
في مقاصد أخرى

Certainly, fear of Allah is the key to guidance, provision for the next world, freedom from every slavery and deliverance from all ruin. With its help the seeker succeeds and he who makes for safety escapes and achieves his aims.

فَإِنَّ تَقْوَى اللَّهِ مِفْتَاحُ سَدَادٍ، وَدَخِيرَةُ مَعَادٍ، وَعَيْتُقُ مِنْ كُلِّ مَلَكَةٍ، وَنَجَاةٌ مِنْ كُلِّ هَلَاكَةٍ، بِهَا يَنْجَحُ الطَّالِبُ، وَيَنْجُوا الْهَارِبُ، وَتُنَالُ الرِّغَائِبُ.

Perform (good) acts while such acts are being raised (up to Allah), while repentance can be of benefit, prayer can be heard, conditions are peaceful and the pens (of the two angels) are in motion (to record the actions). Hasten towards (virtuous) actions before the change of age (to oldness), lingering illness or snatching death (overtakes you).

Certainly, death will end your enjoyments, mar your pleasures and remove your objectives. It is an unwanted visitor, an invincible adversary and an unaccounting killer. Its ropes have entrapped you, its evils have surrounded you, its arrowheads have aimed at you, its sway over you is great, its oppression on you is continuous and the chance of its missing you is remote.

فَاعْمَلُوا وَالْعَمَلُ يُرْفَعُ، وَالتَّوْبَةُ تَنْفَعُ، وَالدُّعَاءُ يُسْمَعُ، وَالْحَالُ هَادِئَةٌ، وَالْأَقْلَامُ جَارِيَةٌ. وَبَادِرُوا بِالْأَعْمَالِ عُمْرًا نَاصِيًا، أَوْ مَرَضًا حَاسِبًا، أَوْ مَوْتًا خَالِسًا، فَإِنَّ الْمَوْتَ هَادِمٌ لَدَاتِكُمْ، وَمُكَدِّرٌ شَهَوَاتِكُمْ، وَمُبَاعِدٌ طِيَابِكُمْ، زَائِرٌ غَيْرٌ مَحْبُوبٍ، وَقِرْنٌ غَيْرٌ مَعْلُوبٍ، وَوَاتِرٌ غَيْرٌ مَطْلُوبٍ، قَدْ أَعْلَقْتُمْ حَبَائِلَهُ، وَتَكَنَّفْتُمْ عَوَائِلَهُ، وَأَقْصَدْتُمْ مَعَابِلَهُ، وَعَظُمَتْ فِيكُمْ سَطْوَتُهُ، وَتَتَابَعَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ عَدْوَتُهُ، وَقَلَّتْ عَنْكُمْ نَبْوَتُهُ.

Very soon you will be overwhelmed with the gloom of its shades, the severity of its illness, the darkness of its distresses, the nonsense utterances of its pangs, the grief of its destruction, the darkness of its encompassment and the unwholesomeness of its taste. It will seem as if it has come to you all of a sudden, silenced those who were whispering to you, separated your group, destroyed your doings, devastated your houses and altered your successors to distribute your estate among the chief relatives, who did not give you any benefit, or the grieved near ones who could not protect (you), or those rejoicers who did not lament (you).

فَيُوشِكُ أَنْ تَعْشَاكُمْ دَوَاجِي ظَلَلِهِ، وَاحْتِدَامِ عِلَلِهِ، وَخَنَادِسِ غَمْرَاتِهِ، وَغَوَاشِي سَكْرَاتِهِ،
وَأَلِيمِ إِرْهَاقِهِ، وَدُجُوِّ أَطْبَاقِهِ، وَجُشُوبَةِ مَدَاقِهِ؛ فَكَأَنَّ قَدْ أَتَاكُمْ بَعْتَهُ فَأَسْكَتَ نَجِيحَكُمْ، وَفَرَّقَ
نَدِيحَكُمْ، وَعَفَى آثَارَكُمْ، وَعَطَّلَ دِيَارَكُمْ، وَبَعَثَ وُزَارَكُمْ، يَفْتَسِمُونَ تُرَاثَكُمْ، بَيْنَ حَمِيمٍ خَاصٍّ لَمْ
يَنْفَعِ، وَفَرِيبٍ مَحْزُونٍ لَمْ يَمْنَعِ، وَآخَرَ شَامِتٍ لَمْ يَجْزِعِ.

Therefore, it is upon you to strive, make effort, equip yourself, get ready and provide yourself from the place of provision. And let not the life of this world deceive you as it deceived those before you among the past people and by-gone periods -- those who extracted its milk, benefited from its neglectfulness, passed a long time and turned its new things into old (by living long). Their abodes turned into graves and their wealth into inheritable estate.

They do not know who came to them (at their graves); do not pay heed to those who weep over them, and do not respond to those who call them. Therefore, beware of this world as it is treacherous, deceitful and cheating, it gives and takes back, covers with clothes and uncovers. Its pleasure does not last, its hardship does not end and its calamity does not stop.

فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِالْحَدِّ وَالْاجْتِنَادِ، وَالتَّاهِبِ وَالِاسْتِعْدَادِ، وَالتَّرْوُدِ فِي مَنْزِلِ الرَّادِ. وَلَا تَعْرَتِكُمْ الدُّنْيَا
كَمَا غَرَّتْ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ مِنَ الْأُمَمِ الْمَاضِيَةِ، وَالْقُرُونِ الْحَالِيَةِ، الَّذِينَ احْتَلَبُوا دِرَّتَهَا، وَأَصَابُوا
غِرَّتَهَا، وَأَفْنَوْا عِدَّتَهَا، وَأَخْلَفُوا جِدَّتَهَا، أَصْبَحَتْ مَسَاكِنُهُمْ أَجْدَانًا، وَأَمْوَالُهُمْ مِيرَاثًا، لَا يَعْرِفُونَ
مَنْ أَتَاهُمْ، وَلَا يَخْفَلُونَ مَنْ بَكَاهُمْ، وَلَا يُجِيبُونَ مَنْ دَعَاهُمْ. فَاحْذَرُوا الدُّنْيَا فَإِنَّهَا غَرَارَةٌ خَدُوعٌ،
مُعْطِيَةٌ مُنَوَّعٌ، مُلْبِسَةٌ نَزُوعٌ، لَا يَدُومُ رَحَاؤُهَا، وَلَا يَنْقُضِي عَنَاؤُهَا، وَلَا يَرْكُدُ بِلَاؤُهَا.

A part of the same sermon about ascetics

منها: في صفة الزَّهَادِ

They are from among the people of this world but are not its people, because they remain in it as though they do not belong to it. They act herein on what they observe and hasten here in (to avoid) what they fear. Their bodies move among the people of the next world. They see that the people of this world attach importance to the death of their bodies but they themselves attach more importance to the death of the hearts of those who are living.

كَانُوا قَوْمًا مِنْ أَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَيْسُوا مِنْ أَهْلِهَا، فَكَانُوا فِيهَا كَمَنْ لَيْسَ مِنْهَا، عَمِلُوا فِيهَا بِمَا
يُبْصِرُونَ، وَبَادَرُوا فِيهَا مَا يَخْذَرُونَ، تَقَلَّبَ أَبْدَانُهُمْ بَيْنَ ظَهْرَانِي أَهْلِ الْآخِرَةِ، يَرَوْنَ أَهْلَ الدُّنْيَا
يُعْظَمُونَ مَوْتَ أَجْسَادِهِمْ وَهُمْ أَشَدُّ إِعْظَامًا لِمَوْتِ قُلُوبِ أَحْيَائِهِمْ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 229

(1) Ibn al-'Athir, *al-Nihayah*, I, 355, II, 61, 103, III, 174;

(2) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar*, 112, 148, 213.

Sermon 230: The Prophet manifested...

Amir al-mu'minin delivered this sermon at Dhiqar on his way to Basrah, and the historian al-Waqidi has mentioned it (in Kitab al-Jamal)

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)
خطبها بذي قار، وهو متوجه إلى البصرة
ذكرها الواقدي في كتاب "الجمل"

About the Holy Prophet

The Prophet manifested whatever he was commanded and conveyed the messages of his Lord. Consequently, Allah repaired through him the cracks, joined through him the slits and created (through him) affection among kin although they bore intense enmity in (their) chests and deep-seated rancour in (their) hearts.

فَصَدَعَ بِمَا أُمِرَ بِهِ، وَبَلَّغَ رِسَالَةَ رَبِّهِ، فَلَمَّ اللَّهُ بِهِ الصَّدْعَ، وَرَتَّقَ بِهِ الْفُتْقَ، وَأَلْفَ بِهِ بَيْنَ ذَوِي الْأَرْحَامِ، بَعْدَ الْعَدَاوَةِ الْوَاعِرَةِ فِي الصُّدُورِ، وَالضَّغَائِنِ الْقَادِحَةِ فِي الْقُلُوبِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 230

- (1) *Al-Mufid, al-Jamal, 127;*
- (2) *al-Mufid, al-'Irshad, 115; from (3)*
- (3) *al-Waqidi, al-Jamal,*
- (4) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-'Iqd, II, 227.*

Sermon 231: This money is neither for me nor for you...

ʿAbdullah ibn Zama`ah who was one of the followers of Amir al-mu'minin came to him during his Caliphate to ask for some money when Amir al-mu'minin said:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

كلم به عبدالله بن زمعة وهو من شيعة

وذلك أنه قدِمَ عليه في خلافته يطلب منه مالاً، فقال (عليه السلام):

This money is neither for me nor for you, but it is the collective property of the Muslims and the acquisition of their swords. If you had taken part with them in their fighting you would have a share equal to theirs, otherwise the earning of their hands cannot be for other than their mouths.

إِنَّ هَذَا الْمَالَ لَيْسَ لِي وَلَا لَكَ، وَإِنَّمَا هُوَ فِيءٌ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَجَلَبُ أَسْيَافِهِمْ، فَإِنْ شَرَكْتَهُمْ

فِي حَرْبِهِمْ كَانَ لَكَ مِثْلُ حَظِّهِمْ، وَإِلَّا فَجَنَاحُ أَيْدِيهِمْ لَا تَكُونُ لِعَيْرِ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 231

(1) *Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 69.*

Sermon 232: Know that the tongue is a part of a man's body...

On Ja`dah ibn Hubayrah al-Makhzumi's ¹ inability to deliver a sermon.

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

بعد أن أقدم أحدهم على الكلام فحصر

[وهو في فضل أهل البيت، ووصف فسادالزمان]

About speaking the truth

Know that the tongue is a part of a man's body. If the man desists, speech will not co-operate with him and when he dilates, speech will not give him time to stop. Certainly, we are the masters of speaking. Its veins are fixed in us and its branches are hanging over us.

أَلَا إِنَّ اللِّسَانَ بَضْعَةٌ مِنَ الْإِنْسَانِ، فَلَا يُسْعِدُهُ الْقَوْلُ إِذَا امْتَنَعَ، وَلَا يُمَهِّلُهُ التُّطْقُ إِذَا اتَّسَعَ، وَإِنَّا لَأَمْرَاءُ الْكَلَامِ، وَفِينَا تَنْشَبَتْ عُرُوفُهُ، وَعَالَيْنَا تَهَدَّلَتْ عُصُونُهُ.

Know that - may Allah have mercy on you - you are living at a time when those who speak about right are few, when tongues are loath to utter the truth and those who stick to the right are humiliated. The people of this time are engaged in disobedience. Their youth are wicked, their old men are sinful, their learned men are hypocrites, and their speakers are sycophants. Their young ones do not respect their elders, and their rich men do not support the destitute.

وَأَعْلَمُوا رَحِمَكُمُ اللَّهُ أَنَّكُمْ فِي زَمَانِ الْقَائِلِ فِيهِ بِالْحَقِّ قَلِيلٌ، وَاللِّسَانُ عَنِ الصِّدْقِ كَلِيلٌ، وَاللَّارِمُ لِلْحَقِّ دَلِيلٌ، أَهْلُهُ مُعْتَكِفُونَ عَلَى الْعِصْيَانِ، مُصْطَلِحُونَ عَلَى الْأَدْهَانِ، فَتَاهُمْ عَارِمٌ، وَشَائِبُهُمْ آتِمٌ، عَالِمُهُمْ مُنَافِقٌ، وَقَارِئُهُمْ مُمَازِقٌ، لَا يُعْظَمُ صَغِيرُهُمْ كَبِيرُهُمْ، وَلَا يَعُولُ غَنِيِّهِمْ فَقِيرُهُمْ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 232

- (1) *Al-Kulayni, Rawdah, 396;*
- (2) *al-Raghib, Muhadarat, I, 89;*
- (3) *al-Watwat, al-Ghurar, 108;*
- (4) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, at the beginning;*
- (5) *al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 82, 132.*

Notes

1. Once Amir al-mu'minin asked his nephew (sister's son) Ja`dah ibn Hubayrah al-Makhzumi to deliver a sermon, but when he rose for speaking his tongue faltered and he could utter nothing, whereupon Amir al-mu'minin ascended the pulpit to speak and delivered a long sermon out of which a few sentences have been recorded here by as-Sayyid ar-Radi.

Sermon 233: They differ among themselves....

Causes for difference in the features and traits of people

Dhi`lib al-Yamami has related from Ahmad ibn Qutaybah, and he from `Abdullah ibn Yazid and he from Malik ibn Dihyah who said, "We were with Amir al-mu'minin when discussion arose about the differences of men (in features and conduct) and then Amir al-mu'minin said":

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

روى اليماني، عن أحمد بن قتيبة، عن عبدالله بن يزيد، عن مالك بن دحية، قال: كُتِبَ

عند أمير المؤمنين (عليه السلام)، وقد ذكر عنده اختلاف الناس فقل: .

They differ among themselves because of the sources ¹ of their clay (from which they have been created). This is because they are either from saltish soil or sweet soil or from rugged earth or soft earth. They, resemble each other on the basis of the affinity of their soil and differ according to its difference. Therefore, sometimes a person of handsome features is weak in intelligence, a tall statured person is of low courage, a virtuous person is ugly in appearance, a short statured person is far-sighted, a good-natured person has an evil trait, a person of perplexed heart has bewildering mind and a sharp-tongued person has a wakeful heart.

إِنَّمَا فَرَّقَ بَيْنَهُمْ مَبَادِيءُ طِينِهِمْ، وَذَلِكَ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا فُلُقَةً مِنْ سَبَخِ أَرْضٍ وَعَدْبِهَا، وَحَزْنِ تُرْبَةٍ وَسَهْلِهَا، فَهُمْ عَلَى حَسَبِ قُرْبِ أَرْضِهِمْ يَتَفَارِقُونَ، وَعَلَى قَدْرِ اخْتِلَافِهَا يَتَفَاوَتُونَ، فَتَأْمُّ الرُّوَاءِ نَاقِصُ الْعَقْلِ، وَمَادُّ الْقَامَةِ قَصِيرُ الْهِمَّةِ، وَرَاكِي الْعَمَلِ قَبِيحُ الْمُنْظَرِ، وَقَرِيبُ الْفَعْرِ بَعِيدُ السَّرِّ، مَعْرُوفُ الضَّرِيَّةِ مُنْكَرُ الْجَلِيَّةِ، وَتَائِهَةُ الْقَلْبِ مُتَفَرِّقُ اللَّبِّ، وَطَلِيْقُ اللِّسَانِ حَدِيدُ الْجَنَانِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 233

(1) *Al-Yamani, al-Taraz;*

(2) *al-Zamakhshari, Rabi`, I, 110.*

Notes

1. Amir al-mu'minin has ascribed the differences in features and characters of people to the differences in the clay from which they are created and according to which their features are shaped and the skeletons of their characters are formed. Therefore, to the extent that their clay of origin is akin, their mental and imaginative tendencies too will be similar and to the extent by which they differ, there will be a difference in their inclinations and tendencies. By origins of a thing are meant those things on which its coming into existence depends, but they should not be its cause. The word "tin" is the plural of "tinah" which means origin or basis. Here "tinah" means semen which after passing through various stages of development emerges in the human shape. Its origin means those constituents from which those items are created which help in the formation of semen. Thus, by saltish, sweet, soft or hard soil the reference is to these elementary constituents. Since those elementary constituents carry different properties the semen growing out of them will also bear different characteristics and propensities which will (eventually) show forth in the differences in features and conduct of those borne in it.

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written (in *Sharh Nahjul Balaghah*, vol. 13, p. 19) that "origins of tinah" implies those preservative factors which are different in their properties as Plato and

other philosophers have held. The reason for calling them "origins of tinah" is that they serve as an asylum for the human body and prevent the elements from diffusion. Just as the existence of a thing hinges on its basis, in the same way the existence of this body which is made up of elements depends on preservative factors. So long as the preservative factor exists the body is also safe from disruption and disintegration and the elements too are immune to diffusion and dispersal. When it leaves the body the elements also get dispersed.

According to this explanation Amir al-mu'minin's words would mean that Allah has created different original factors among whom some are vicious and some are virtuous, some are weak and some are strong, and every person will act according to his original factor. If there is similarity in the inclinations of two persons it is because their original factor are similar, and if their tendencies differ it is because their original factors do not have any similarity. But this conclusion is not correct because Amir al-mu'minin's words do not only refer to differences in conduct and behaviour but also of features and shape and the differences of features and shape cannot be the result of differences in original factors.

In any case, whether the original factors are the cause of differences in features and conduct or the elementary constituents are the cause, these words appear to lead to the negation of volition and to prove the compulsion (of destiny) in human actions, because if man's capacity for thinking and acting is dependent on "tinah" then he would be compelled to behave himself in a fixed way on account of which he would neither deserve praise for good acts nor be held blame worthy for bad habits. But this hypothesis is incorrect because it is well established that just as Allah knows everything in creation after its coming into being, in the same way He knew it before its creation. Thus, He knew what actions man would perform of his free will and what he would leave. Therefore, Allah gave him capacity to act according to his free will, and created him from a suitable "tinah". This tinah is not the cause of his actions so as to snatch away from him his free will but the meaning of creating from suitable tinah is that Allah does not by force stand in man's way but allows him to tread the path he wants to tread of his own free will.

Sermon 234: May my father and my mother shed their lives for you...

Spoken when Amir al-mu'minin was busy in the funeral ablution (ghusl) of the Holy Prophet and shrouding him

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

قاله وهو يلي غسل رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وآله) وتجهيزه

May my father and my mother shed their lives for you. O Messenger of Allah! With your death the process of prophethood, revelation and heavenly messages has stopped, which had not stopped at the death of others (prophets). Your position with us (members of your family) is so special that your grief has become a source of consolation (to us) as against the grief of all others; your grief is also common so that all Muslims share it equally.

If you had not ordered endurance and prevented us from bewailing, we would have produced a store of tears and even then the pain would not have subsided, and this grief would not have ended, and they would have been too little of our grief for you. But this (death) is a matter that cannot be reversed nor is it possible to repulse it. May my father and my mother die for you; do remember us with Allah and take care of us.

بِأبي أُنْتِ وَأُمِّي، لَقَدْ انْقَطَعَ بِمَوْتِكَ مَا لَمْ يَنْقَطِعْ بِمَوْتِ غَيْرِكَ مِنَ النَّبُوَّةِ وَالْأَنْبَاءِ وَأَخْبَارِ السَّمَاءِ، خَصَصْتِ حَتَّى صِرْتِ مُسَلِّيًّا عَمَّنْ سِوَاكَ، وَعَمَمْتِ حَتَّى صَارَ النَّاسُ فِيكَ سَوَاءً، وَلَوْ لَا أَنَّكَ أَمَرْتِ بِالصَّبْرِ، وَنَهَيْتِ عَنِ الْجَزَعِ، لَانْقَدْنَا عَلَيْكَ مَاءَ الشُّؤُونِ، وَلَكَانَ الدَّاءُ مُمَاطِلًا، وَالْكَمَدُ مُحَالِفًا، وَقَالَ لَكَ! وَلَكِنَّهُ مَا لَا يُمَلِّكَ رُدُّهُ، وَلَا يُسْتَطَاعُ دَفْعُهُ!
بِأبي أُنْتِ وَأُمِّي! ادْكُرْنَا عِنْدَ رَبِّكَ، وَاجْعَلْنَا مِنْ بَالِكَ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 234

- (1) *Al-Mufid, al-'Amali, 60;*
- (2) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, III, 143 (t.y.b);*
- (3) *Muhammad ibn Habib, al-'Amali, 112;*
- (4) *Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Musnad, hadith 228;*
- (5) *Ibn Hisham, al-Sirat al-Nabawiyyah, IV, 213;*
- (6) *al-Baladhuri, Ansab, I, 571;*
- (7) *Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn al-Sari ibn Sahl al-Nahwi, al-'Amali;*
For (3) & (4) see 'Abd al-Zahra', III, 182.

Sermon 235: I began following the path...

In this sermon Amir al-mu'minin has related his own condition after the Prophet's migration till his meeting with him.¹

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

اقتصن فيه ذكر ما كان منه بعد هجرة النبي (صلى الله عليه وآله) ثم لحاقه به

I began following the path adopted by the Prophet and treading on the lines of his remembrance till I reached al-'Arj.

فَجَعَلْتُ أَتْبَعُ مَا خَذَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَأَطَأُ ذِكْرَهُ، حَتَّى انْتَهَيْتُ إِلَى الْعَرَجِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Amir al-mu'minin's words "faata'u dhikrahu" constitute the highest forms of brevity and eloquence. He means to say that he was being given news about the Prophet from the commencement of his setting out till he reached this place, and he has expressed this sense in this wonderful expression.

قال السيد الشريف رضي الله عنه في حديث طويل: فقوله (عليه السلام): «فَأَطَأُ ذِكْرَهُ»، من الكلام الذي رُمِيَ به إلى غايته والفصاحة والايجاز، وأراد أني كنتُ أُعْطِي خبره (عليه السلام) من بدء خروجي إلى أن انتهيتُ إلى هذا الموضوع، وكنتُ عن ذلك بهذه الكناية العجيبة.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 235

(1) *Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, V, (w.t.'a).*

Notes

1. Since the commencement of prophethood, the Prophet remained in Mecca for thirteen years. For him, this period was of the severest oppression and destitution. The unbelievers of the Quraysh had closed all the doors of livelihood upon him, and had left no deficiency in inflicting hardships upon him, so much so that in order to take his life they began contriving how to do away with him. Forty of their nobles assembled in the hall of audience (Dar an-Nadwah) for consultation, and decided that one individual should be picked out from every tribe and they should jointly attack him. In this way, Banu Hashim would not dare to face all the tribes, and the matter would quieten down on the payment of blood price. To give a practical shape to this scheme, these people sat in ambush near the house of the Prophet on the night of the first of Rabi` al-awwal, so that when the prophet slept in his bed he would be attacked. On this side the preparation for killing him was complete, and on the other side Allah informed him of all the intrigues of the Quraysh unbelievers and commanded him to make `Ali (p.b.u.h.) sleep on his bed and himself to emigrate to Medina. The Prophet sent for `Ali (p.b.u.h.) and disclosing to him his plan, said: "Ali, you lie on my bed." Amir al-mu'minin enquired: "O Messenger of Allah, will your life be saved by my sleeping here?" The Prophet said: "Yes." Hearing this Amir al-mu'minin performed a prostration in thanks-giving and, exposing himself fully to the danger, lay on the Prophet's bed while the Prophet left from the rear door. The Quraysh unbelievers were peeping and getting ready for the attack but Abu Lahab said: "It is not proper to attack in the night because there are women and children also in the house. When morning dawns you attack him, but keep watch during night that he should not move anywhere." Consequently, they kept their eyes on the bed throughout the night and soon, on the appearance of the dawn, proceeded forward stealthily. Hearing the sound of their footsteps, Amir al-mu'minin

removed the covering from his face and stood up. The Quraysh gazed at him with stretched eyes as to whether it was an illusion or fact. After making sure that it was `Ali they enquired, "Where is Muhammad?" and `Ali replied, "Did you entrust him to me, that now you are asking me?" They had no reply to this. Men ran to chase him but found footprints only up to the cave of Thawr. Beyond that there were neither footprints nor any sign of hiding in the cave. They came back bewildered while the Prophet after staying in the cave for three days left for Medina. Amir al-mu'minin passed these three days in Mecca, returned to the people their properties lying in trust with the Prophet and set off towards Medina to join the Prophet. Upto al-`Arj which is a place between Mecca and Medina, he kept getting news about the Prophet and he continued his anxious march in his search till he met the Prophet at Quba on the twelfth of Rabi` al-awwal, and entered Medina with him. (at-Tabari, at-Tafsir, vol. 9, pp. 148-151; at-Tarikh, vol. 1, pp. 1232-1234; Ibn Sa`d, at-Tabaqat, vol. 1, Part 1, pp. 153-154; Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah, vol. 2, pp. 124-128; Ibn al-Athir, Usd al-ghabah, vol. 4, p. 25; al-Kamil, vol. 2, pp. 101-104; Ibn Kathir, at-Tafsir, vol. 2, pp. 302-303; at-Tarikh, vol. 3, pp. 180-181; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 13, pp. 303-306; as-Suyuti, ad-Durr al-manthur, vol. 3, pp. 179-180; al-`Allamah al-Majlisi, Bihar al-anwar, vol. 19, pp. 28-103).

Sermon 236: Perform (good) acts while you are still in the vastness of life...

About collecting provision for the next world while in this world and performing good acts before death

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في المسارعة إلى العمل

Perform (good) acts while you are still in the vastness of life, the books are open (for recording of actions), repentance is allowed, the runner away (from Allah) is being called and the sinner is being given hope (of forgiveness) before the (light of) action is put off, time expires, life ends, the door for repentance is closed and angels ascend to the sky.

فَاعْمَلُوا وَأَنْتُمْ فِي نَفْسِ الْبَقَاءِ وَالصُّحُفُ مَنْشُورَةٌ وَالتَّوْبَةُ مَبْسُوطَةٌ وَالْمُدْبِرُ يُدْعَى، وَالْمُسِيءُ يُرْجَى، قَبْلَ أَنْ يَحْمَدَ الْعَمَلُ وَيَنْقَطَعَ الْمَهْلُ، وَتَنْقُضِي الْمُدَّةُ، وَتُسَدُّ أَبْوَابُ التَّوْبَةِ، وَتَضَعُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ

Therefore a man should derive benefit from himself for himself, from the living for the dead, from the mortal, for the lasting and from the departer for the stayer. A man should fear Allah while he is given age to live upto his death, and is allowed time to act. A man should control his self by the rein and hold it with its bridle, thus by the rein he should prevent it from disobedience towards Allah, and by the bridle he should lead it towards obedience to Allah.

فَأَحَدَ امْرُؤٍ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ لِنَفْسِهِ، وَأَحَدَ مِنْ حَيٍّ لِمَيِّتٍ، وَمِنْ فَاِنٍ لِبَاقٍ، وَمِنْ ذَاهِبٍ لِدَائِمٍ. امْرُؤٌ خَافَ اللَّهَ وَهُوَ مُعَمَّرٌ إِلَى أَجَلِهِ، وَمَنْظُورٌ إِلَى عَمَلِهِ. امْرُؤٌ أَلْجَمَ نَفْسَهُ بِلِجَامِهَا، وَرَمَّهَا بِرِمَامِهَا فَأَمْسَكَهَا بِلِجَامِهَا عَنْ مَعَاصِي اللَّهِ، وَقَادَهَا بِرِمَامِهَا إِلَى طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 236

(1) Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 54.

Sermon 237: They have been collected...

About the two arbitrators (Abu Musa al-Ash`ari and `Amr ibn al-`As) and disparagement of the people of Syria (ash-Sham).

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

في شأن الحكمين وذم أهل الشام

Rude, low people and mean slaves. They have been collected from all sides and picked up from every pack. They need to be taught the tenets (of Islam), disciplined, instructed, trained, supervised and led by the hand. They are neither muhajirun (immigrants from Mecca), nor ansar (helpers of Medina) nor those who made their dwellings in the abode (in Medina) and in belief.

جُفَاءَ طَعَامٍ، عَبِيدَ أَقْرَامٍ، جُمِعُوا مِنْ كُلِّ أَوْبٍ، وَتُلْقَطُوا مِنْ كُلِّ شَوْبٍ، مِمَّنْ يَنْبَغِي أَنْ يُفَقَّهَ
وَيُؤَدَّبَ، وَيُعَلَّمَ وَيُدْرَبَ، وَيُؤَلَّى عَلَيْهِ، وَيُؤَخَذَ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ، لَيْسُوا مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ، وَلَا
مِنَ الَّذِينَ تَبَوَّأُوا الدَّارَ.

Look! They have chosen for themselves one who is nearest of all of them to what they desire, while you have chosen one who is nearest to what you dislike. You may certainly recall that the other day `Abdullah ibn Qays (Abu Musa) was saying: "It is a mischief, therefore, cut away your bow-string and sheathe your swords." If he was right (in what he said) then he was wrong in marching (with us) without being forced, but if he was lying then he should be viewed with suspicion. Therefore, send `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas to face `Amr ibn al-`As. Make use of these days and surround the borders of Islam. Do you not see that your cities are being attacked and your prowess is being aimed at?

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الْقَوْمَ اخْتَارُوا لِنَفْسِهِمْ أَقْرَبَ الْقَوْمِ مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ، وَاخْتَرْتُمْ لِنَفْسِكُمْ أَقْرَبَ الْقَوْمِ مِمَّا
تُكْرَهُونَ، وَإِنَّمَا عَاهَدْتُمْ بِعَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ قَيْسٍ بِالْأَمْسِ يَقُولُ: إِنَّهَا فِتْنَةٌ فَفَطِّعُوا أَوْ تَارَكُوا وَشِيمُوا
سُيُوفَكُمْ، فَإِنْ كَانَ صَادِقًا فَقَدْ أَحْطَأَ بِمَسِيرِهِ غَيْرَ مُسْتَكْرَهٍ، وَإِنْ كَانَ كَاذِبًا فَقَدْ لَزِمْتَهُ الشُّهْمَةُ.
فَادْفَعُوا فِي صَدْرِ عَمْرٍو بْنِ الْعَاصِ بِعَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الْعَبَّاسِ، وَخُذُوا مَهَلَ الْأَيَّامِ، وَحُوطُوا قَوَاصِي
الْإِسْلَامِ، أَلَا تَرَوْنَ إِلَى بِلَادِكُمْ تُغْزَى، وَإِلَى صَفَاتِكُمْ تُرْمَى؟

Alternative Sources for Sermon 237

- (1) Ibn Qutaybah, *al-Imamah*, I, 154;
- (2) al-Thaqafi, *al-Gharat*, I, 312;
- (3) al-Kulayni, *al-Rasa'il*;
- (4) al-Tabari, *al-Mustarshid*, 95;
- (5) Ibn Tawus, *Kashf*, 173;
- (6) Safwah, *Jamharah*.

Sermon 238: They are life for knowledge and death for ignorance...

Amir al-mu'minin describes herein the members of the Prophet's family

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

يذكر فيها آل محمد (عليهم السلام)

They are life for knowledge and death for ignorance. Their forbearance tells you of their knowledge, their outer self of their inner self, and their silence of the wisdom of their speaking. They do not go against right nor do they differ (among themselves) about it. They are the pillars of Islam and the asylums of (its) protection.

With them right has returned to its position and wrong has left its place and its tongue is severed from its root. They have understood the religion attentively and carefully, not by mere heresy or from relaters, because the relaters of knowledge are many but its understanders are few.

هُم عَيْشُ الْعِلْمِ، وَمَوْتُ الْجَهْلِ، يُخَيِّرُكُمْ حِلْمُهُمْ عَنْ عِلْمِهِمْ، وَظَاهِرُكُمْ عَنْ بَاطِنِكُمْ
وَصَمْتُهُمْ عَنْ حِكْمِ مَنْطِقِهِمْ، لَا يُخَالِفُونَ الْحَقَّ وَلَا يَحْتَلِفُونَ فِيهِ، هُمْ دَعَائِمُ الْأِسْلَامِ، وَوَلَائِحُ
الْأَعْتِصَامِ، يَهْمُ عَادَ الْحَقُّ فِي نَصَابِهِ، وَأَنْزَاخَ الْبَاطِلِ عَنْ مَقَامِهِ، وَأَنْقَطَعَ لِسَانُهُ عَنْ مَنبِتِهِ، عَقَلُوا
الدِّينَ عَقْلًا وَعَايَةَ وَرِعَايَةَ، لَا عَقْلَ سَمَاعٍ وَرَوَايَةَ، فَإِنَّ رُوَاةَ الْعِلْمِ كَثِيرٌ، وَرِعَايَتُهُ قَلِيلٌ.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 238

- (1) *Al-Kulayni, Rawdah*, 386;
- (2) *al-Harrani, Tuhaf*, 163.

Sermon 239: O Ibn al-`Abbas!...

When `Uthman ibn `Affan was surrounded, `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas brought a letter to Amir al-mu'minin from `Uthman in which he expressed the desire that Amir al-mu'minin should leave for his estate Yanbu` so that the proposal that was being mooted out for him to become caliph should subside. `Uthman had this request earlier also. Upon this Amir al-mu'minin said to Ibn al-`Abbas:

ومن كلام له عليه السلام
قاله لعبد الله بن العباس وقد جاء برسالة من عثمان بن عفان وهو محصور يسأله فيها
الخروج إلى ماله بينبع، ليقفل هتف الناس باسمه للخلافة، بعد أن كان سأله مثل ذلك من
قبل. فقال عليه السلام:

O Ibn al-`Abbas! `Uthman just wants to treat me like the water-drawing camel so that I may go forward and backward with the bucket. Once he sent me word that I should go out then sent me word that I should come back. Now, again he sends me word that I should go out. By Allah, I continued protecting him till I feared lest I become a sinner.

يَا بْنَ عَبَّاسٍ، مَا يُرِيدُ عُثْمَانُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَجْعَلَنِي جَمَلًا نَاضِحًا بِالْعَرَبِ أَقْبِلْ وَأَذْبِرْ! بَعَثَ إِلَيَّ أَنْ
أُخْرَجَ، ثُمَّ بَعَثَ إِلَيَّ أَنْ أَقْدَمَ، ثُمَّ هُوَ الْآنَ يَبْعَثُ إِلَيَّ أَنْ أُخْرَجَ! وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ دَفَعْتُ عَنْهُ حَتَّى
حَشِيتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ آثِمًا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 239

- (1) *Ibn Qutaybah, al-Imamah, I, 34;*
- (2) *al-Mubarrad, al-Kamil, I, 11;*
- (3) *Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-`Iqd, IV, 309.*

Sermon 240: Exhorting his men to jihad and asking them to refrain from seeking ease

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

يحثّ فيه أصحابه على الجهاد

Allah seeks you to thank Him and assigns to you His affairs. He has allowed time in the limited field (of life) so that you may vie with each other in seeking the reward (of Paradise). Therefore, tight up your girdles and wrap up the skirts. High courage and dinners do not go together. Sleep causes weakness in the big affairs of the day and (its) darkness obliterates the memories of courage.

وَاللَّهُ مُسْتَأْدِبِكُمْ شُكْرَهُ، وَمُؤَرِّثِكُمْ أَمْرَهُ، وَمُمْهِلِكُمْ فِي مِضْمَارِ مَخْدُودٍ، لِتَتَنَارَعُوا سَبَقَهُ،
فَشَدُّوا عُقَدَ الْمَازِرِ، وَاطَّوُّوا فُضُولَ الْخَوَاصِرِ، وَلَا تَجْتَمِعْ عَزِيمَةٌ وَوَلِيمَةٌ، وَمَا أَنْقَضَ النَّوْمَ لِعَرَائِمِ
الْيَوْمِ، أَعْحَى الظُّلْمَ لِتَذَاكِيرِ الْهَمَمِ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 240

(1) *Al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 308.*

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In the following bibliography, works written before or about the same time as Nahjul Balaghah (400/1009) are indicated by asterisk, one for extant works and two for those which, apparently, have been lost.

An asterisk upon a title in the lists of sources indicates an edition of it used by the marhum Imtiyaz `Ali Khan `Arshi, and its particulars are mentioned here after that of the edition of it referred to by `Abd al-Zahra' al-Husayni.

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(d. 328/939),
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(d. 652/1254),
Matalib al-sa'ul, Najaf.

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al-Yaqin, Najaf,
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LETTERS

Letters of Imam ‘Ali Amir Al-Mu’minin, Peace Be On Him

Selections from the writings of our master Amir al-Mu’minin, ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib and his letters to his enemies and the governors of his provinces, including selections of his letters of appointment to his administrative officers and his injunctions to members of his family and his companions

رسائل أمير المؤمنين (عليه السلام)

باب مختار من كتب مولانا أمير المؤمنين علي (عليه السلام)

و رسائله الى أعدائه و أمراء بلاده، و يدخل في ذلك ما اختير من عهوده الى عماله و وصاياه لأهله و أصحابه.

Letter 1: Addressed to the people of Kufa before proceeding for the Battle of Jamal

Addressed to the people of Kufah at the time of his march from Medina to Basrah. ¹

من كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى أهل الكوفة، عند مسيره من المدينة إلى البصرة

From the servant of Allah, `Ali, the Commander of the faithful, to the people of Kufah who are foremost among the supporters and chiefs of the Arabs.

مِنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلِيِّ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى أَهْلِ الْكُوفَةِ، جِبْهَةَ الْأَنْصَارِ وَسَنَامِ الْعَرَبِ.

Now, I am apprising you of what befell `Uthman so (correctly) that its hearing may be like its seeing. People criticised him, and I was the only man from among the muhadjirun (immigrants) who asked him to seek to satisfy (the Muslims) most and to offend them the least. As for Talhah and az-Zubayr, their lightest step about him was hard and their softest voice was strong. `A'ishah too was in a rage with him. Consequently, a group overpowered him and killed him. Then, people swore allegiance to me, not by force or compulsion but obediently and out of free will.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي أُخْبِرُكُمْ عَنْ أَمْرِ عُثْمَانَ حَتَّى يَكُونَ سَمْعُهُ كَعَيْنَانِهِ إِنَّ النَّاسَ طَعَنُوا عَلَيْهِ، فَكُنْتُ رَجُلًا مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ أَكْثَرَ اسْتِعْتَابِهِ، وَأَقْلُبُ عِتَابَهُ، وَكَانَ طَلْحَةُ وَالزُّبَيْرُ أَهْوَنَ سَيْرِهِمَا فِيهِ الْوَجِيفُ، وَأَرْفَقَ حَدَائِهِمَا الْعَنِيفُ، وَكَانَ مِنْ عَائِشَةَ فِيهِ فَلْتَةٌ عَظْبٌ، فَأَتَيْحَ لَهُ قَوْمٌ فَفَتَلَوْهُ، وَبَابِعِنِي النَّاسُ غَيْرَ مُسْتَكْرَهِينَ وَلَا مُجْبَرِينَ، بَلْ طَائِعِينَ مُخْتَارِينَ.

You should know that Medina has been vacated by its residents and they have abandoned it. It is boiling like a huge cooking pot and rebellion is fixed on its axis moving with full force. So, hasten towards your amir (commander) and proceed forward to fight your enemy, if so wills Allah to Whom belongs Might and Majesty.

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ دَارَ الْهَجْرَةِ قَدْ فَلَعَتْ بِأَهْلِهَا وَقَلَعُوا بِهَا، وَجَاشَتْ جَيْشَ الْمَرْجِلِ، وَقَامَتِ الْفِتْنَةُ عَلَى الْقُطْبِ، فَأَسْرِعُوا إِلَى أَمِيرِكُمْ، وَبَادِرُوا جِهَادَ عَدُوِّكُمْ، إِنَّ شَاءَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ.

Notes

1. Ibn Maythman writes (in Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.4, p.338) that when on hearing about the mischief-mongering of Talhah and az-Zubayr, Amir al-mu'minin set off for Basrah, he sent this letter to the people of Kufah through Imam al-Hasan and `Ammir ibn Yasir from al-Ma' al-'Adhb, while Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written (in Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.14, pp.8, 16; at-Tabari, vol.1, p.3139; and Ibn al-Athir, vol.3, p.223) that when Amir al-mu`minin camped at ar-Rabadhah, he sent this letter through Muhammad ibn Ja'far ibn Abi Tilib and Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr. In this letter Amir al-mu`minin has clearly thrown light on the point that the assassination of `Uthman was the result of the efforts of `A'ishah, Talhah and az-Zubayr, and that it was they who took a prominent part in it. In fact, `A'ishah went beyond her bounds and exposed his shortcomings in public meetings and ordered that he should be killed. Thus, ash-Shaykh Muhammad `Abdub has written:

Once `Uthman was on the pulpit when Umm al-mu`minin `A'ishah took out the shoes and the shirt of the Prophet (may Allah bless him and his descendants) from under her veil and said: "These are the shoes of the Messenger of Allah and his shirt, not yet decayed, while you have altered his religion and changed his sunnah." Upon this, hot words followed between them when she said, "Kill this Na'thal," symbolising him as a long bearded Jew (of that name). (Nahjul Balaghah al-bala-ghah, printed in Egypt, vol.2, p.3; also see Ansab al-ashraf, vol.5, p.88; Abu'l-Fida', vol.1, p.172).

People were already displeased with `Uthman, so this event increased their boldness and they surrounded him so that he might mend his ways or abdicate from the caliphate. In these circumstances, there was serious apprehension that if he did not accept either of the two alternatives he would be killed. All this was observed by `A'ishah, but she paid no heed to it and, leaving him in the siege, decided to leave for Mecca, although on this occasion Marwan ibn al-Hakam and `Attab ibn Asid did say to her, "If you postpone your departure it is possible his life may be saved and this crowd may disperse" whereupon she said that she had decided to go for hajj (pilgrimage) and that that could not be changed. Then Marwan recited this couplet by way of a proverb:

Qays set fire to my cities, and when they came into flames he slipped away saving himself clear of it.

Similarly, Talhah and az-Zubayr were (also) in rage against him and they were ever forward in fanning this fire and intensifying the opposition. From this angle they were, to a great extent, taking part in his assassination and responsible for his blood. Other people also knew them in this perspective and regarded them as his murderers, while their supporters too were not able to offer any explanation (for absolving them). Thus, Ibn Qutaybah writes that when al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah met `A'ishah at Awtas he asked her:

"O' Umm al-mu'minin, where are you bound for." She replied, "I am going to Basrah." He inquired for what purpose and she replied, "To avenge `Uthman's blood." He said, "But his assassins are with you." Then he turned to Marwan and enquired where he was going. He replied that he too was going to Basrah. He enquired the purpose and the reply was "to avenge `Uthman's blood." Then he said, "Uthman's assassins are with you. These Talhah and az-Zubayr have killed him." (al-Imamah was `siyasah, vol.1, p.60)

In any case, when, after laying the blame on Amir al-mu'minin, this group who had killed `Uthman reached Basrah, Amir al-mu'minin also rose to quell this mischief and wrote this letter to the people of Kufah to seek their support. Upon this their combatants and warriors rose in large numbers and enlisted in his army. They faced the enemy with full courage which Amir al-mu'minin also acknowledged. Thus, the letter hereafter is in acknowledgement of this very fact.

Letter 2: Written to the people of Kufah after the victory of Basrah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام) إليهم،

بعد فتح البصرة

May Allah reward you, townsmen (of Kufah), on behalf of a member of your Prophet's family, with the best reward that He bestows on those who act in obedience to Him, and on those who thank Him for His bounties. Surely, you heard (me) and obeyed, and when you were called you promptly responded.

وَجَزَاكُمْ اللَّهُ مِنْ أَهْلِ مِصْرَ عَنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِ نَبِيِّكُمْ أَحْسَنَ مَا يَجْزِي الْعَامِلِينَ بِطَاعَتِهِ،
وَالشَّاكِرِينَ لِنِعْمَتِهِ، فَقَدْ سَمِعْتُمْ وَأَطَعْتُمْ، وَدُعَيْتُمْ فَأَجَبْتُمْ.

Letter 3: To the Qadhi (judge) of Kufa, Shurayh b. Haarith when he purchased a costly house

Shurayh bin Haarith had been holding an important post during the previous regimes. Imam Ali (a) had also appointed him as a Qadhi (Chief Judge) of Kufa. It was brought to the notice of Imam Ali (a) that he had purchased a house for himself in the city (rather a costly and expensive house, perhaps more expensive and luxurious than his status demanded and that too rather at a cheaper price).

Imam Ali (a) called him and asked of him: "I am given to understand that you have purchased this house for eighty dinars and a sales deed has also been completed regularizing it with signatures of witnesses".

Shurayh replied, "O Amir al-Mu'minin this is a fact". Hearing this Imam Ali (a) felt annoyed and said to him: "Shurayh be warned that a thing (death) will come to you; it will not take any notice of this sales deed nor will it accept the testimony of the witnesses but it will take you out of this house alone and unattended and will drag you to your grave.

And before such a thing happens, you must think well over the fact whether you have purchased this house with the money which does not belong to you but to somebody else and whether the purchase price was acquired with foul means or it was an ill-gotten wealth, which met its cost, if it was so, then remember that you will part (through death) with this house and in the bargain you will lose your place in Paradise.

If you had come to me prior to this transaction I would have drafted such a sales deed for you that you would not have cared to purchase this property even for a dirham. You know what the transfer deed would have been like, it would have been phrased in the following words:

ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام)

لشريح بن الحارث قاضيه

It is related that Shurayh ibn al-Harith (al-Kindi) who was Amir al-mu'minin's Qadi (judge) at Kufah during his tenure purchased a house for eighty Dinars. When it became known to Amir al-mu'minin he sent for him and said to him: I have come to know that you have purchased a house for eighty Dinars, and that you have written a document for it and put witnessing on it. Shurayh, replied: Yes, Amir al-mu'minin, it is so. Amir al-mu'minin cast an angry look at him and said to him:

روي أنّ شريح بن الحارث قاضي أميرالمؤمنين (عليه السلام) اشترى على عهده داراً

بثمانين ديناراً،

فبلغه (عليه السلام) ذلك، فاستدعى شريحاً، وقال له:

بَلَعْنِي أَنْكَ ابْتَعْتَ دَاراً بِثَمَانِينَ دِينَاراً، وَكَتَبْتَ لَهَا كِتَاباً، وَأَشْهَدْتَ فِيهِ شُهُوداً.

فقال شريح: قد كان ذلك يا أميرالمؤمنين. قال: فنظر إليه (عليه السلام) نظر مغضب ثم

قال له:

O Shurayh, beware, shortly one body (the angel of death) will come to you who will not look at the document, nor question you about your evidence but take you out of it far away and deposit you in your grave quite alone. Look! O Shurayh, if you have purchased this, house from money other than yours or paid the price from unlawful source, you have incurred loss of this world as well as of the next. If you had come to me at the time of purchase I would have written for you a document on this paper and then you would not have liked to purchase the house even for one Dirham, not to speak of more. That document is this:-

يَا شُرَيْحُ، أَمَا إِنَّهُ سَيَأْتِيكَ مَنْ لَا يَنْظُرُ فِي كِتَابِكَ، وَلَا يَسْأَلُكَ عَنْ بَيْتِكَ، حَتَّى يُخْرِجَكَ مِنْهَا شَاخِصًا، وَيُسَلِّمَكَ إِلَى قَبْرِكَ خَالِصًا. فَاَنْظُرْ يَا شُرَيْحُ لَا تُكُونُ ابْتِغَتْ هَذِهِ الدَّارَ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَالِكَ، أَوْ نَقَدْتَ الثَّمَنَ مِنْ غَيْرِ حَالِكَ! فَإِذَا أَنْتَ قَدْ حَسِرْتَ دَارَ الدُّنْيَا وَدَارَ الْآخِرَةِ! أَمَا إِنَّكَ لَوْ كُنْتَ أَتَيْتَنِي عِنْدَ شِرَائِكَ مَا اشْتَرَيْتَ لَكَ كِتَابًا عَلَى هَذِهِ النُّسْخَةِ، فَلَمْ تَرَعَبْ فِي شِرَاءِ هَذِهِ الدَّارِ بِدِرْهَمٍ فَمَا فَوْقَ. والنسخة هذه:

This is about a purchase made by a humble slave (of Allah) from another slave ready to depart (for the next world). He has purchased a house out of houses of deceit in the area of mortals and the place of those liable to perish. This house has four boundaries as follows: The first boundary is contiguous to sources of calamities; the second boundary adjoins the sources of distress; the third boundary adjoins devastating desire; and the fourth boundary adjoins deceitful Satan and towards this opens the door of this house.

هَذَا مَا اشْتَرَى عَبْدٌ ذَلِيلٌ، مِنْ مَيِّتٍ قَدْ أُرْجِحَ لِلرَّحِيلِ، اشْتَرَى مِنْهُ دَارًا مِنْ دَارِ الْعُرُورِ، مِنْ جَانِبِ الْفَانِينَ، وَخِطَّةِ الْهَالِكِينَ، وَتَجْمَعُ هَذِهِ الدَّارُ خُدُودَ أَرْبَعَةٍ: الْحُدُّ الْأَوَّلُ يَنْتَهِي إِلَى دَوَاعِي الْأَفَاتِ، وَالْحُدُّ الثَّانِي يَنْتَهِي إِلَى دَوَاعِي الْمُصِيبَاتِ، وَالْحُدُّ الثَّلَاثُ يَنْتَهِي إِلَى الْهَوَى الْمُرْدِي، وَالْحُدُّ الرَّابِعُ يَنْتَهِي إِلَى الشَّيْطَانِ الْمُعْوِي، وَفِيهِ يُشْرَعُ بَابُ هَذِهِ الدَّارِ.

This house has been purchased by one who has been waylaid by desires from one who is being driven by death at the price of leaving the honour of contentment and entering into the humility of want and submissiveness. If the purchaser encounters some (evil) consequences of this transaction then it is for him who dismantles the bodies of monarchs, snatches the lives of despots, destroys the domain of Pharaoh like Kisras, ¹ Caesars, ² Tubba`s ³ and Himyars ⁴ and all those who amass wealth upon wealth and go on increasing it, build high houses and decorate them and collect treasures and preserve them, as they claimed according to their own thinking, for children to take them to the place of accounting and judgement and the position of reward and punishment. When the verdict will be passed those who stood on falsehood would then be the losers. (Qur'an, 40: 78)

This document is witnessed by intelligence when it is free from the shackles of desires and safe from the attachments to this world.

اشْتَرَى هَذَا الْمُعْتَرُّ بِالْأَمَلِ، مِنْ هَذَا الْمُزْعَجِ بِالْأَجَلِ، هَذِهِ الدَّارَ بِالْخُرُوجِ مِنْ عِزِّ الْمَنَاعَةِ،
وَالدُّخُولِ فِي ذُلِّ الطَّلَبِ وَالضَّرَاعَةِ، فَمَا أَدْرَكَ هَذَا الْمُشْتَرِي فِيمَا اشْتَرَى مِنْ دَرَكٍ، فَعَلَى
مُبْلَبِ أَجْسَامِ الْمُلُوكِ، وَسَالِبِ نُفُوسِ الْجَبَابِرَةِ، وَمُنْزِلِ مُلْكِ الْفَرَاعِنَةِ، مِثْلِ كِسْرَى وَقَيْصَرَ،
وَتُبَّعِ وَجَمِيرِ، وَمَنْ جَمَعَ الْمَالَ عَلَى الْمَالِ فَأَكْتَرَهُ، وَمَنْ بَنَى وَشَيْدَهُ، وَزَحْرَفَ وَجَدَّهُ، وَأَدَّخَرَ
واعتَقَدَهُ، وَنَظَرَ بِرِغْمِهِ لِلْوَلَدِ، إِشْحَاصَهُمْ جَمِيعاً إِلَى مَوْقِفِ الْعَرَضِ وَالْحِسَابِ، وَمَوْضِعِ الثَّوَابِ
وَالْعِقَابِ، إِذَا وَقَعَ الْأَمْرُ بِفَصْلِ الْقَضَاءِ، (وَخَسِرَ هُنَا لِكَ الْمُبْطِلُونَ)
شَهَدَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ الْعَقْلُ إِذَا خَرَجَ مِنْ أَسْرِ الْهَوَى، وَسَلِمَ مِنْ عِلَاقِقِ الدُّنْيَا .

Notes

1. Kiswa, is the Arabicised form of "Khusraw" which means a King whose domain of rule extends to a vast area. This was the title of the rulers of Iran.

2. Caesar, was the title of the rulers of Rome, which in Latin means that child whose mother dies before delivery and who is extracted by cutting open her body. Since among the Kings of Rome, Augustus was born like this he was known by this name and after that this word was adopted as the title of every ruler.

3. Tubba', is an appellation of each of the Kings of Yemen who possessed Himyar and Hadramawt. Their names have been mentioned in the holy Qur'an in chaps. 44:37 and 50:14.

4. Himyar, originally, an important tribe in the ancient Sabaeen kingdom of southwestern Arabia; later the powerful rulers of much of southern Arabia from c. 115 BC to c. AD 525. The Himyarites were concentrated in the area known as Dhu Raydan (later called Qataban) on the coast of present-day Yemen; thus they were probably aided in the overthrow of their Sabaeen kinsmen by the discovery of a sea route from Egypt to India, which deprived the inland Sabaeen kingdom of its former importance as a centre for overland trade. The Himyarites (classical Homeritae) inherited the Sabaeen language and culture, and from their capital at Zafar their power at times extended eastward as far as the Persian Gulf and northward into the Arabian Desert. At the beginning of the 4th century AD the Himyar capital was moved northward to San'a, and later in that century both Christianity and Judaism gained firm footholds in the area. Internal disorders and changing trade routes caused the kingdom to decline, and in 525, after several unsuccessful attempts, Abyssinian invaders finally crushed the Himyarites. A Himyar appeal to Persia for aid led to Persian control in 575. (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica [Micropaedia], vol.5, p.49, ed. 1973-1974)

Letter 4: To one of the officers of his army

ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام)

إلى بعض أمراء جيشه

If they ¹ return to the umbrella of obedience then this is all that we want. But if the condition of these people points out towards disruption and disobedience then, taking with you those who obey you, rush upon those who disobey you, and while you have those with you who follow you do not worry about those who hold back from you, because the absence of a halfhearted man is better than his presence, and his sitting down is better than his rising up.

فَإِنْ عَادُوا إِلَى ظِلِّ الطَّاعَةِ فَذَاكَ الَّذِي نُحِبُّ، وَإِنْ تَوَافَتِ الْأُمُورُ بِالْقَوْمِ إِلَى الشَّقَاقِ
وَالْعَصِيَانِ فَانْهَدِ بِمَنْ أَطَاعَكَ إِلَى مَنْ عَصَاكَ، وَاسْتَعِنِ بِمَنْ أَنْقَادَ مَعَكَ عَمَّنْ تَقَاعَسَ عَنْكَ،
فَإِنَّ الْمُتَكَارَةَ مَغِيْبُهُ خَيْرٌ مِنْ شُهُودِهِ، وَفُتُوْدُهُ أَعْيَى مِنْ نُهُوضِهِ.

Notes

1. When `Uthman ibn Hunayf, the Governor of Basrah informed Amir al-mu 'minin of the arrival of Talhah and az-Zubayr in Basrah and of their intentions, Amir al-mu 'minin wrote this letter to him, wherein he has instructed him that in case the enemy was bent on fighting, when facing him he should not enlist on his side those who on the one hand showed consideration for the personalities of `A'ishah, Talhah and az-Zubayr and who on the other hand had agreed to fight against them merely by persuasion, because such people could not be expected to fight steadfastly nor could they be depended upon. Rather, such people would try to dishearten others too. Therefore, it was only good to leave aside such people.

Letter 5: To al-Ash'ath ibn Qays (al-Kindi), the Governor of Azarbaijan

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى الأشعث بن قيس عامل أذربيجان

Certainly, your assignment ¹ is not a morsel for you, but it is a trust round your neck, and you have been charged with the protection (of the people) on behalf of your superiors. It is not for you to be oppressive towards the ruled, nor to risk yourself save on strong grounds. You have in your hands the funds which are the property of Allah, to Whom belongs Might and Majesty, and you hold its charge till you pass it on to me. Probably, I will not be one of the bad rulers for you, and that is an end to the matter.

وَإِنَّ عَمَلَكَ لَيْسَ لَكَ بِطَعْمَةٍ، وَلَكِنَّهُ فِي عُنُقِكَ أَمَانَةٌ، وَأَنْتَ مُسْتَرْعَى لِمَنْ فَوْقَكَ، لَيْسَ لَكَ أَنْ تَفْتَاتَ فِي رَعِيَّتِهِ، وَلَا تُخَاطِرَ إِلَّا بِوَثِيقَةٍ، وَفِي يَدَيْكَ مَالٌ مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ، وَأَنْتَ مِنْ حُرَّانِهِ حَتَّى تُسَلِّمَهُ إِلَيَّ، وَلَعَلِّي أَلَّا أَكُونَ شَرًّا وُلَاتِكَ لَكَ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Notes

1. When Amir al-mu'minin was free from the battle of Jamal he wrote to al-Ash'ath ibn Qays (al-Kindi) who had been the Governor of Azarbaijan from the days of `Uthman, to send the revenue and levies of his province. But since he had fears about the future of his position and assignment, he intended to swallow all this money like other officers of `Uthman. Therefore, when this letter reached him he sent for his chief associates and after mentioning this letter to them said: "I fear that this money will be taken away from me; I therefore intend to join Mu`awiyah." Whereupon those people said that it was a matter of shame to leave kith and kin and seek refuge with Mu'awiyah. Consequently, on the advice of these people he postponed his idea to run away but did not agree to part with the money. On getting this information Amir al-mu'minin sent Hujr ibn `Adi al-Kindi to bring him to Kufah. He persuaded him and brought him to Kufah. On reaching there his kit was found to contain four hundred thousand Dirhams out of which Amir al-mu'minin

left thirty thousand for him and deposited the rest in the public treasury.

Letter 6: To Mu`awiyah (ibn Abi Sufyan)

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى معاوية

Verily, those who swore allegiance to Abu Bakr, `Umar and `Uthman have sworn allegiance ¹ to me on the same basis on which they swore allegiance to them. (On this basis) he who was present has no choice (to consider), and he who was absent has no right to reject; and consultation is confined to the muhajirun and the ansar. If they agree on an individual and take him to be Caliph it will be deemed to mean Allah's pleasure.

If any one keeps away by way of objection or innovation they will return him to the position from where he kept away. If he refuses they will fight him for following a course other than that of the believers and Allah will put him back from where he had run away.

By my life, O Mu'awiyah, if you see with your intellect without any passion you will find me the most innocent of all in respect of `Uthman's blood and you will surely know that I was in seclusion from him, unless you conceal what is quite open to you (and accuse me of a crime I have not committed). Then you may commit any outrage (on me) as you wish and that is an end to the matter.

إِنَّهُ بَايَعَنِي الْقَوْمُ الَّذِينَ بَايَعُوا أَبَا بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ وَعُثْمَانَ عَلَيَّ مَا بَايَعُوهُمْ عَلَيْهِ، فَلَمْ يَكُنْ لِلشَّاهِدِ أَنْ يَخْتَارَ، وَلَا لِلْغَائِبِ أَنْ يُؤَدَّ، وَإِنَّمَا الشُّورَى لِلْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ، فَإِنْ اجْتَمَعُوا عَلَيَّ رَجُلٌ وَسَمَّوْهُ إِمَامًا كَانَ ذَلِكَ لِلَّهِ رِضَى، فَإِنْ خَرَجَ عَنْ أَمْرِهِمْ خَارِجٌ بَطَعَنَ أَوْ بَدَعَةَ رَدُّوهُ إِلَى مَا خَرَجَ مِنْهُ، فَإِنْ أَبِي قَاتَلُوهُ عَلَيَّ اتَّبَاعِهِ غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَوَلَاهُ اللَّهُ مَا تَوَلَّى. وَالْعَمْرِي، يَا مُعَاوِيَةَ، لِمَنْ نَظَرْتَ بِعَقْلِكَ دُونَ هَوَاكَ لَتَجِدَ بِي أَتْرَأَ النَّاسِ مِنْ دَمِ عُثْمَانَ، وَلَتَعْلَمَنَّ أَبِي كُنْتُ فِي عَزْلَةٍ عَنْهُ، إِلَّا أَنْ تَتَجَنَّبَ؛ فَتَجَنَّبَ مَا بَدَأَ لَكَ! وَالسَّلَامُ.

Notes

1. When all the people of Medina unanimously swore allegiance to Amir al-mu`minin, Mu`awiyah refused to acquiesce apprehending danger for his own power, and in order to contest Amir al-mu`minin's caliphate he concocted the excuse that it had not been agreed to unaulmously and that there fore after cancelling it there should be another general election, although the caliphate from which (the process of) election was started was the result of a timely situation. There was no question of the common vote therein so that it could be called the result of the people's election. However, it was imposed on the people and assumed to be their verdict. From then it became a principle that whomever the nobles of Medina elected would be deemed to represent the entire world of Islam and no person would be allowed to question it, whether he was present at the time of election or not. In any case, after the establishment of the principle, Mu`awiyah had no right to propose a re-election nor to refuse allegiance when he had in practice recognized these caliphates which, it was alleged, had been settled by the important people of Medina. That is why when he held this election to be invalid and refused allegiance,

Amir al-mu`minin pointed out to him the (recognized) way of election and demolished his argument. It was a method known as arguing with the adversary on the basis of his wrong premises so as to demolish his argument, since Amir al-mu`minin never at any state regarded consultation (with chiefs) or the common vote to be the criterion of validity of the caliphate. Otherwise, in connection with the caliphate about which it is alleged that they

were based on the unanimity of the muhajirun and the ansar, he would have regarded that unanimity of vote as a good authority and held them as valid; but his refusal for allegiance in the very first period, which cannot be denied by anyone, is a proof of the fact that he did not regard these self-concocted methods as the criterion of (validity of) the caliphate. That is why at all times he continued pressing his own case for the caliphate, which was also established on the basis of the Prophet's saying and deeds. However, to place it before Mu`awiyah meant opening the door to questions and answers. He therefore attempted to convince him with his own premises and beliefs so that there could be no scope for interpretation or for confusing the matter, in fact Mu'awiyah's real aim was to prolong the matter so that at some point his own authority might get support.

Letter 7: To Mu'awiyah

ومن كتاب منه (عليه السلام)

إليه (معاوية) أيضاً

I have received from you the packet of unconnected advices and the embellished letter. You have written it because of your misguidance, and despatched it because of lack of wisdom. This is the letter of a man who has neither light to show him the way nor a leader to guide him on the right path. Passion prompted him and he responded to it. Misguidance led him and he followed it. Consequently, he began to speak nonsense and became recklessly astray.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ أَتَنِي مِنْكَ مَوْعِظَةٌ مُوصَلَةٌ، وَرِسَالَةٌ مُحَبَّرَةٌ، مَمَّقَتَهَا بِضَلَالِكَ، وَأَمْضَيْتَهَا بِسُوءِ رَأْيِكَ، وَكِتَابٌ امْرِيءٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ بَصَرٌ يَهْدِيهِ، وَلَا قَائِدٌ يُرْشِدُهُ، قَدْ دَعَاهُ الْهُوَى فَأَجَابَهُ، وَقَادَهُ الضَّلَالُ فَاتَّبَعَهُ، فَهَجَرَ لِأَغْطَاءٍ، وَضَلَّ حَابِطاً.

A part of the same letter

ومن هذا الكتاب

Because allegiance is once and for all; it is not open to reconsideration nor is there any scope for fresh proceedings of election. He who remains out of it is deemed to be critical of Islam while he who prevaricates upon it is a hypocrite.

لِأَنَّهَا بَيْعَةٌ وَاحِدَةٌ لَا يُتَنَّى فِيهَا النَّظَرُ، وَلَا يُسْتَأْنَفُ فِيهَا الْحِيَارُ، الْخَارِجُ مِنْهَا طَاعِنٌ، وَالْمُرَوِّي فِيهَا مُدَاهِنٌ.

Letter 8: To Jarir ibn `Abdillah al-Bajali

Jarir bin Abdullah Bajali was sent to Damascus. He was carrying a letter for Mu'awiya. Some delay occurred in his return. Imam Ali (a) felt anxious about his safety and wrote the following letter to him:

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى جرير بن عبدالله البجلي لما أرسله إلى معاوية

Now then, when you receive this letter of mine ask Mu'awiyah to take a final decision and to follow a determined course. Then ask him to choose either war that exiles him from home or ignoble peace. If he chooses war leave him alone, but if he chooses peace secure his allegiance; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِذَا أَتَاكَ كِتَابِي فَاحْمِلْ مُعَاوِيَةَ عَلَى الْفَضْلِ، وَخُذْهُ بِالْأَمْرِ الْجُزْمِ، ثُمَّ خَيَّرْهُ بَيْنَ حَرْبٍ مُجْلِيَةٍ، أَوْ سَلْمٍ مُخْزِيَةٍ، فَإِنْ اخْتَارَ الْحَرْبَ فَانْبِذْ إِلَيْهِ، وَإِنْ اخْتَارَ السَّلْمَ فَخُذْ بِيَعْتَهُ،
وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 9: To Mu`awiyah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى معاوية

Our people ¹ (the Quraysh) decided to kill our Prophet and to annihilate our root. They created worries for us, behaved with us harshly, denied us ease of life, exposed us to fear, forced us to take refuge in a rugged mountain and ignited for us the flames of war.

فَأَرَادَ قَوْمُنَا قَتْلَ نَبِيِّنَا، وَاجْتِيَاخَ أَصْلَانَا، وَهَمُّوا بِنَا الْهُمُومَ، وَفَعَلُوا بِنَا الْأَفَاعِيلَ، وَمَنْعُونَا الْعَذْبَ، وَأَخْلَسُونَا الْحَوْفَ، وَاضْطَرُّونَا إِلَى جَبَلٍ وَعُغْرٍ، وَأَوْقَدُوا لَنَا نَارَ الْحَرْبِ،

Allah then gave us determination to protect His religion and defend His honour. The believers among us expected (heavenly) reward from it, and the unbelievers among us gave their support because of kinship. Those who accepted Islam from among the Quraysh were away from the distresses in which we were involved either because of a pledge that protected them or because of the tribe that would rise to support them. They were therefore safe from killing. The way with the Prophet (may Allah bless him and his descendants) was that when fighting became fierce and people began to loose ground he would send forward members of his family and through them protect his companions from the attacks of swords and spears. In this way `Ubaydah ibn al-Harith was killed on the day of Badr, Hamzah (ibn `Abd al-Muttalib) on the

day of Uhud and Ja'far (ibn Abi Talib) on the day of Mu'tah. One more person, whom I can name if I wish, desired to seek martyrdom as they did; but their deaths approached, while his death had not yet approached.

فَعَزَمَ اللَّهُ لَنَا عَلَى الدَّبِّ عَنِ حَوْزَتِهِ، وَالرَّهْمِيِّ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حُرْمَتِهِ. مُؤْمِنُنَا يَبْغِي بِذَلِكَ الْأَجْرَ، وَكَافِرُنَا يُجَامِي عَنِ الْأَصْلِ، وَمَنْ أَسْلَمَ مِنْ قُرَيْشٍ خَلَوْ بِمَا نَحْنُ فِيهِ بِحِلْفٍ يَمْنَعُهُ، أَوْ عَشِيرَةٍ تَقُومُ دُونَهُ، فَهَوَّ مِنْ الْقَتْلِ بِمَكَانٍ أَمِنَ. وَكَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) إِذَا احْمَرَ النَّاسُ، وَأَحْجَمَ النَّاسُ، قَدَّمَ أَهْلَ بَيْتِهِ فَوْقَى بِهِمْ أَصْحَابَهُ حَرَّ السُّيُوفِ وَالْأَسِنَّةِ، فَقَتِلَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ الْحَارِثِ يَوْمَ بَدْرٍ، وَقَتِلَ حَمْرَةُ يَوْمَ أُحُدٍ، وَقَتِلَ جَعْفَرُ يَوْمَ مُؤْتَةَ، وَأَرَادَ مَنْ لَوْ شِئْتُ ذَكَرْتُ اسْمَهُ مِثْلَ الَّذِي أَرَادُوا مِنَ الشَّهَادَةِ، وَلَكِنَّ آجَاهُمْ عَجَلَتْ، مَيِّتَهُ أُجِلَتْ.

How strange it is that I am being grouped with him who never evinced briskness of pace like me nor had he to his credit any achievement like mine unless he claims something of which I do not know and which I think Allah too does not know. In any case, all praise belongs to Allah.

فَيَا عَجَبًا لِلدَّهْرِ! إِذْ صِرْتُ يُفْرَنُ بِي مَنْ لَمْ يَسْعَ بِقَدَمِي، وَلَمْ تَكُنْ لَهُ كَسَابِقِي الَّتِي لَا يُدْلِي أَحَدٌ بِمِثْلِهَا، إِلَّا أَنْ يَدَّعِيَ مُدَّعٍ مَا لَا أَعْرِفُهُ، وَلَا أَظُنُّ اللَّهَ يَعْرِفُهُ، وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ عَلَى كُلِّ حَالٍ.

As regards your request to hand over to you the murderers of `Uthman, I have thought over this matter and I do not find their handing over to you or to someone else possible for me. By my life, if you do not give up your

wrong ways and disruptive acts you will surely know them. They will shortly be seeking you and will not give you the trouble of seeking them in land, sea, mountains or plain. But this search will be painful for you and their visit will not give you happiness. Peace be on those who deserve it.

وَأَمَّا مَا سَأَلْتِ مِنْ دَفْعِ قَتَلَةِ عُثْمَانَ إِلَيْكَ، فَإِنِّي نَظَرْتُ فِي هَذَا الْأَمْرِ، فَلَمْ أَرَهُ يَسْعُنِي
دَفْعُهُمْ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا إِلَىٰ غَيْرِكَ، وَلَعَمْرِي لَئِنْ لَمْ تَنْزِعْ عَنِّيكَ وَشِقَاقِكَ لَتَعْرِفَنَّهُمْ عَن قَلِيلٍ
يَطْلُبُونَكَ، لَا يُكَلِّفُونَكَ طَلَبَهُمْ فِي بَرٍّ وَلَا بَحْرٍ، وَلَا جَبَلًا سَهْلًا، إِلَّا أَنَّهُ طَلَبْتُ يَسْؤُوكَ
وَجَدَانَهُ، وَرَوْزَ لَا يَسْرُوكَ لُقْيَانَهُ، وَالسَّلَامَ لِأَهْلِهِ.

Notes

1. When the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and his descendants) was commanded (by Allah) to call people to (believe in) the Unity of Allah, the powers of unbelief and disobedience stood up to block the way of Truthfulness and the tribes of Quraysh decided to quell this voice through pressure and force. The love of their idols was so staunch in the hearts of these unbelievers that they were not prepared to hear a single word against them. The idea of one God was enough to rouse their passions. In addition, they were made to hear such epithets about their gods that gave them no better position than lifeless stones. When they saw their principles and beliefs in danger they prepared themselves to trouble the Prophet and got ready to try every means to that end. They adopted such pain-inflicting devices (against the Prophet) that it was impossible for him to step out of his house. Those who had accepted Islam in this period too had to face continuous tribulations. For example, these adherents of belief were often laid prostrate on the ground under the sun and beaten with straps and stones till they lost their senses. When the atrocities of the Quraysh rose to this extent the Prophet permitted them to leave Mecca and immigrate towards Abyssinia, in the fifth year of his call to Prophethood. The Quraysh followed them there as well, but the ruler of Abyssinia refused to hand them over to them, and by his fairness and justice did not allow any trouble to befall them.

On the other side the Prophet's preaching was continuing and the magnetism and influence of Truth was producing its effect. People were impressed by his teachings and personality and coming into his fold as a result of which the Quraysh felt much perturbed and tried to stop this increasing influence and power. When they could not do anything they decided to sever all connections with Banu Hashim and Banu `Abd al-Mut-talib, to have no social contacts with them and to have no transactions with them, so that they might be forced to give up supporting the Prophet and then they would deal with him as they wished. Consequently, they concluded a mutual agreement about it and a document was written on the subject and kept in deposit. After this agreement, although the locality was the same and the inhabitants too were the same yet for Banu Hashim every nook and corner became strange and well-known faces turned as if they had never known each other. All of them turned their faces and stopped mutual meeting and contacts. In these circumstances, there was also apprehension that the Prophet might be attacked suddenly in a valley outside the city. For this reason, they were forced to take refuge in a place called "shi`b (quarter) of Abi Talib." At this stage those Banu Hashim who had not yet accepted Islam shared these privations on account of lineal unity and offered defence at the hour of need, while those who had accepted Islam like Hamzah and Abu Talib, were active in protecting the Prophet by way of a religious obligation. In particular, Abu Talib had given up all his personal ease and comfort. He spent his days in consoling the Prophet and his nights in changing his bed, in this way, that if the Prophet used a bed one night the next night `Ali was made to sleep in it, so that in case someone attacked, then `Ali should suffer the brunt.

This was a period of great privation and trouble for Banu Hasim. If they could get leaves of trees to eat that was enough, otherwise they had to starve. After the lapse of three years in these hardships Zuhayr ibn Abi Umayyah (whose mother was `Atikah bint `Abd al-Muttalib), Hisham. ibn `Amr ibn Rabi `ah (who had family relationship with Banu Hashim through his mother), al-Mut'im ibn `Adi ibn Nawfal ibn `Abd Manaf, Abu'l-Bakhtari al-`As

ibn Hisham ibn al-Mughirah and Zama'ah ibn al-Aswad ibn al-Muttalib proposed that this agreement should be abrogated. For a discussion of this issue, the Chiefs among the Quraysh assembled in the Ka'bah. No decision has yet been taken when Abu Talib also came out of the Valley and joined them. He said to them, "My nephew Muhammad has told me that the paper on which this agreement was written has been eaten by white-ants and nothing in it has remained save the name of Allah. So, you should send for the document and see it. If he is correct then you should give up animosity to him; and if he is wrong I am ready to hand him over to you." Consequently, the document was sent for and seen. It was a fact that except the words "with Your name, O' My God" which was written on the top of all documents in those days the rest of it had been eaten away by white-ants. Seeing this al-Mut'im ibn `Adi tore off the writing and thus this agreement was abrogated. At last Banu Hashim got rid of the life of oppression and helplessness; but even after this there was no change in the unbelievers' behaviour towards the Prophet; rather they were so keen in their enmity and malice against him that they started thinking of taking his life, as a consequence of which the great event of hijrah (immigration of the Holy Prophet from Mecca to Medina) took place. Although on this occasion Abu Talib was no longer alive, `Ali represented him by lying down on the Prophet's bed, because it was the lesson taught by Abu Talib through which he managed to protect the Holy Prophet's life.

Although these events were not unknown to Mu`awiyah yet by recounting to him the deeds of his predecessors, the intention was to awaken his malicious spirit. Therefore, his attention has been drawn to the hardships inflicted (on the Holy Prophet and his adherents) by the Quraysh and especially Banu `Abd Shams so that he might see the conduct of each of the followers of truth and the followers of wrong and realize whether he himself was treading on the right path or just following his forefathers.

Letter 10: To Mu'awiyah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إليه أيضاً

What will you do when the coverings of this world in which you are wrapped are removed from you. The world attracted you with its embellishment and deceived you with its pleasure. It called you and you responded to it. It led you and you followed it. It commanded you and you obeyed it. Shortly an informer will inform you of things against which there will be no shield (to protect you). Therefore, keep off from this affair, take heed of the accounting (on the Day of Judgement), get ready for death that will soon overtake you and do not give your ears to those who have gone astray. If you do not do so I shall recall to you whatever you have forgotten, because you are a man living in ease and luxury.¹ Satan has taken you in his clutches, has secured his wishes in you and has taken complete control of you like your soul and blood.

وَكَيْفَ أَنْتَ صَانِعٌ إِذَا تَكَشَّفَتْ عَنْكَ جَلَابِيبُ مَا أَنْتَ فِيهِ مِنْ دُنْيَا قَدْ تَبَهَّجَتْ بِزِينَتِهَا، وَخَدَعَتْ بِلَذَّتِهَا، دَعْتَكَ فَأَجَبْتَهَا، وَقَادَتْكَ فَاتَّبَعْتَهَا، وَأَمَرْتَكَ فَأَطَعْتَهَا، وَإِنَّهُ يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَقْفِكَ وَأَقِفْ عَلَى مَا لَا يُنْجِيكَ مِنْهُ مِحْنٌ، فَاقْعَسْ عَنِ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ، وَخُذْ أَهْبَةَ الْحِسَابِ، وَشَبِّرْ لِمَا قَدْ نَزَلَ بِكَ، وَلَا تُمَكِّنِ الْعَوَاةَ مِنْ سَمْعِكَ، وَإِلَّا تَفْعَلْ أُعَلِّمُكَ مَا أَعْقَلْتَ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ، فَإِنَّكَ مُتْرَفٌ قَدْ أَخَذَ الشَّيْطَانُ مِنْكَ مَاخِذَهُ، وَبَلَغَ فِيكَ أَمَلَهُ، وَجَرَى مِنْكَ مَجْرَى الرُّوحِ وَالْدَّمِ.

O Mu'awiyah, when were you all protectors of the ruled and guardians of the affairs of the people? Without any forward step or conspicuous distinction? We seek Allah's protection against the befalling of previous misfortunes, and I warn you lest you continue being deceived by desires and your appearance becomes different from your innerself.

وَمَتَى كُنْتُمْ يَا مُعَاوِيَةَ سَاسَةَ الرَّعِيَّةِ، وَوَلَاةَ أَمْرِ الْأُمَّةِ؟ بَعِيرٌ قَدَمَ سَابِقِ، وَلَا شَرَفَ بَاسِقِ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ لُزُومِ سَوَابِقِ الشَّقَاءِ، وَأُحَدِّثُكَ أَنَّ تَكُونَ مُتَمَادِيًا فِي غِرَّةِ الْأُمْنِيَّةِ، مُخْتَلِفَ الْعَالِيَّةِ وَالسَّرِيرَةِ.

You have called me to war. Better to leave the people on one side, come out to me and spare both the parties from fighting so that it may be known who of us has a rusted heart, and covered eyes. I am Abu'l-Hasan who killed your granfather² your brother³ and your uncle⁴ by cutting them to pieces on the day of Badr. The same sword is with me and I meet my adversary with the same heart. I have not altered the religion nor put up any new prophet. I am surely (treading) on that very highway which you had willingly foresaken (in the beginning) and then adopted per force.

وَقَدْ دَعَوْتَ إِلَى الْحَرْبِ، فَدَعِ النَّاسَ جَانِباً وَاحْرُجْ إِلَيَّ، وَأَعْفِ الْفَرِيقَيْنِ مِنَ الْقِتَالِ، لَتَعْلَمَ
أَيْنَا الْمَرِينُ عَلَى قَلْبِهِ، وَالْمُعْطَى عَلَى بَصَرِهِ! فَأَنَا أَبُو حَسَنٍ قَاتِلُ جَدِّكَ وَخَالِكَ وَأَخِيكَ
شَدْخاً يَوْمَ بَدْرٍ، ذَلِكَ السَّيْفُ مَعِي، وَبِذَلِكَ الْقَلْبِ أَلْقَى عَدُوِّي، مَا اسْتَبَدَلْتُ دِيناً، وَلَا
اسْتَحْدَثْتُ نَبِيّاً، وَإِنِّي لَعَلَى الْمَنْهَاجِ الَّذِي تَرَكْتُمُوهُ طَائِعِينَ، وَدَخَلْتُمْ فِيهِ مُكْرَهِينَ.

You think you have come out seeking to revenge 'Uthman's blood. Certainly, you know how 'Uthman's blood was shed. If you want to avenge it, avenge it there. It is as though I see that when war is cutting you with its teeth you cry like camels crying under a heavy load. And it is as though I see your party bewildered by the incessant striking of swords, occurrence of death and

falling of bodies after bodies, calling me towards the Qur'an⁵ although they would themselves be either unbelievers, deniers of truth or breakers of allegiance after swearing it.

وَزَعَمْتَ أَنَّكَ جِئْتَ نَائِراً بِدَمِ عُثْمَانَ، وَلَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ حَيْثُ وَقَعَ دَمُ عُثْمَانَ فَاطْلُبْهُ مِنْ هُنَاكَ
إِنْ كُنْتَ طَالِباً، فَكَأَيِّ قَدْ رَأَيْتَكَ تَضِجُ مِنَ الْحَرْبِ إِذَا عَضَّتْكَ ضَجِيجَ الْجِمَالِ بِالِاتِّقَالِ،
وَكَأَيِّ بِجَمَاعَتِكَ تَدْعُونِي جَزَعاً مِنَ الصَّرْبِ الْمُتَتَابِعِ، وَالْقَضَاءِ الْوَاقِعِ، وَمَصَارِعَ بَعْدَ مَصَارِعَ،
إِلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ، وَهِيَ كَافِرَةٌ جَا حَادَّةٌ، أَوْ مُبَايَعَةٌ حَائِدَةٌ.

Notes

1. This is in reference to the verse: We sent no warner into any city except its man who lived at ease

said, "We disbelieve in the Message you have been sent with." (Qur'an, 34:34).

2. 'Utbah ibn Rabi'ah.

3. Hanzalah ibn Abi Sufyan.

4. al-Walid ibn 'Utbah.

5. This prophecy of Amir al-mu'minin is about the battle of Siffin. Herein he has depicted the whole picture in very few words. Thus, on one side Mu'awiyah was bewildered on account of the attacks of the Iraqis and was thinking to run away, and on the other, his army was crying under the constant onslaught of death, and, eventually, when there was no way of escape, they raised the Qur'an on spears and shouted for peace. By this device, the remaining persons saved their lives.

"This prophecy" as Ibn Abi'l-Hadid al-Mu'tazili says, "is either true prophetic keen eye of Amir al-mu'minin which is really a significant power, or it is an information through knowledge of the unknown ('ilmu'l -ghayb) which is too most significant and wonderful. However, both cases are in the state of extreme significance and wonderfulness."

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has further quoted the same prophecy from other letters of Amir al-mu'minin to Mu'awiyah. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.15, pp.83-85)

This prophecy cannot be attributed to imagination, guessing or the drawing of inference from events, nor can these details be ascertained by wit or far-reaching intelligence. Only he can disclose them whose source of information is either the Prophet's own revelation-bearing tongue or Divine inspiration.

Letter 11: Given to the contingent sent to confront the enemy.

Part of instructions to his marshal when Imam Ali (a) sent him to a battle

1

ومن وصية

وصى بها (عليه السلام) جيشاً بعثه إلى العدو

When you proceed towards the enemy or he proceeds towards you, the position of your force should be on the approaches high ground or on the edges of mountains or the bends of rivers, so that it may serve you as a help and a place to return to. Your encounter should be from one side or two sides.

Place watchers on the peaks of mountains and the raised sides of the high ground so that the enemy may not approach you from any place, whether of danger or safety. And know that the vanguard of an army serves as their eyes, and the eyes of the vanguard are their informers. Beware of dispersal. When you halt do so together and when you move you should move together. When night comes fix your spears in a circle and do not sleep except for dozing or napping.

فَإِذَا نَزَلْتُمْ بَعْدُو أَوْ نَزَلَ بِكُمْ، فَلْيَكُنْ مَعْسَكَرُكُمْ فِي قُبُلِ الْأَشْرَافِ، أَوْ سِفَاحِ الْجِبَالِ، أَوْ
أُتْنَاءِ الْأَنْهَارِ، كَيْمَا يَكُونَ لَكُمْ رِذَاءٌ، وَدُونَكُمْ مَرَدًّا، وَلْتَكُنْ مُقَاتَلَتُكُمْ مِنْ وَجْهِ وَاحِدٍ أَوْ
اِثْنَيْنِ، وَاجْعَلُوا لَكُمْ رُقَبَاءَ فِي صِيَاصِي الْجِبَالِ، وَمَنَاكِبِ الْهَضَابِ، لِقَلَّ يَأْتِيكُمْ الْعَدُوُّ مِنْ
مَكَانٍ مَخَافَةٍ أَوْ أَمْنٍ. وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ مُقَدِّمَةَ الْقَوْمِ عُيُونُهُمْ، وَعُيُونَ الْمُقَدِّمَةِ طَلَائِعُهُمْ.
وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالتَّفَرُّقَ، فَإِذَا نَزَلْتُمْ فَانْزِلُوا جَمِيعًا، وَإِذَا ارْتَحَلْتُمْ فَارْتَحِلُوا جَمِيعًا، وَإِذَا غَشِيَكُمْ اللَّيْلُ
فَاجْعَلُوا الرِّمَاحَ كِفَّةً، وَلَا تَذُوقُوا النَّوْمَ إِلَّا غَرَارًا أَوْ مَضْمَضَةً.

Notes

1. When Amir al-mu'minin put Ziyad ibn an-Nadr al-Harithi and Shurayh ibn Hani al-Harithi in command of contingents of eight thousand and four thousand strong at the camp of an-Nukhaylah and ordered them to advance towards Syria (ash-Sham), some dispute arose between them about their ranks, of which they apprised Amir al-mu'minin and wrote letters of complaints about each other. In reply, Amir al-mu'minin wrote to them that when they marched jointly the command of the whole force would be with Ziyad ibn an-Nadr al-Harithi and when they marched separately each would be in command of the force over which he had been placed.

In this letter Amir al-mu'minin also wrote for them certain instructions. Here as-Sayyid ar-Radi has taken down only the portion containing the instructions. These instructions are not only useful as concerns the strategies of fighting of those days, but their utility and importance in bringing out the principles of fighting in these days also is undeniable. These instructions are that at the time of encounter with the enemy the forces should be encamped on the tops of mountains and turns of rivers, because in this way the low areas of the rivers would serve as trenches and the peaks of mountains as the walls of the fortress and thus it would be possible to feel secure and face the enemy from the other side. Secondly, that tile attack should be from one side or at the most from two sides, because by distribution of the entire force on several fronts weakness would inevitably arise. Thirdly, that the watchers should be put in position on the tops of high ground and the peaks of mountains so that they may give warning before the attack. Sometimes it happens that instead of attacking from the expected side the enemy attacks from a different side.

Therefore, if watchers are in position in high places they will detect the enemy from the cloud of dust seen from a distance.

To clarify the useful aspect of these instructions Ibn Ahi'l-Hadid has recorded (in vol.15, p.91) a historical incident that when Qahtabah (ibn Shabib at-Ta'i) encamped in a village after leaving Khurasan, he and Khalid ibn Barmak went and sat on the top of a nearby hill. No sooner had they sat down than Khalid noticed flocks of deer coming running from the forest. On seeing this he said to Qahtabah, "O' commander, get up and announce to the army that they should at once fall in line and takeup arms." Hearing this, Qahtabah was startled and stood up but looking hither and thither said, "I do not see the enemy's men anywhere." He replied, "O' Amir, this is not the time that should be lost in conversation. You see these deer which are proceeding towards the people, leaving their abodes. This means that the army of the enemy is marching from their rear." Consequently, he ordered his army to get ready. As soon as the army got ready the noise of horses' hoofs was heard and within moments the enemy was on them. Since they had prepared themselves for defence in time, they defended themselves against the enemy thoroughly. Now, if Khalid had not been at such a height and had not acted with such sagacity, the enemy would have attacked them unawares and annihilated them. Fourthly, that the reconnaissance should be spread here and there, so that they can be aware of the movements and intentions of the enemy, and thereby foil his plans. Fifthly, that when the army camps it should camp together and when it moves it should move together so that the enemy does not attack you in a state of dispersal and overpower you easily. Sixthly, that at night the guard should be formed by fixing spears in a circle in the ground so that if the enemy attacks in the night, it is possible to prepare for defence by taking up arms at once and if the enemy showers arrows that too can be defied. Seventhly, that deep sleep should be avoided lest you remain unaware of the enemy's approach and he succeed in attacking you before you get ready.

Letter 12: to Ma'qil ibn Qays ar-Riyahi

When Imam Ali (a) sent an expedition of 3000 soldiers under Ma'qil bin Qays Riyahi against the Syrians, he issued the following instructions.

ومن وصيته (عليه السلام)

لمعقل بن قيس الرياحي

حين أنفذه إلى الشام في ثلاثة آلاف مقدّمة له

Fear Allah before Whom attendance is inevitable, and with other than Whom there is no meeting. Do not fight except with those who fight you. Travel in the two cool periods (i.e., morning and evening). Let the men have a midday sleep. March easily and do not travel during the early night for Allah has made it for resting and has ordained it for staying, nor for journeying. Therefore, give rest to your body in the night and let your carrier-beasts also rest.

When you are sure that morning has appeared and when dawn has dawned, commence your journey with Allah's blessings. If and when you face the enemy stand in the midst of your comrades. Do not get too near the foe like one who wants to commence the fighting, nor remain too distant like one who is afraid of action, till you receive my orders. Hatred for them should not lead you to fight before inviting them (to guidance) and exhausting your pleas before them.

اتَّقِ اللَّهَ الَّذِي لَا بُدَّ لَكَ مِنْ لِقَائِهِ، وَلَا مُنْتَهَى لَكَ دُونَهُ، وَلَا تُفَاتِلَنَّ إِلَّا مَنْ فَاتَكَ، وَسِرِّ
الْبُرْدَيْنِ، عَوِّزَ بِالنَّاسِ، وَرَفِّعْ فِي السَّيْرِ، وَلَا تَسِرْ أَوَّلَ اللَّيْلِ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ جَعَلَهُ سَكَنًا، وَقَدَّرَهُ مَقَامًا
لَا طَعْنًا، فَأَرِحْ فِيهِ بَدَنَكَ، وَرَوِّحْ ظَهْرَكَ، فَإِذَا وَقَفْتَ حِينَ يَنْبَطِحُ السَّحْرُ، أَوْ حِينَ يَنْفَجِرُ
الْفَجْرُ، فَسِرْ عَلَى بَرَكَةِ اللَّهِ، فَإِذَا لَقِيتَ الْعَدُوَّ فَصِفْ مِنْ أَصْحَابِكَ وَسَطًا، وَلَا تَدُنْ مِنَ الْقَوْمِ
دُنُوًّا مَنْ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يُنْشِبَ الْحَرْبَ، وَلَا تَبَاعِدْ مِنْهُمْ تَبَاعُدَ مَنْ يَهَابُ النَّاسَ، حَتَّى يَأْتِيكَ أَمْرِي،
وَلَا يَحْمِلَنَّكُمْ شَنَاؤُهُمْ عَلَى قِتَالِهِمْ، قَبْلَ دُعَائِهِمْ وَالْأَعْدَارِ إِلَيْهِمْ.

Letter 13: To two of the officers in his army

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى أميرين من أمراء جيشه

I have placed Malik ¹ ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar in command over you and over all those under you. Therefore, follow his commands and take him as the armour and shield for yourselves, because he is one of those from whom I have no fear of weakness nor any mistake, nor laziness where haste is more appropriate, nor haste where slackness is expected of him.

وَقَدْ أَمَرْتُ عَلَيْكُمَا وَعَلَى مَنْ فِي حَيْزِكُمَا مَالِكُ بْنُ الْحَارِثِ الْأَشْتَرِ، فَاسْمَعَا لَهُ وَأَطِيعَا،
وَاجْعَلَاهُ دِرْعاً وَجَنّاً، فَإِنَّهُ مِمَّنْ لَا يُخَافُ وَهُنُّهُ، وَلَا سَقَطُتُهُ، وَلَا بُطُؤُهُ عَمَّا الْأَسْرَاعُ إِلَيْهِ أَحْزَمُ،
وَلَا إِسْرَاعُهُ إِلَى مَا الْبُطُءُ عَنْهُ أَمْثَلُ.

Notes

1. When Amir al-mu'minin sent a vanguard contingent twelve thousand strong under Ziyad ibn an-Nadr al-Harithi and Shurayh ibn Ham al-Harithi to Syria, on the way, near Sur ar-Rum, they encountered with Abu'l-A'war ('Amr ibn Sulayman) as-Sulami who was camping there with a contingent of the Syrians. Both of them informed Amir al-mu'minin of this through al-Harith ibn Jumhan al-Ju'fi, whereupon he sent Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar as the Officer-in-command and wrote this letter to inform them. The brief but comprehensive words in which Amir al-mu'minin has mentioned Malik al-Ashtar in this letter gives an indication of his intelligence, sagacity, courage, daring, expanse and versatility in the art of war and his personal greatness and importance.

Letter 14: To his soldiers before the Battle of Siffin

Given to the army before the encounter with the enemy at Siffin ¹

ومن وصيته (عليه السلام)

لعسكره قبل لقاء العدو بصفين

Do not fight them unless they initiate the fighting, because, by the grace of Allah, you are in the right and to leave them till they begin fighting will be another point from your side against them. If, by the will of Allah, the enemy is defeated then do not kill the runner away, do not strike a helpless person, do not finish off the wounded. Do not inflict pain on women even though they may attack your honour with filthy words and abuse your officers, because they are weak in character, mind and intelligence. We have been ordered to desist from them although they may be unbelievers. Even in the pre-Islamic (al-jahiliyyah) period if a man struck a woman with a stone or a stick he was rebuked along with his offspring after him.

لَا تُفَاتِلُوهُمْ حَتَّى يَبْدَأُوكُمْ، فَإِنَّكُمْ بِحَمْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَى حُجَّةٍ، وَتَزَكُّكُمْ إِيَّاهُمْ حَتَّى يَبْدَأُوكُمْ حُجَّةً أُخْرَى لَكُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ، فَإِذَا كَانَتِ الْهَزِيمَةُ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْتُلُوا مُدْبِرًا، وَلَا تُصِيبُوا مُعْوِرًا، وَلَا تُجْهِرُوا عَلَى جَرِيحٍ، لَا تَهَيِّجُوا النِّسَاءَ بِأَدَى، وَإِنْ شَتَمْنَ أَعْرَاضَكُمْ، وَسَبَبْنَ أَمْرَاءَكُمْ، فَإِنَّهُنَّ ضَعِيفَاتُ الْقُوَى وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالْعُمُولِ، إِنْ كُنَّا لَنُؤْمَرُ بِالْكَفِّ عَنْهُنَّ وَإِنَّهُنَّ لَمُشْرِكَاتُ، وَإِنْ كَانَ الرَّجُلُ لَيَتَنَاوَلُ الْمَرْأَةَ فِي الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ بِالْفَهْرِ أَوْ الْهَرَاوَةِ فَيَعِيرُ بِهَا وَعَقَبُهُ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ.

Notes

1. The responsibility for the war and fighting that took place between Amir al-mu'minin and Mu'awiyah lies solely on Mu'awiyah because he brought about the war by laying the wrong blame for 'Uthman's blood on Amir al-mu'minin, although the real facts about the causes of 'Uthman's killing and by whom he was killed were not unknown to him. But since there was no way for him to achieve his end save by creating an occasion for war, he entered into war to retain his authority which was evidently offensive and which cannot by any means be considered as permissible, because revolt and rebellion against the rightful Imam is unlawful according to the general consensus of Muslims. Thus, Abu Zakariyya Yahya ibn Sharaf an-Nawawi (631/1233-676/1277) writes:

Do not fight against those in authority in matters of governance, nor raise objections against them except when you observe them committing things which you know are definitely against Islam. If you see them doing such things regard it bad for them and speak the truth wherever you may be, but rising against them or fighting is prohibited by the consensus of Muslims. (Sharh Sahih Muslim, vol.2, p.125. In agreement with this view, see also, al-Qadi Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn at-Tayyib al-Baqillani [338/950 - 403/1013], the Ash'arite great scholar, in at- Tamhid, p.186; and Sa'du'd-Din Mas'ud ibn 'Umar at-Taftazani [712/1312 - 793/1390] in Sharh al-Maqasid, vol.2, p.272)

Muhammad ibn 'Abd al-Karim ash- Shahrastani writes:

Whoever rises against the true Imam, by the unanimity of opinion of the (Muslim) community, is known as a Kharijite, the deviator. The same is the case of rising, during the days of the companions, against the rightful Imams, or even after them against those who followed them in virtue. (al-Milal wa'n-nihal, vol.1, p.114)

There is no doubt that Mu'awiyah's action was the result of uprising and revolt, and to take up arms for the purpose of stopping the advance of the one who revolts is not to be regarded as being against any code of peacefulness or peace-loving. Rather, it is a natural right of the oppressed; and if he is deprived of this right then there will remain no way of

preventing oppression and tyranny or of safeguarding rights in the world. That is why Allah has permitted taking up arms against rebels. Thus, Allah says:

And if two parties of the believers fall into a quarrel (among themselves), restore ye peace between them two; but if one of the two transgresseth against the other, (then) fight ye (all against) that which transgresseth until it complieth with the command of Allah; and if it complieth then restore ye peace between the two with justice, and act ye justly; Verily, Allah loveth the just ones. (Qur'an, 49:9)

It was the first plea to which Amir al-mu'minin pointed out by saying, "By the Grace of Allah you are in the right," but even after exhaustion of this plea he prevented his army from taking the initiative in fighting, because he wished that the initiative should not be from his side and that he should take up the sword only in defence. Consequently, when all his effort for peace and tranquility proved futile and the enemy took the step towards war, this was the second argument in their favour, after which Amir al-mu'minin could not be blamed for getting ready to fight, nor accused of aggressive action. It was rather an obligation to stop oppression and tyranny that he had to discharge and which Allah has permitted in plain words. Thus, Allah's command is that:

And fight in the cause of Allah (against) those who fight you but be not aggressive; for verily Allah loveth not the aggressors. (Qur'an, 2:190)

Besides, fighting against Amir al-mu'minin means fighting against the Prophet, as the Prophet's saying: "O' 'Ali, your peace is my peace and your war is my war" (Ibn al-Maghazili, al-Manaqib, p.5; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.18, p.24). In this way whatever punishment should be for fighting against the Prophet should be for fighting against Amir al-mu'minin. For him who wages war against the Prophet, Allah has laid down the following punishment.

To recompense of those who war against Allah and His Apostle, and strive in the land, spreading mischief (therein), is only that they be slain or crucified or their hands and their feet should be cut off, from the opposite sides, or be banished from the land; This for them shall be the disgrace in this world, and for them, in the hereafter, shall be a great torment. (Qur'an, 5:33)

Apart from this, the instructions that Amir al-mu'minin issued in connection with the war, namely that no runner away or wounded should be molested, are so high from the moral point of view that they can be regarded as a sublime specimen of moral values and the high standard of Islamic fighting. Then, these instructions were not confined to mere words but Amir al-mu'minin followed them to the letter, and ordered others also to follow them strictly. He did not, on any occasion, tolerate the chasing of a runner away, attack the helpless or molest women, in fact, on the battlefield of Jamal, where the command of the opposite force was with a woman, he did not change his principle. After the defeat and vanquishment of the foe he gave proof of his high character and sent 'A'ishah to Medina under guard. Had there been someone other than Amir al-mu'minin he would have proposed the same punishment as that which ought to be awarded for such a step! Thus, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written:

What she did with Amir al-mu'minin, if she had done the same with (Caliph) 'Umar and had spread rebellion against him among the people, he would, after securing victory over her, have killed her and cut her into pieces, but Amir al-mu'minin was very forbearing and large-hearted. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.17, p.254)

Letter 15: His invocation to Allah whenever he faced an enemy.

Made by Amir al-mu'minin when he used to face the enemy

وكان (عليه السلام) يقول إذا لقي العدو محارباً:

O My God! Hearts are drawn to You, necks stretch (towards You), eyes are fixed (on You), steps are in motion (towards You) and bodies have turned lean. O My God! Hidden animosity has become manifest and the cauldrons of malice are boiling.

اللَّهُمَّ إِلَيْكَ أَفْضَتِ الْقُلُوبُ، وَوَدَّتِ الْأَعْنَاقُ، وَشَخَّصَتِ الْأَبْصَارُ، وَثِقَلَتِ الْأَقْدَامُ،
وَأَنْضَيْتِ الْأَبْدَانُ. اللَّهُمَّ قَدْ صَرَخَ مَكْنُونُ الشَّنَانِ، وَجَاشَتْ مَرَاجِلُ الْأَضْغَانِ

O My God! We complain to You of the absence of our Prophet, the numerousness of our enemy and the diffusion of our passions.

Our Lord! Decide between us and between our people with truth, and You are the Best of Deciders. (Qur'an, 7:89)

اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّا نَشْكُو إِلَيْكَ غَيْبَةَ نَبِيِّنَا، وَكَثْرَةَ عَدُوِّنَا، وَتَشْتُّتِ أَهْوَائِنَا .
(رَبَّنَا افْتَحْ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَ قَوْمِنَا بِالْحَقِّ وَأَنْتَ خَيْرُ الْفَاتِحِينَ)

Letter 16: His advice to his followers during a battle

He used to give to his followers at the time of battle

وكان يقول (عليه السلام)

لاصحابه عند الحرب

The retreat after which return is intended and the withdrawal after which attack is in view should not make you unhappy. Do justice with the swords (allow your swords to do their duties). Keep ready a place for the falling of bodies (of your foe); prepare yourselves for hurling strong spears and striking swords with full force, and keep your voices down as that keeps off cowardice.

لَا تَسْتَدَنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ فِرَّةٌ بَعْدَهَا كَرَّةٌ، وَلَا جَوْلَةٌ بَعْدَهَا حَمَلَةٌ، وَأَعْطُوا السُّيُوفَ حُقُوقَهَا،
وَوَطِّئُوا لِلْجُنُوبِ مَصَارِعَهَا، وَأَذْمُرُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ عَلَى الطَّعْنِ الدَّعْسِيِّ، وَالضَّرْبِ الطَّلْحَفِيِّ،
وَأَمِئْتُوا الْأَصْوَاتَ، فَإِنَّهُ أُطْرِدُ لِلْفَشْلِ

By Him Who broke open the seed (for growing) and created living beings, they had not accepted Islam but they had secured safety (by verbally professing it) and had hidden their misbelief. Consequently when they found helpers for their misbelief they disclosed it.

[ف] وَالَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ، وَبَرَأَ النَّسَمَةَ، مَا أَسْلَمُوا وَلَكِنْ اسْتَسْلَمُوا، وَأَسْرُوا الْكُفْرَ، فَلَمَّا
وَجَدُوا أَعْوَانًا عَلَيْهِ أَظْهَرُوهُ .

Letter 17: In reply to a letter from Mu'awiyah

In reply to a letter from Mu'awiyah ¹

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى معاوية، جواباً عن كتاب منه

As for your demand to me to (hand over) Syria, I cannot give you today what I denied you yesterday. As regards your saying that the war has eaten up Arabia save its last breath, you should know that he whom right has eaten up goes to Paradise and he whom wrong has eaten up goes to Hell. As for our equality in (the art of) war and in (numbers of) men, certainly you cannot be more penetrating in doubtfulness (of belief) than I am in certainty (of belief), and the people of Syria are not more greedy for this world than the people of Iraq are for the next world.

وَأَمَّا طَلْبُكَ إِلَيَّ الشَّامَ، فَإِنِّي لَمْ أَكُنْ لِإِعْطِيكَ الْيَوْمَ مَا مَنَعْتِكَ أَمْسٍ. وَأَمَّا قَوْلُكَ: إِنَّ الْحَرْبَ قَدْ أَكَلَتِ الْعَرَبَ إِلَّا حَشَاشَاتِ أَنْفُسٍ بَقِيَتْ، فَمَنْ أَكَلَهُ الْحَقُّ فَإِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، مَنْ أَكَلَهُ الْبَاطِلُ فَإِلَى النَّارِ. وَأَمَّا اسْتِوَاؤُنَا فِي الْحَرْبِ وَالرِّجَالِ، فَلَسْتَ بِأَمْضَى عَلَى الشَّكِّ مِنِّي عَلَى الْبَقِيَّةِ، وَلَيْسَ أَهْلُ الشَّامِ بِأَخْرَصَ عَلَى الدُّنْيَا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْعِرَاقِ عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ.

As for your saying that both of us are sons of 'Abd Manaf, it is no doubt so, but Umayyah cannot be like Hashim, nor Harb like Abd al-Muttalib, nor can Abu Sufyan be like Abu Talib. The muhajir (immigrant) cannot be a match for him who was set free (on the day of fall of Mecca), nor can one of pure descent be a match for him who has been adopted, nor the pursuer of truth be a match of the adherent to wrong, nor a believer be a match for a hypocrite. How bad are the successors who go on following their predecessors who have fallen in the fire of Hell!

وَأَمَّا قَوْلُكَ: إِنَّا بَنُو عَبْدِ مَنَافٍ، فَكَذَلِكَ نَحْنُ، وَلَكِنْ لَيْسَ أُمِّيَّةُ كَهَاشِمٍ، وَلَا حَرْبٌ كَعَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، وَلَا أَبُو سُوْفْيَانَ كَأَبِي طَالِبٍ، وَلَا الْمَهَاجِرُ كَالطَّلِيقِ، وَلَا الصَّرِيحُ كَاللَّصِيقِ، وَلَا الْمُحَقِّقُ كَالْمُبْطِلِ، وَلَا الْمُؤْمِنُ كَالْمُدْغِلِ، وَلَيْسَ الْخُلْفُ خُلْفٌ يَتَّبِعُ سَلْفًا هَوَى فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ.

Besides that, we also have the distinction of prophethood among us, by virtue of which we subdued the strong and raised up the down-trodden. When Allah made Arabia enter (the fold of) His religion, and the people submitted to it willingly or unwillingly, you were among those who entered the religion either from greed or from fear, at a time when those who had gone first had preceded and the first muhajirun had acquired their (peculiar) distinction. Now, do not allow Satan have a share with you nor let him have his sway over you; and that is an end to the matter.

وَفِي أَيْدِينَا بَعْدُ فَضْلُ النَّبُوَّةِ الَّتِي أَذَلَّلْنَا بِهَا الْعَرَبَ، وَنَعَشْنَا بِهَا الدَّلِيلَ. وَلَمَّا أَدْخَلَ اللَّهُ الْعَرَبَ فِي دِينِهِ أَفْوَاجًا، وَأَسْلَمَتْ لَهُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةُ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا، كُنْتُمْ مِمَّنْ دَخَلَ فِي الدِّينِ: إِمَّا

رَغْبَةً وَإِنَّا رَهْبَةٌ، عَلَى حِينٍ فَازَ أَهْلُ السَّبْقِ بِسَبْقِهِمْ، وَذَهَبَ الْمُهَاجِرُونَ الْأَوْلُونَ بِفَضْلِهِمْ.
فَلَا تَجْعَلَنَّ لِلشَّيْطَانِ فِيكَ نَصِيْبًا، وَلَا عَلَى نَفْسِكَ سَبِيْلًا، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Notes

1. During the battle of Siffin, Mu'awiyah thought of again demanding the province of Syria from Amir al-mu'minin and to play such a trick as to succeed in his designs. In this connection, he consulted 'Amr ibn al-'As. But the latter did not agree with this idea and said, "O' Mu'awiyah, think a little, what effect will this writing of yours have on 'Ali? How can he fall in this trap by your persuasion." On this Mu'awiyah said, "We are all descendants of 'Abd Manaf. What difference is there between 'Ali and me that he may score over me and I may not succeed in deceiving him?" 'Amr ibn al-'As said, "If you think so, then write and see (the outcome)." Mu'awiyah therefore wrote a letter to Amir al-mu'minin wherein he made a demand for Syria and also wrote: "We are descendants of 'Abd Manaf. There is no distinction of one over the other among us." Then, Amir al-mu'minin wrote this letter in reply and mentioning his own predecessors along with those of Mu'awiyah disproved his contention of equality. Although the origin of both was the same and the paternal chain of both joined at 'Abd Manaf, the progeny of 'Abd Shams was the source of all evil in morality and character and was involved in heresy and vice whereas the house of Hashim was the worshipper of one God and kept aloof from idolatry. If the branches growing out of the same root bear both flowers as well as thorns, then both cannot be deemed equal. Consequently, it does not need any detailed explanation to show that Umayyah and Hashim, Harb and 'Abd al-Muttalib and Abu Sufyan and Abu Talib were not match of each other from any angle. This is not denied by any historian nor by any biographer. In fact, after this reply even Mu'awiyah did not dare refute it, because the fact could be concealed that after 'Abd Manaf it was Hashim alone who possessed conspicuous prestige among the Quraysh, and the most important positions with relation to the Ka'bah namely siqayah (i.e., the superintendence of the water-supply, especially with a view to the needs of pilgrims) and rifadah (provisioning of pilgrims) was assigned to him. As such, at the time of hajj, caravan after caravan used to come and stay with him and he was such a generous host to them that those who partook of his generosity and benevolence would praise him for long thereafter.

The worthy son of this very large-hearted and courageous father was 'Abd al-Muttalib whose name was Shaybah and surname was Sayyidu'l-Batha' (the Chief of the Valley of Mecca). He was the successor to the distinction of Abraham's line and owner of the greatness and chiefdom of Quraysh. The high courage and far-sightedness showed by him before Abraham is a shining star of the family of 'Abd Manaf.'Abd Manaf was a pearl and 'Abd al-Muttalib was the lustre of the pearl.

'Abd al-Muttalib's son was Abu Talib whose lap served as the cradle for 'Abdullah's orphan child and the training place of the Prophet. He brought up the Prophet in his care, and shielded him against his enemies. To compare Abu Sufyan, Harb and Umayyah with them or to regard them as their matches is the same as to close one's eyes to the lustre of light and to regard it as darkness.

After recounting this genealogical difference the next point of distinction that Amir al-mu'minin has described is that he himself is a muhajir (immigrant from Mecca) while Mu'awiyah is a taliq (i.e., one of those whom the Prophet had spared on the day of fall of Mecca). Therefore, when the Prophet entered Mecca victorious he enquired from the Quraysh how they thought he would deal with them, and all said that being a generous son of a generous father they expected only good from him, whereupon the Prophet said, "Go away, you have all been spared." That is, "you did deserve to be detained as slaves but as a mark of obligation you have been left free." These spared ones included Mu'awiyah and Abu Sufyan also. Thus, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid and ash-Shaykh Muhammad 'Abduh have recorded the following note in their annotations to this letter "Abu Sufyan and Mu'awiyah both were among the spared ones." (Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.17, p.119;'Abduh, vol.3, p.17)

The third point of distinction is that Amir al-mu'minin's lineage is pure and clear and there is no doubtful point anywhere. As against this, for Mu'awiyah he has used to the word "lasiq". Men of letters have given lasiq to mean "One who is attributed to other than his

father." In this connection, the first doubt that is entertained about Umayyah is whether he was the son of 'Abd Shams or only his slave who began to be known as his son because of having been brought up by him. Thus, al-'Allamah al-Majlisi has related from Kamil al-Baha'i that: Umayyah was a Byzantinian slave of 'Abd Shams. When he found him intelligent and sagacious he freed him and adopted him as hisson, as a result of which he began to be called Umayyah son of 'Abd Shams, as Zayd (ibn al-Harithah) was called Zayd ibn Muhammad before the verse was revealed (to prohibit it).(Bihar al-anwar, 1st ed., vol.8, p.383)

The second doubt in the Umayyad lineage is whether Harb who is known as the son of Umayyah was really his son or a slave brought up by him. In this connection, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has quoted from Abu'l-Faraj al-Isbahani's book that:

Mu'awiyah enquired from the lineage expert Daghfal (Ibn Hanzalah) whether he had seen 'Abd al-Muttalib and he replied in the affirmative.He further enquired how he found him and Daghfal replied, "He was prestigious, handsome and a man of open forehead, while his face bore the brightness of Prophethood." Then, Mu'awiyah enquired whether he had seen Umayyah ibn 'Abd Shams also, and he replied that he had seen him too. He enquired how he found him and he replied, "Weak bodied, bent stature and blind in the eyes. In front of him was his slave Dhakwan who led here and there." Mu'awiyah said it was his son Abu 'Amr (Harb) whereupon he said, "You say so but the Quraysh only know that he was his slave." (al-Aghani, vol.1, p.12; Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.17, pp.231-232)

In this connection, the third doubt is about Mu'awiyah himself. Thus Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written that:

Mu'awiyah's mother Hind led a life of vileness and immorality. az-Zamakhshari (Abu'l-Qasim Mahmud ibn 'Umar [467/1075- 538/1144]) has written in his book Rabi'u 'l-abrar that Mu'awiyah's parentage was traced back to four persons who were: Musafir ibn Abi 'Amr, 'Umarah ibn al-Walid ibn al-Mughirah, al-'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-Muttalib and as-Sabbah (a singer for 'Umarah). (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.1, p.336)

The fourth point of distinction that Amir al-mu'minin has stated is that he himself was the devotee of right while Mu'awiyah was the devotee of wrong and this fact needs no proof, for the whole life of Mu'awiyah was spent in suppressing right and hankering after wrong. No where is his step seen advancing towards right.

The fifth distinction that Amir al-mu'minin has mentioned is that he himself was a believer whereas Mu'awiyah was a mischief-monger and a hypocrite. Just as there can be no doubt about Amir al-mu'minin's belief, there can be no doubt about Mu'awiyah's mischief-mongering and hypocrisy. Thus, Amir al-mu'minin has exposed his hypocrisy in the earlier writing in these words.

These people had not accepted Islam but they had secured safety by verbally professing it and had hidden their misbelief. Consequently, when they found helpers for their mischief they disclosed it.

Letter 18: To `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas, his Governor of Basrah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى عبد الله بن العباس وهو عامله على البصرة

You should know that Basrah is the place where Satan descends and mischiefs happen. Keep the people of this place pleased with good treatment and remove the knots of fear from their hearts.

وَأَعْلَمَنَّ أَنَّ الْبَصْرَةَ مَهْبِطُ إِبْلِيسَ، وَمَعْرِسُ الْفِتَنِ، فَحَادِثُ أَهْلِهَا بِالْأَحْسَانِ إِلَيْهِمْ، وَاحْتُلْنَ عُمْدَةَ الْخَوْفِ عَنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ.

I have come to know of your strictness with Banu Tamim¹ and your harshness over them. Banu Tamim are those that if one star sets another one rises for them. They were never exceeded in (the art of) war in pre-Islamic times or after Islam. They have a special kinship with us and a particular relationship. We shall be rewarded if we pay heed to the kinship and be deemed sinful if we disregard it. O Abu'l-`Abbas, may Allah have mercy on you. keep yourself restrained in whatever you say or do, good or bad about your people, as we are both partners in this (responsibility). Prove yourself according to my good impressions about you, and do not prove my opinion (about you) wrong; and that is an end to the matter.

وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي تَنَمُّرُكَ لِبَنِي تَمِيمٍ، وَغِلْظَتُكَ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَإِنَّ بَنِي تَمِيمٍ لَمْ يَغِبْ لَهُمْ نَجْمٌ إِلَّا طَلَعَ لَهُمْ آخَرٌ، وَإِنَّهُمْ لَمْ يُسَبِّقُوا بِوَعْمٍ فِي جَاهِلِيَّةٍ وَلَا إِسْلَامٍ، وَإِنَّ لَهُمْ بِنَا رَحِمًا مَاسَّةً، وَقَرَابَةً خَاصَّةً، نَحْنُ مَأْجُورُونَ عَلَى صَلَاتِهَا، وَمَأْزُورُونَ عَلَى قَطْبِعَتِهَا. فَارْبَعُ أَبَا الْعَبَّاسِ، رَحِمَكَ اللَّهُ، فَيَمَا جَرَى عَلَى يَدِكَ وَلِسَانِكَ مِنْ خَيْرٍ وَشَرٍّ! فَإِنَّا شَرِيكَانِ فِي ذَلِكَ، كُنْ عِنْدَ صَالِحِ ظَنِّي بِكَ، وَلَا يَفِيلَنَّ رَأْيِي فِيكَ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Notes

1. When Talhah and az-Zubayr reached Basrah it was Banu Tamim who took active part in the movement to avenge `Uthman's blood and were foremost in fanning this mischief. Therefore, when `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas took over as the Governor of Basrah, in view of their breach of faith and animosity, he thought they deserved harsh treatment and was to some extent severe with them. But in this tribe there were also a few sincere followers of Amir al-mu'minin. When they saw this behaviour of Ibn 'Abbas with their tribe they sent a letter to Amir al-mu'minin through Jariyah ibn Qadamah wherein they complained of Ibn 'Abbas's harsh treatment.

Thereupon, Amir al-mu'minin wrote this letter to Ibn 'Abbas in which he instructed him to change his ways and to behave well with them, and has drawn his attention to the kinship existing between Banu Hashim and Banu Tamim. That kinship was this that Banu Hashim and Banu Tamim join the lineal line at Ilyas ibn Mudar because Hashim is the descendant of Mudrikah ibn Ilyas, while Tamim is the descendant of Tabikhah ibn Ilyas.

Letter 19: To one of his officers

The following is a letter to one of his governors. It speaks volumes about the ways of Divine Rule. It shows how Imam Ali (a) was training the Muslims to behave tolerantly towards other religions, how minority was to be treated and what should those who hold a different creed, expect of a Muslim ruler.

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى بعض عماله

Now, the cultivators ¹ (dahaqin, plural of dihqan) of your city have complained of your strictness, hard heartedness, humiliating treatment and harshness. I thought over it and found that since they are unbelievers they cannot be brought near nor kept away or treated severely because of the pledge with them. Behave with them in between strictness and softness and adopt for them a mingling or remoteness and aloofness with nearness and closeness if Allah so wills.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ دَهَاقِينَ أَهْلِ بَلَدِكَ شَكَوْا مِنْكَ غِلْظَةً وَقَسْوَةً، وَاحْتِقَارًا وَجَفْوَةً، وَنَظَرْتُ فَلَمْ أَرَهُمْ أَهْلًا لِأَنَّ يُدُنُّوْا لِشِرْكِهِمْ، وَلَا أَنْ يُفْصَوْا وَيُجْفَوْا لِعَهْدِهِمْ، فَالْبَسَ لَهُمْ جِلْبَابًا مِنَ الدِّينِ تَشْوِيهِ بِطَرْفِ مِنَ الشَّدَّةِ، وَذَاوِلَ لَهُمْ بَيْنَ الْقَسْوَةِ وَالرَّأْفَةِ، وَأَمْرُجَ لَهُمْ بَيْنَ التَّقْرِيبِ وَالْأَدْنَاءِ، وَالْأَبْعَادِ وَالْأَقْصَاءِ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللهُ.

Notes

1. These people were Magians (majus). That is why the treatment of Amir al-mu'minin's officer with them was not the same as with Muslims. Disgusted with this they wrote a letter of complaint to Amir al-mu'minin and spoke of the Officer's harshness. In reply, Amir al-mu'minin wrote to his officer that he should meet out treatment to them in which there should be neither harshness nor such leniency which they may exploit to create mischief because if they are let loose they get involved in machinations against the government and disturb the country's administration by creating one mischief or the other, while a wholly repressive policy cannot be justified because they are counted among the subjects and their rights as such cannot be ignored.

Letter 20: To Ziyad ibn Abih

To Ziyad ibn Abih (son of his [unknown] father), when 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas was the Governor of Basrah, the suburbs of Ahwaz, Fars and Kirman while Ziyad was his deputy in Basrah.

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى زياد بن أبيه

وهو خليفة عامله عبدالله بن العباس على البصرة، وعبد الله عامل أمير المؤمنين (عليه

السلام) يومئذ عليها وعلى كور الاهواز فارس وكرمان و

I truthfully swear by Allah that if I come to know that you have misappropriated the funds of the Muslims, small or big, I shall inflict upon you such punishment which will leave you empty handed, heavy backed and humiliated; and that is an end to the matter.

وَإِنِّي أَقْسِمُ بِاللَّهِ قَسَمًا صَادِقًا، لَئِن بَلَغَنِي أَنَّكَ حُنْتَ مِنْ فِيءِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ شَيْئًا صَغِيرًا أَوْ

كَبِيرًا، لَأَشُدَّنَّ عَلَيْكَ شِدَّةً تَدْعُكَ قَلِيلَ الْوَفْرِ، تَقِيلُ الظَّهْرَ، ضَعِيلَ الْأَمْرِ، وَالسَّلَامَ.

Letter 21: Also to Ziyad

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إليه أيضاً

Give up lavishness and be moderate. Every day remember the coming day. Hold back from the funds what you need and send forward the balance for the day of your need.

فَدَعَ الْأَسْرَافَ مُقْتَصِدًا، وَادْتَكَّرَ فِي الْيَوْمِ غَدًا، وَأَمْسَكَ مِنَ الْمَالِ بِقَدْرِ ضَرُورَتِكَ، وَقَدَّمَ الْفَضْلَ لِيَوْمِ حَاجَتِكَ.

Do you expect that Allah may give you the reward of the humble while you yourself remain vain in His view? And do you covet that He may give you the reward of those practising charity while you enjoy comforts and deny them to the weak and the widows? Certainly, a man is awarded according as he acts and meets what he has sent forward; and that is an end to the matter.

أَتَرْجُوا أَنْ يُعْطِيَكُمُ اللَّهُ أَجْرَ الْمُتَوَاضِعِينَ وَأَنْتَ عِنْدَهُ مِنَ الْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ! وَتَطْمَعُ . وَأَنْتَ مُتَمَرِّغٌ فِي النَّعِيمِ، تَمْنَعُهُ الضَّعِيفَ وَالْأَرْمَلَةَ . أَنْ يُوجِبَ لَكَ ثَوَابَ الْمُتَصَدِّقِينَ؟ وَإِنَّمَا الْمَرْءُ مَجْزِيٌّ بِمَا [أ] سَلَفَ، وَقَادِمٌ عَلَى مَا قَدَّمَ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 22: To `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas.

`Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas used to say, "Apart from the Prophet's sayings I did not derive greater benefit from any saying than this one."

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى عبدالله بن العباس

وكان ابن عباس يقول: ما انتفعت بكلام بعد كلام رسول الله كانتفاعي بهذا الكلام

Let it be known to you that sometimes a man gets pleased at securing a thing which he was not going to miss at all and gets displeased at missing a thing which he would not in any case get. Your pleasure should be about what you secure in respect of your next life and your grief should be for what you miss in respect thereof. Do not be much pleased on what you secure from this world, nor get extremely grieved over what you miss out of it. Your worry should be about what is to come after death.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ الْمَرْءَ قَدْ يَسُرُّهُ دَرَكُ مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيَفُوتَهُ، وَيَسُوُّهُ فَوْتُ مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُدْرِكَهُ،
فَلْيَكُنْ سُرُورُكَ بِمَا نَلْتَ مِنْ آخِرَتِكَ، وَلْيَكُنْ أَسْفُكَ عَلَى مَا فَاتَكَ مِنْهَا، وَمَا نَلْتَ مِنْ دُنْيَاكَ
فَلَا تُكْتِرْ بِهِ فَرَحًا، وَمَا فَاتَكَ مِنْهَا فَلَا تَأْسَ عَلَيْهِ جَزَعًا، وَلْيَكُنْ هَمُّكَ فِيَمَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ.

Letter 23: Instructions to his family a little before his martyrdom.

Made shortly before his martyrdom when he had been fatally wounded by a blow from the sword of (Abd ar-Rahman) Ibn Muljam (the curse of Allah be upon him).

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

قاله قُبَيْلَ موته لما ضربه ابن ملجم على سبيل الوصية

I enjoin upon you as my dying wish not to regard anything by way of partner with Allah, not to disregard the sunnah of Muhammad (may Allah bless him and his descendants), establish these two pillars and light these two lamps. You will then be free from evil.

وَصِيَّتِي لَكُمْ: أَنْ لَا تُشْرِكُوا بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا، وَمُحَمَّدًا (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَلَا تُضَيِّعُوا سُنَّتَهُ،
أَقِيمُوا هَذَيْنِ الْعَمُودَيْنِ، وَخَلَاكُمْ دَمًّا.

Yesterday I was your companion and today I am (just) a lesson for you, while tomorrow I shall be leaving you. If I survive I shall be the master of my blood (to avenge or not to avenge it), and if I die then death is a promised event. If I forgive, it is for me a means of nearness (to Allah) and for you a good act. Therefore, do forgive.

What! Love you not that Allah should forgive you? (Qur'an, 24:22)

By Allah, this sudden death is not an event that I dislike, nor is it an accident that I hate. I am just like a night traveller who reaches the spring (in the morning) or like or seeker who secures (his aim):

And whatever is with Allah is the best for the righteous ones. (Qur'an, 3:198)

أَنَا بِالْأَمْسِ صَاحِبُكُمْ، وَالْيَوْمِ عِبْرَةٌ لَكُمْ، وَعَدَاءٌ مُفَارِقُكُمْ، إِنْ أَبَقَ فَأَنَا وَلِيُّ دَمِي، وَإِنْ أَفَنَ
فَالْفَنَاءُ مِيعَادِي، وَإِنْ أَعْفُ فَاَلْعَفْوُ لِي قُرْبَةٌ، وَهُوَ لَكُمْ حَسَنَةٌ، فَاعْفُوا (أَلَا تُحِبُّونَ أَنْ يَغْفِرَ اللَّهُ
لَكُمْ). وَاللَّهُ مَا فَجَأَنِي مِنَ الْمَوْتِ وَارِدٍ كَرِهْتُهُ، وَلَا طَالَعُ أَنْكَرْتُهُ، وَمَا كُنْتُ إِلَّا كَقَارِبٍ وَرَدَ،
وَطَالِبٍ وَجَدَ، (وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لِلْأَبْرَارِ)

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: A part of this utterance has already appeared in the sermons but it was found necessary to record it again because of some additional matter.

قال السيد الشريف رضي الله عنه: أقول: وقد مضى بعض هذا الكلام فيما تقدم من الخطب، إلا أن فيه هاهنا زيادة أوجبت تكريره.

Letter 24: His Will

The following is the will of Imam Ali (a) in which he has left instructions as to how to treat his property and estate. It was written after his return from the Battle of Siffin.

ومن وصية له (عليه السلام)

بما يُعمل في أمواله، كتبها بعد منصرفه من صفين

This is what `Ali ibn Abi Talib, the slave of Allah has laid down about his property, in pursuance of seeking Allah's pleasure so that He may by virtue of it give him entry into Paradise and accord him peace.

هَذَا مَا أَمَرَ بِهِ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فِي مَالِهِ، اتِّبَاعًا وَجْهَ اللَّهِ،

لِيُوجَّحَنِي (1) بِهِ الْجَنَّةَ، وَيُعْطِيَنِي الْأَمَنَةَ

A part of the same

منها:

It will be administered by Hasan ibn `Ali. He will take from it a suitable portion for his livelihood and spend it on charity. If something happens to Hasan, and Husayn survives he will administer it after Hasan, and deal with it accordingly. In the charitable estate of the two sons of Fatimah they have the same rights as the all (other) sons of `Ali. I have laid down the (functions of) administration of the two sons of Fatimah in order to seek the pleasure of Allah and nearness to the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and his descendants) with due regard for his honour and consideration of his kinship.

فَإِنَّهُ يَقُومُ بِذَلِكَ الْحَسَنُ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ، يَأْكُلُ مِنْهُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ، وَيُنْفِقُ مِنْهُ فِي الْمَعْرُوفِ، فَإِنْ حَدَثَ بِحَسَنٍ حَدَثٌ وَحُسَيْنٌ حَيٌّ، قَامَ بِالْأَمْرِ بَعْدَهُ، وَأَصْدَرَهُ مَصْدَرَهُ. وَإِنَّ لِابْنَيْ فَاطِمَةَ مِنْ صَدَقَةِ عَلِيٍّ مِثْلَ الَّذِي لِبَنِي عَلِيٍّ، وَإِنِّي إِذَا جَعَلْتُ الْقِيَامَ بِذَلِكَ إِلَى ابْنِي فَاطِمَةَ اتِّبَاعًا وَجْهَ اللَّهِ، وَفُرْبَةً إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، وَتَكْرِيمًا لِحُرْمَتِهِ، وَتَشْرِيفًا لِحُرْمَتِهِ

It is obligatory on him who administers it that he retains the estate as it is, and spends the usufruct as he has been ordered and instructed. He should not sell the seedlings in the plantations of these villages till the land changes its face by turning them into plants. As for those of my slave girls who were under me, if any one of them has a child or is pregnant, she will be retained for the sake of the child and will form part of his share. If the child dies and she survives, then she is free, bondage is removed from her and liberty is given to her.¹

وَيَشْتَرِطُ عَلَى الَّذِي يَجْعَلُهُ إِلَيْهِ أَنْ يَتْرَكَ الْمَالَ عَلَى أَصُولِهِ، وَيُنْفِقَ مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ حَيْثُ أَمَرَ بِهِ وَهُدْيَ لَهَا، أَلَّا يَبِيعَ مِنْ أَوْلَادِ نَحِيلِ هَذِهِ الْقُرَى وَدِيَّةً حَتَّى تُشْكَلَ أَرْضُهَا غِرَاسًا. وَمَنْ كَانَ مِنْ إِمَائِي . اللَّائِي أَطُوفُ عَلَيْهِنَّ . لَهَا وَلَدٌ، أَوْ هِيَ حَامِلٌ، فَتُمْسِكُ عَلَى وَلَدِهَا وَهِيَ مِنْ حَظِّهَا، فَإِنْ مَاتَ وَلَدُهَا وَهِيَ حَيَّةٌ فَهِيَ عَتِيقَةٌ، فَذُفْرَجَ عَنْهَا الرِّقُّ، وَحَرَّرَهَا الْعِتْقُ .

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: In this will in Amir al-mu' minin's phrase "alla yabi'a min nakhliha wadiyyatan", the word "wadiyyah" means seedling of date-palm and its plural is "wadiyy". And his words "hatta tushkila arduha ghirasan", is one of the most eloquent form of expression and it means that when a number of date plants grow on the land then he who had seen it before the growth would regard it as a different land.

قال الشريف: قوله (عليه السلام) في هذه الوصية: "وألا يبيع من نخلها وديّة"، الوديّة: القسيّة، وجمعها وديّ. وقوله (عليه السلام): "حتى تشكل أرضها غراساً" هو من أفصح الكلام، والمراد به: أن الارض يكثر فيها غراس النخل حتى يراها الناظر على غير تلك الصفة التي عرفها بما فيشكل عليه أمرها ويحسبها غيرها.

Notes

1. The life of Amir al-mu'minin was that of a labourer or a cultivator. He worked in fields of other persons, cultivated barren and untilled lands, providing means of irrigating them, made them cultivable and planted orchards therein . Since these lands were cultivated by him they were his Property but he never paid heed to property, and, declaring them a trust, gave up his proprietorship; but in consideration of the Prophet's kinship he assigned the management rights of this trust to Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn one after the other. Yet he did not tolerate any additional rights for them but like other children gave them merely the right to take from it only for their livelihood, while the balance he ordered to be spent for the common good of the Muslims and for charitable purposes. Thus, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes:

Everyone knows that in Medina, Yanbu' and Suwayqah, Amir al-mu'minin had dug several springs from under the land and brought under cultivation many barren and uncultivable lands. Thereafter, he gave up rights over them and declared them as trusts for the Muslims. When he left the world, nothing was owned by him. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.15, p.146)

Letter 25: Instructions to assessors and collectors of Zakat

Amir al-mu'minin used to write to whoever he appointed for the the collection of zakat and charities. Ash-Sharif says: We have recorded a few portions of it here to show that he always erected the pillars of right and created examples of justice in all matters, small or big, delicate or serious.

ومن وصية له (عليه السلام)

كان يكتبها لمن يستعمله على الصدقات

و إنما ذكرنا منها جملاً هاهنا ليُعلمَ بها أنه (عليه السلام) كان يقيم عماد الحق، ويشرع

أمثلة العدل، في صغير الامور وكبيرها، ودقيقها وجليلها.

Move on with the fear of Allah Who is One and has no partner. Do not frighten any Muslim. Do not pass over his lands so as to make him feel unhappy. Do not take from him more than Allah's share in his property. When you go to a tribe, you should get down at their watering place instead of entering their houses. Then proceed towards them with peace and dignity till you stand among them. Then salute them and do not be remiss in greeting them, then say to them, "O servants of Allah, the vicegerent of Allah and His caliph has sent me to you to collect from you Allah's share in your properties. Is there anything of His share in your properties? If so, give it to His vicegerent."

انطلق على تقوى الله وحده لا شريك له، ولا تُروعن مسلماً، ولا تجتازن عليه كارهاً، ولا تأخذن منه أكثر من حق الله في ماله. فإذا قدمت على الحي فأنزل بمائهم من غير أن تحالط أبيتائهم، ثم امض إليهم بالسكينة والوقار، حتى تقوم ينهم فسلم عليهم، ولا تخدج بالتحية لهم، ثم تقول: عباد الله، أرسلني إليكم ولي الله وخليفته، لاخذ منكم حق الله في أموالكم، فهل لله في أموالكم من حق فتؤدوه إلى وليه؟

If someone among them says "No", then do not repeat the demand. If someone speaks to you in the affirmative, then go with him without frightening him, threatening him, pressuring him or oppressing him. Take what he gives you such as gold or silver (coins). If he has cattle or camels do not enter upon them save with his permission, because their major part is his. Therefore, when you get there do not enter upon them like one who has full control over them or in a violent manner. Do not scare any animal, do not tease anyone and do not let the owner feel grieved about anyone.

فإن قال قائل: لا، فلا تُراجعه، وإن أنعم لك منعم فأنطلق معه من غير أن تخيفه أو تُوعده أو تعسفه أو تُرهقه، فخذ ما أعطاك من ذهب أو فضة، فإن كانت له ماشية أو إبل فلا تدخلها إلا بإذنه، فإن أكثرها له، فإذا أتيتها فلا تدخلها دخول متسلط عليه ولا عفيف به، ولا تُنفرن بهيمة ولا تُفزعنها، ولا تسوءن صاحبها فيها،

Divide the property into two parts and let the owner choose one. When he has chosen do not object to it. Then divide the remaining into two parts

and let him choose one and when he has chosen do not raise any objection. Continue like this till only that much remains which is enough to satisfy Allah's dues. Then take Allah's due from it. If he disputes your action allow his views, then mix the two (separated) parts and repeat what you had done before till you take Allah's due from his property.

Do not take an old, decrepit, broken-limbed, sick or unsound animal. Do not entrust the animals (for custody) except to one whom you trust to take care of Muslims' property till he hands it over to their chief who will distribute it. Do not entrust it to anyone except he who is a well wisher, God-fearing, trustworthy and watchful, and who is not harsh on Muslims' property, nor makes them run too much, nor tires them, nor labours them. Then send to us all that you have collected and we shall deal with it as Allah has ordered.

وَاصْدَعِ الْمَالَ صَدْعَيْنِ، ثُمَّ خَيَّرَهُ، فَإِذَا اخْتَارَ فَلَا تَعْرِضَنَّ لِمَا اخْتَارَهُ، ثُمَّ اصْدَعِ الْبَاقِي صَدْعَيْنِ، ثُمَّ خَيَّرَهُ، فَإِذَا اخْتَارَ فَلَا تَعْرِضَنَّ لِمَا اخْتَارَ، فَلَا تَزَالُ بِذَلِكَ حَتَّى يَبْقَى مَا فِيهِ وَفَاءٌ لِحَقِّ اللَّهِ فِي مَالِهِ، فَاقْبِضْ حَقَّ اللَّهِ مِنْهُ، فَإِنْ اسْتَقَالَكَ فَأَقِلَّهُ، ثُمَّ احْلِطْهُمَا، ثُمَّ اصْنَعْ مِثْلَ الَّذِي صَنَعْتَ أَوَّلًا حَتَّى تَأْخُذَ حَقَّ اللَّهِ فِي مَالِهِ. وَلَا تَأْخُذَنَّ عَوْدًا، وَلَا هَرَمَةً، وَلَا مَكْسُورَةً، وَلَا مَهْلُوسَةً، وَلَا دَاتَ عَوَارٍ. وَلَا تَأْمَنَنَّ عَلَيْهَا إِلَّا مَنْ تَبْتَقُ بِدِينِهِ، رَافِقًا بِمَالِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ حَتَّى يُوَصِّلَهُ إِلَى وَلِيِّهِمْ فَيَقْسِمَهُ بَيْنَهُمْ. وَلَا تُوَكِّلَنَّ بِهَا إِلَّا نَاصِحًا شَفِيقًا، وَأَمِينًا حَفِيفًا، غَيْرَ مُعَنَّفٍ وَلَا مُجْحِفٍ، وَلَا مُلْغِبٍ وَلَا مُنْعَبٍ. ثُمَّ اخْذِرِي الْبِنَا مَا اجْتَمَعَ عِنْدَكَ، نُصَيْرَهُ حَيْثُ أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ.

When your trustee takes over (the animal) tell him that he should not separate the she-camel from its young and should not milk all its milk because that would affect its young, and also that he should not exert it in riding. In this matter, he should behave justly between it and all its companions. He should allow rest to camels (who are tired), and drive with ease those whose hoofs have been rubbed off.

When you pass a water spring stay the camels there for drinking and do not take them away from vegetated land to barren paths. He should allow them rest now and then, and give them time near water and grass. In this way, when they reach us by leave of Allah, they will be fat with plenty of marrow and would not be fatigued or distressed. We will then distribute them according to the (commands of) the Book of Allah and the sunnah of His Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny). Certainly, this will be a great source of reward for you and a means to secure guidance, if Allah so wills.

فَإِذَا أَخَذَهَا أَمِينُكَ فَأَوْعِزْ إِلَيْهِ: أَلَّا يَحْوَلَ بَيْنَ نَاقَةٍ وَبَيْنَ فَصِيلِهَا، وَلَا يَحْمَصُرَ لَبَنَهَا فَيَصْرُرَ ذَلِكَ بِوَلَدِهَا، وَلَا يَجْهَدَنَّهَا زُكُوبًا، وَلْيَعْدِلْ بَيْنَ صَوَاحِبَاتِهَا فِي ذَلِكَ وَبَيْنَهَا، وَلْيُرْفِقْ عَلَى اللَّاعِبِ، وَلْيَسْتَأْنِ بِالتَّقِيبِ وَالظَّالِعِ، وَلْيُورِدْهَا مَا تَمُرُّ بِهِ مِنَ الْعُدْرِ، وَلَا يَعْدِلْ بِهَا عَنْ نَبْتِ الْأَرْضِ إِلَى جَوَادِّ الطَّرِيقِ، وَلْيُرَوِّحْهَا فِي السَّاعَاتِ، وَلْيُمَهِّلْهَا عِنْدَ التِّطَافِ وَالْأَعْشَابِ، حَتَّى

تَأْتِينَا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ بُدْنًا مُنْقِيَاتٍ، غَيْرَ مُتَعَبَاتٍ وَلَا مَجْهُودَاتٍ، لِنُقَسِمَهَا عَلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَسُنَّةِ
نَبِيِّهِ (عليه السلام) فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ أَعْظَمُ لِاجْرِكَ، وَأَقْرَبُ لِرُشْدِكَ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ.

Letter 26: Instruction Given to one of his officers whom he sent for the collection of zakat and charities

ومن عهد له (عليه السلام)

إلى بعض عمّاله، وقد بعثه على الصدقة

He (Amir al-mu'minin) ordered him to fear Allah in his secret matters and hidden actions, where there is no witness except He and no one watches save He. He also orders him that whatever he does in obedience to Allah openly should not be different from what he does secretly. He whose hidden position is not different from his open position, and whose action is not different from his words, has discharged his obligation and his worship is pure.

He also ordered him that he should not harass them, should not be harsh on them and should not turn away from them because of superiority of official position over them, because they are brethren in faith and help in the recovery of levies.

أَمَرَهُ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ فِي سَرَائِرِ أُمُورِهِ وَخَفِيَّاتِ أَعْمَالِهِ، حَيْثُ لَا شَهِيدَ غَيْرُهُ، وَلَا وَكِيلَ دُونَهُ. وَأَمَرَهُ أَلَّا يَعْمَلَ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ فِيمَا ظَهَرَ فَيُخَالِفَ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ فِيمَا أَسْرَى، وَمَنْ لَمْ يَخْتَلِفْ سِرُّهُ عَلَانِيَتُهُ، وَفِعْلُهُ وَمَقَالَتُهُ، فَقَدْ أَدَّى الْأَمَانَةَ، وَأَخْلَصَ الْعِبَادَةَ. وَأَمَرَهُ أَلَّا يَجْبَهُهُمْ، وَلَا يَعْضَهُهُمْ، وَلَا يَرْغَبَ عَنْهُمْ تَفْضُلًا بِالْأَمَارَةِ عَلَيْهِمْ، فَإِنَّهُمْ الْأَخْوَانُ فِي الدِّينِ، وَالْأَعْوَانُ عَلَى اسْتِخْرَاجِ الْحُقُوقِ .

Certainly, you have a fixed share and a known right in this levy, and there are other sharers who are poor, weak and starving. We shall discharge your rights. So, you should discharge their rights. If you do not do so you will have the largest number of enemies on the Day of Judgement. How wretched is the man whose enemies in the view of Allah are the needy, the destitute, the beggars, the turned away, the indebted and (penniless) travellers. He who treats the trust lightly and indulges in treachery and does not keep himself and his faith untarnished by it has certainly secured humiliation in this world, and his humiliation and disgrace in the next world will be greater. Surely, the greatest treachery is the treachery against the Muslim community, and the ugliest deceit is the deceit towards the Muslim leaders; and that is an end to the matter.

وَإِنَّ لَكَ فِي هَذِهِ الصَّدَقَةِ نَصِيبًا مَفْرُوضًا، وَحَقًّا مَعْلُومًا، وَشُرَكَاءَ أَهْلِ مَسْكِنَتِكَ، وَضَعْفَاءَ دَوِي فَاقَةٍ، إِنَّا مُؤَفُّوكَ حَقَّكَ، فَوَقِّهِمْ حُقُوقَهُمْ، وَإِلَّا تَفْعَلْ فَإِنَّكَ مِنْ أَكْثَرِ النَّاسِ خُصُومًا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَبُؤْسًا لِمَنْ حَصَمَهُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ الْفُقَرَاءُ وَالْمَسَاكِينُ وَالسَّائِلُونَ وَالْمَدْفُوعُونَ وَالْعَارِمُ وَالْبُنُ السَّبِيلِ! وَمَنْ اسْتَهَانَ بِالْأَمَانَةِ، وَرَتَعَ فِي الْحَيَانَةِ، وَلَمْ يُنَزِّهِ نَفْسَهُ وَدِينَهُ عَنْهَا، فَقَدْ أَحْلَى بِنَفْسِهِ فِي الدُّنْيَا الْحَزِي، وَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَذَلُّ وَأَحْزَى. وَإِنَّ أَعْظَمَ الْحَيَانَةِ خِيَانَةُ الْأُمَّةِ، وَأَفْظَعَ الْغِيْشِ غِيْشُ الْأَيْمَةِ، وَالسَّلَامِ.

**Letter 27: Instruction Given to Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr
(may Allah be pleased with him), when Amir al-mu'minin
appointed him as the Governor of Egypt**

ومن عهد له (ﷺ)

إلى محمد بن أبي بكر حين قلده مصر

Behave humbly with the people, keep yourself lenient, meet them large-heartedly, accord them equal treatment so that the big should not expect injustice from you in their favour and the low should not be despondent of your justice to them. Allah, the Sublime, will certainly question you, O community of His creatures, about your actions, small or big, open or concealed. If He punishes you it is because you have been oppressive, and if He forgives, then it is because He is the Most Generous.

فَاخْفِضْ لَهُمْ جَنَاحَكَ، وَأَلِنْ لَهُمْ جَانِبَكَ، وَأَبْسُطْ لَهُمْ وَجْهَكَ، وَأَسِرْ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي اللَّحْظَةِ وَالنَّظَرَةِ، حَتَّى لَا يَطْمَعِ الْعُظَمَاءُ فِي حَيْفِكَ لَهُمْ، وَلَا يَيْتَأَسِرَ الضُّعَفَاءُ مِنْ عَدْلِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ. وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى يُسَائِلُكُمْ مَعَشَرَ عِبَادِهِ عَنِ الصَّغِيرَةِ مِنْ أَعْمَالِكُمْ وَالْكَبِيرَةِ، وَالظَّاهِرَةِ وَالْمَسْتُورَةِ، فَإِنْ يُعَذِّبْ فَأَنْتُمْ أَظْلَمُ، وَإِنْ يَغْفِرْ فَهُوَ أَكْرَمُ.

Know, O creatures of Allah, that the God-fearing have shared the joys of this transient world as well as the next coming world, for they shared with the people of this world in their worldly matters while their people did not share with them in the matters of the next world. They lived in this world in the best manner of living and ate the choicest food and consequently they enjoyed herein all that the people with ease of life enjoyed, and secured from it what the haughty and the vain secured. Then, they departed from it after taking provision enough to take them to the end of their journey and after doing a profitable transaction. They tasted the pleasure of renouncing the world in this world, and they firmly believed that on the coming day in their next life they would be neighbours of Allah, where their call would not be repulsed nor would their share of pleasure be small.

وَاعْلَمُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، أَنَّ الْمُتَّقِينَ ذَهَبُوا بِعَاجِلِ الدُّنْيَا وَآجِلِ الْآخِرَةِ، فَشَارَكُوا أَهْلَ الدُّنْيَا فِي دُنْيَاهُمْ، وَمَمَّ يُشَارِكُهُمْ أَهْلُ الدُّنْيَا فِي آخِرَتِهِمْ; سَكَنُوا الدُّنْيَا بِأَفْضَلِ مَا سَكِنَتْ، وَأَكَلُوا بِأَفْضَلِ مَا أُكِلَتْ، فَحَظُّوا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَا حَظَّ بِهِ الْمُتْرَفُونَ، وَأَخَذُوا مِنْهَا مَا أَخَذَهُ الْجَبَابِرَةُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُونَ، ثُمَّ انْقَلَبُوا عَنْهَا بِالرَّادِ الْمُبَلِّغِ، وَالْمَتَجَرِّ الرَّابِحِ، أَصَابُوا لَدَّةَ زُهْدِ الدُّنْيَا فِي دُنْيَاهُمْ، وَتَيَقَّنُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ حَيْرَانٌ عِنْدَ فِي آخِرَتِهِمْ، لَا تُرَدُّ لَهُمْ دَعْوَةٌ، وَلَا يَنْقُصُ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِنْ لَدَّةِ .

Therefore, O creatures of Allah, be afraid of death and its nearness and keep ready all that is needed for it. It will come as a big event and a great affair, either as a good in which there will never be any evil, or an evil in which there will never be any good. Who is nearer to Paradise than he who works towards it, and who is nearer to Hell than he who works for it?

You are being chased by death. If you stop, it will catch you, and if you run away from it, it will grip you. It is more attached to you than your

shadow. Death is tied to your fore-locks while the world is being wrapped up from behind you. Therefore, fear the Fire whose hollow is deep, whose flames are severe and whose punishment is novel. It is a place wherein there is no mercy. No call is heard in it. No pain is healed in it. If it is possible for you to have severe fear of Allah and to rest hope in Him, then do both these things because every individual has hope in His Lord to the extent of his fear of His Lord. Certainly, the most hopeful person with Allah is he who fears Him most.

فَاخْذُرُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الْمَوْتَ وَقُرْبَهُ، وَأَعِدُّوا لَهُ عُذَّتَهُ، فَإِنَّهُ يَأْتِي بِأَمْرٍ عَظِيمٍ، وَحَاطَبٌ جَلِيلٌ، يَخِيرُ لَا يَكُونُ مَعَهُ شَرٌّ أَبَدًا، أَوْ شَرٌّ لَا يَكُونُ مَعَهُ خَيْرٌ أَبَدًا، فَمَنْ أَقْرَبَ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ مِنْ عَامِلِهَا! وَمَنْ أَقْرَبَ إِلَى النَّارِ مِنَ عَامِلِهَا! وَأَنْتُمْ طُرْدَاءُ الْمَوْتِ، إِنْ أَقَمْتُمْ لَهُ أَخَذَكُمْ، وَإِنْ فَرَزْتُمْ مِنْهُ أَدْرَكَكُمْ، وَهُوَ أَلْزَمُ لَكُمْ مِنْ ظِلِّكُمْ، الْمَوْتُ مَعْمُودٌ بِنَوَاصِيكُمْ، وَالدُّنْيَا تُطْوَى مِنْ خَلْفِكُمْ. فَاخْذُرُوا نَارًا قَعْرُهَا بَعِيدٌ، وَحَرُّهَا شَدِيدٌ، وَعَدَابُهَا جَدِيدٌ، دَارٌ لَيْسَ فِيهَا رَحْمَةٌ، وَلَا تُسْمَعُ فِيهَا دَعْوَةٌ، وَلَا تُفَرَّجُ فِيهَا كُرْبَةٌ. وَإِنْ اسْتَطَعْتُمْ أَنْ يَسْتَدَّ حَوْفُكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ، وَأَنْ يَحْسُنَ ظَنُّكُمْ بِهِ، فَاجْمَعُوا بَيْنَهُمَا، فَإِنَّ الْعَبْدَ إِذَا مَا يَكُونُ حُسْنُ ظَنِّهِ بِرَبِّهِ عَلَى قَدْرِ حَوْفِهِ مِنْ رَبِّهِ، وَإِنْ أَحْسَنَ النَّاسُ ظَنًّا بِاللَّهِ أَشَدُّهُمْ حَوْفًا لِلَّهِ.

O Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, know that I have given you charge of Egypt which is my biggest force. So you are duty-bound to oppose your passions and serve as a shield against your religion even though you may get only an hour in the world; and do not enrage Allah for pleasing others because (Allah) is such that He may take the place of others, but others cannot take the place of Allah. Say prayers at the appointed time. Do not say it earlier for the sake of (available) leisure nor delay it on account of pre-occupation. Remember that every act of yours is dependent on your prayer.

وَاعْلَمَ . يَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنَ أَبِي بَكْرٍ . أَيُّ قَدْ وَلَيْتُكَ أَعْظَمَ أَجْنَادِي فِي نَفْسِي أَهْلَ مِصْرَ، فَأَنْتَ مَحْفُوقٌ أَنْ تُخَالِفَ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ، وَأَنْ تُنَافِحَ عَن دِينِكَ، وَلَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَكَ إِلَّا سَاعَةٌ مِنَ الدَّهْرِ، وَلَا تُسْحِطِ اللَّهُ بِرِضَى أَحَدٍ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ، فَإِنَّ فِي اللَّهِ خَلْفًا مِنْ غَيْرِهِ، وَلَيْسَ مِنَ اللَّهِ خَلْفٌ فِي غَيْرِهِ. صَلِّ الصَّلَاةَ لِيُؤْتِيَهَا الْمَوْقِفَ هَا، وَلَا تُعَجِّلْ وَقْتَهَا لِفِرَاعٍ، وَلَا تُؤَخِّرْهَا عَن وَقْتِهَا لِاسْتِعْجَالٍ، وَاعْلَمَ أَنَّ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ مِنْ عَمَلِكَ تَبِعٌ لِصَلَاتِكَ.

A part of the same

ومن هذا العهد:

The leader of guidance and the leader of destruction cannot be equal, nor the friend of the Prophet and the enemy of the Prophet. The Messenger of Allah (S) has told me that: "I have no fear for my Ummah from either a believer or an unbeliever. As for the believer Allah will afford him protection because of his belief, and as for the unbeliever Allah will humiliate him because of his unbelief. But I fear for you every one who is a

hypocrite in his heart and learned of speech. He speaks what you hold good but does what you dislike."

فَإِنَّهُ لَا سَوَاءَ، إِمَامٌ الْهُدَى وَإِمَامٌ الرَّدَى، وَوَلِيُّ النَّبِيِّ وَعَدُوُّ النَّبِيِّ، وَلَقَدْ قَالَ لِي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ
(صلى الله عليه وآله): "إِنِّي لَا أَخَافُ عَلَى أُمَّتِي مُؤْمِنًا وَلَا مُشْرِكًا، أَمَّا الْمُؤْمِنُ فَيَمْنَعُهُ اللَّهُ
بِإِيمَانِهِ، وَأَمَّا الْمُشْرِكُ فَيَقْتُلُهُ اللَّهُ بِشِرْكِهِ، لَكِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ كُلَّ مَنَافِقِ الْجَنَانِ، عَالِمِ اللِّسَانِ،
يَقُولُ مَا تَعْرِفُونَ، وَيَفْعَلُ مَا تُنْكِرُونَ."

Letter 28: In reply to Mu'awiyah, and it is one of his most elegant writings

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى معاوية جواباً

وهو من محاسن الكتب.

Now, your letter ¹ has reached me wherein you recall that Allah chose Muhammad (S) for His religion and helped him through those companions who helped him. Strange things about you have remained concealed (by the irony of fate) from us, since you have started telling us of Allah's trials for us and His bounties to us through our Prophet. In this matter, you are like the person who carries dates to Hajar, or who challenges his own master to a duel in archery.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ أَتَانِي كِتَابُكَ تَذَكُّرٌ [فِيهِ] اصْطِطَاءُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى مُحَمَّدًا (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ)
لِدِينِهِ، وَتَأْيِيدُهُ إِيَّاهُ بِمَنْ أَيْدَهُ مِنْ أَصْحَابِهِ، فَلَقَدْ خَبَأَ لَنَا الدَّهْرُ مِنْكَ عَجَبًا، إِذْ طَفِئَتْ نُجُومُنَا
بِبِلَاءِ اللَّهِ عِنْدَنَا، وَنِعْمَتِهِ عَلَيْنَا فِي نَبِيِّنَا، فَكُنْتُ فِي ذَلِكَ كَنَاقِلِ التَّمْرِ إِلَى هَجْرٍ، أَوْ دَاعِي
مُسَدِّدِهِ إِلَى التَّضَالِ

You think that so - and- so are the most distinguished persons in Islam. You have said such a thing which if it be true, you have nothing to do with it, but if it be not so, then its defect will not affect you. And what are you to do with the question of who is better and who is worse, or who is the ruler and who is the ruled. What have the freed ones and their sons to do with distinguishing between the first muhajirun and determining their position or defining their ranks. What a pity! the sound of an arrow is being produced by what is not a real arrow, and he against whom the judgement is to be passed is sitting in judgement. O man, why do you not see your own lameness and remain within bounds, and why do not you realize the shortness of your measure and stay back where destiny has placed you. You have no concern with the defeat of the defeated or the victory of the victor.

وَزَعَمْتَ أَنَّ أَفْضَلَ النَّاسِ فِي الْأِسْلَامِ فُلَانٌ وَفُلَانٌ، فَذَكَرْتَ أَمْرًا إِنْ تَمَّ اعْتَزَلَكَ كُلُّهُ، وَإِنْ
نَقَصَ لَمْ يَلْحَقْكَ ثَلْمُهُ، وَمَا أَنْتَ وَالْفَاضِلِ وَالْمَفْضُولِ، وَالسَّائِسِ وَالْمَسُوسِ! وَمَا لِلطُّلُقَاءِ
وَأَبْنَاءِ الطُّلُقَاءِ، وَالتَّمْيِيزِ بَيْنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ الْأُولَى، وَتَرْتِيبِ دَرَجَاتِهِمْ، وَتَعْرِيفِ طَبَقَاتِهِمْ! هَيْهَاتَ
لَقَدْ حَنَّ قَدْحٌ لَيْسَ مِنْهَا، وَطَفِقَ يَحْكُمُ فِيهَا مَنْ عَلَيْهِ الْحُكْمُ هَذَا! أَلَا تَرَى أَنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ عَلَى
ظُلْعِكَ، وَتَعْرِفُ قُصُورَ دَرْعِكَ، وَتَتَأَخَّرُ حَيْثُ أَحْرَكَ الْقَدْرُ! فَمَا عَلَيْكَ غَلْبَةُ الْمَغْلُوبِ، وَلَا
لَكَ ظَفَرُ الطَّافِرِ!

You are wandering in bewilderment and straying from the right path. Do you not realize it? I am not giving you any news: I am just recounting Allah's bounty, namely that a number of people from among the muhajirun (immigrants from Mecca) and ansar (helpers) fell as martyrs in the way of

Allah the Sublime, and that each of them is distinguished (on that account), but when one of us secured martyrdom he was named the Chief of all martyrs, and the Messenger of Allah (S) gave him the peculiar honour of saying seventy takbir (Allahu Akbar) during his funeral prayer.

Do you not know that a number of people lost their hands in the way of Allah, and that everyone is distinguished (on that account), but when the same thing occurred to one of us he was given the name "the flier in Paradise"; and "the two winged". If Allah had not forbidden self-praise, the writer would have mentioned numerous distinctions which the believer knows full well and which the ears of hearers do not wish to forget.

وَإِنَّكَ لَذَهَابٌ فِي تَيْبِهِ، رَوَّاعٌ عَنِ الْقَصْدِ. أَلَا تَرَى . غَيْرَ مُخْبِرٍ لَكَ، لَكِنْ بِنِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ أَحَدِيثٌ . أَنْ قَوْمًا اسْتُشْهِدُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ، لِكُلِّ فَضْلٍ، حَتَّى إِذَا اسْتُشْهِدَ شَهِيدُنَا قِيلَ: سَيِّدُ الشُّهَدَاءِ، وَخَصَّهُ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) بِسَبْعِينَ تَكْبِيرَةً عِنْدَ صَلَاتِهِ عَلَيْهِ! أَوْلَا تَرَى أَنْ قَوْمًا قُطِعَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ . وَلِكُلِّ فَضْلٍ . حَتَّى إِذَا فُعِلَ بِوَاحِدِنَا كَمَا فُعِلَ بِوَاحِدِهِمْ، قِيلَ: الطَّيَّارُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ وَذُوالْجَنَاحِينَ! وَلَوْ لَا مَا نَهَى اللَّهُ عَنْهُ مِنْ تَرْكِيَةِ الْمَرْءِ نَفْسَهُ، لَدَكَرَ ذَاكِرٌ فَضَائِلَ جَمَّةً، تَعْرِفُهَا قُلُوبُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَلَا تُمَجِّهَا آذَانُ السَّامِعِينَ.

Better leave those whose arrows miss the mark. We are the direct recipients of our Lord's favours while others receive favours from us after that. In spite of our old established honour and our well-known superiority over your people, we did not stay away from mixing with you and married and got married (among you) like equals although you were not so. And how could you be so when (the position is that) among us is the Prophet while among you is the opposer, among us is the lion of Allah while among you is the lion of the opposing groups, among us are the two masters of the youth of Paradise ² while among you are the children of Hell, among us is the choicest of all the women of the worlds ³ while among you is the bearer of firewood, and many more distinctions on our side and shortcomings on your side.

فَدَعَّ عَنْكَ مَنْ مَالَتْ بِهِ الرَّمِيَّةُ، فَإِنَّا صَنَائِعُ رَبِّنَا، وَالنَّاسُ بَعْدُ صَنَائِعُ لَنَا. لَمْ يَمْنَعْنَا قَدِيمُ عَزْرِنَا وَلَا عَادِي طَوْلِنَا عَلَى قَوْمِكَ أَنْ خَلَطْنَاكُمْ بِأَنْفُسِنَا، فَتَكَحْنَا وَأَنْكَحْنَا، فِعْلَانِ الْأَكْفَاءِ، وَلَسْتُمْ هُنَاكَ! وَأَنْتَى يَكُونُ ذَلِكَ كَذَلِكَ وَمِنَّا النَّبِيُّ وَمِنْكُمْ الْمُكَذِّبُ، وَمِنَّا أَسَدُ اللَّهِ وَمِنْكُمْ أَسَدُ الْأَخْلَافِ، وَمِنَّا سَيِّدَا شَبَابِ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ وَمِنْكُمْ صَبِيَةُ النَّارِ، وَمِنَّا خَيْرُ نِسَاءِ الْعَالَمِينَ وَمِنْكُمْ حَمَالَةُ الْحُطْبِ، فِي كَثِيرٍ مِمَّا لَنَا وَعَلَيْكُمْ!

Our Islam is well-known and our (greatness in the) pre-Islamic period too cannot be denied. Whatever remains has been mentioned in the words of Allah the Glorified, the Sublime:

And blood relations have the better claim in respect of one to the other, according to the Book of Allah... (Qur'an, 33:6)

He (Allah) the Sublime, also says:

Verily, of men the nearest to Abraham are surely those who followed him and this (Our) Prophet (Muhammad) and those who believe; and verily, Allah, is the Guardian of the faithful. (Qur'an, 3:68)

فَإِسْلَامُنَا مَا قَدْ سَمِعَ، وَجَاهِلِيَّتُنَا لَا تُدْفَعُ، وَكِتَابُ اللَّهِ يَجْمَعُ لَنَا مَا شَدَّ عَنَّا، وَهُوَ قَوْلُهُ
سُبْحَانَهُ: (وَأُولُو الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ)، وَقَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى: (إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ
بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ لِلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ)،

Thus, we are superior firstly because of kinship and secondly because of obedience. When at Saqifah (of Banu Sa'idah) the Muhajirun contended kinship with the Messenger of Allah (S) against the Ansar, they scored over them. If that success was based on kinship then the right would be ours better than yours. Otherwise, the Ansar's contention stands. You think that I have been jealous of every caliph and have revolted against them. Even if this be so, it is not an offence against you and therefore no explanation is due to you.

“This is a matter for which no blame comes to you”.

فَنَحْنُ مَرَّةً أَوْلَىٰ بِالْقَرَابَةِ، وَتَارَةً أَوْلَىٰ بِالطَّاعَةِ. وَلَمَّا اخْتَجَّ الْمُهَاجِرُونَ عَلَى الْأَنْصَارِ يَوْمَ
السَّقِيْفَةِ بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَلَجُّوا عَلَيْهِمْ، فَإِنْ يَكُنِ الْفَلَجُ بِهِ فَالْحَقُّ لَنَا دُونَكُمْ،
وَإِنْ يَكُنْ بغيرِهِ فَالْأَنْصَارُ عَلَى دَعْوَاهُمْ.

وَزَعَمْتَ أَنِّي لِكُلِّ الْخُلَفَاءِ حَسَدْتُ، وَعَلَىٰ كُلِّهِمْ بَعَيْتُ، فَإِنْ يَكُنْ ذَلِكَ كَذَلِكَ فَلَيْسَ
الْجِنَايَةُ عَلَيْكَ، فَيَكُونُ الْعُدْرُ إِلَيْكَ.

"وَتِلْكَ شَكَاةٌ ظَاهِرَةٌ عَنكَ عَارِهَا"

You have said that I was dragged like a camel with a nose string to swear allegiance (to Abu Bakr at Saqifah). By the Eternal Allah, you had intended to revile me but you have praised me, and to humiliate me but have yourself been humiliated. What humiliation does it mean for a Muslim to be the victim of oppression so long as he does not entertain any doubt in his religion, nor any misgiving in his firm belief! This argument of mine is intended for others, but I have stated it to you only in so far as it was appropriate.

وَقُلْتُ: إِنِّي كُنْتُ أَقَادُ كَمَا يُقَادُ الْجَمَلُ الْمَحْشُوشُ حَتَّىٰ أُبَايِعَ، وَلَعَمْرُ اللَّهِ لَقَدْ أَرَدْتُ أَنْ
تُدَمَّ فَمَدَحْتَ، وَأَنْ تَفْضَحَ فَافْتَضَحْتَ! وَمَا عَلَى الْمُسْلِمِ مِنْ عَضَاظَةٍ فِي أَنْ يَكُونَ مَظْلُومًا
مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ شَاكًا فِي دِينِهِ، وَلَا مُرْتَابًا بِبَيْعَتِهِ!

وَهَذِهِ حُجَّتِي إِلَىٰ عَيْرِكَ فَصُدَّهَا، وَلِكَيْتِي أَطْلَقْتُ لَكَ مِنْهَا بِعَدْرِ مَا سَحَّحَ مِنْ دِكْرِهَا.

Then you have recalled my position vis-a- vis 'Uthman, and in this matter an answer is due to you because of your kinship with him. So (now tell me), which of us was more inimical towards 'Uthman and who did more to bring about his killing; or who offered him his support but he made him sit down and stopped him; or who was he whom he called for help but who turned his

face from him and drew his death near him till his fate over took him? No, no; by Allah:

Indeed knoweth Allah those who hinder others among you and those who say unto their brethren "Come hitherunto us", and they come not to fight but a little. (Qur'an 33:18)

ثُمَّ ذَكَرْتَ مَا كَانَ مِنْ أَمْرِي وَأَمْرٍ عُثْمَانَ، فَلَكَ أَنْ نُجَابَ عَنْ هَذِهِ لِرَجْمِكَ مِنْهُ، فَأَيُّنَا كَانَ
أَعْدَى لَهُ، أَهْدَى إِلَى مَقَاتِلِهِ! أَمْ مَنْ بَدَلَ لَهُ نُصْرَتَهُ فَاسْتَقْعَدَهُ وَاسْتَكْفَفَهُ، أَمْ مَنْ اسْتَنْصَرَهُ
فَتَرَاحَى عَنْهُ بَثَّ الْمُنُونِ إِلَيْهِ، حَتَّى أَتَى قَدْرُهُ عَلَيْهِ، كَلَّا وَاللَّهِ (لَقَدْ عَلِمَ اللَّهُ الْمُعْوِفِينَ مِنْكُمْ
وَالْفَائِلِينَ لِأَخْوَانِهِمْ هَلُمَّ إِلَيْنَا وَلَا يَأْتُونَ الْبَأْسَ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا).

I am not going to offer my excuse for reproving him for (some of) his innovations, for if my good counsel and guidance to him was a sin then very often a person who is blamed has no sin and "sometimes the only reward a counsellor⁴ reaps is suspicion (of evil)".

I desired naught but reform what I am able to (do); and my guidance is not but with Allah; On Him (alone) do I rely, and unto Him (alone) do I turn. (Qur'an, 11:88)

وَمَا كُنْتُ لِأَعْتَدِرَ مِنْ أَبِي كُنْتُ أَنْقِمُ عَلَيْهِ أَحْدَانًا، فَإِنْ كَانَ الذَّنْبُ إِلَيْهِ إِرْشَادِي وَهِدَايِي
لَهُ، فَزَبَّ مَلُومٌ لَا ذَنْبَ لَهُ
"وَقَدْ يَسْتَفِيدُ الظَّنَّةَ الْمُتَنَصِّحُ "

وَمَا أَرَدْتُ (إِلَّا الْأَصْلَاحَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ وَمَا تَوْفِيقِي إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ).

You have mentioned that for me and for my followers you have only the sword. This makes even a weeping person laugh. Did you ever see the descendants of 'Abd al-Muttalib running away from battle, or being frightened by swords? "Wait a little till Hamal⁵ joins the battle" shortly, then he whom you are seeking will seek you and he whom you think to be far away will approach near you. I am (shortly) speeding towards you with a force of Muhajirun and Ansar and those who follow them in virtue. Their number will be great and their dust will spread all round. They will be wearing their shrouds and their most coveted desire is to meet Allah. They will be accompanied by the descendants of those who took part in the battle of Badr, and they will have Hashimite swords whose cut you have already seen in the case of your brother, maternal uncle, your grandfather and your kinsmen.

Nor are they far distant from the unjust ones. (Qur'an, 11:83)

وَذَكَرْتَ أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ لِي وَلَا لِأَصْحَابِي عِنْدَكَ إِلَّا السَّيْفُ، فَلَقَدْ أَضْحَكْتَ بَعْدَ اسْتِعْبَارِ! مَتَى
أَلْفَيْتَ بَنُو عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ عَنِ الْأَعْدَاءِ نَاكِيلِينَ، وَبِالسُّيُوفِ مُحْوَفِينَ؟! " فَ لَبِثَ قَلِيلًا يَلْحَقِي
الْهَيْجَا حَمَلًا "

سَيَطْلُبُكَ مَنْ تَطْلُبُ، وَيَقْرُبُ مِنْكَ مَا تَسْتَبْعِدُ، وَأَنَا مُرْقِلٌ نَحْوَكَ فِي جَحْفَلٍ مِنَ
الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ، وَالتَّابِعِينَ [لَهُمْ] بِإِحْسَانٍ، شَدِيدِ زِحَامِهِمْ، سَاطِعِ قَتَامِهِمْ، مُتَسَرِّبِلِينَ

سَرَابِيلُ الْمَوْتِ، أَحَبُّ الْإِقَاءِ إِلَيْهِمْ لِقَاءُ رَبِّهِمْ، قَدْ صَحَبْتُهُمْ دُرِّيَّةً بَدْرِيَّةً، وَسُيُوفٌ هَاشِمِيَّةً، قَدْ عَرَفْتَ مَوَاقِعَ نَصَاهَا فِي أَخِيكَ وَخَالِكَ وَجَدِّكَ وَأَهْلِكَ، (وَمَا هِيَ مِنَ الظَّالِمِينَ بِبَعِيدٍ)

Notes

1. This letter of Amir al-mu'minin's is in reply to Mu'awiyah's letter which he sent to Kufah through Abu Umamah al-Bahili, and it also contains replies to some points which Mu'awiyah had written in the letter sent through Abu Muslim al-Khawlani.

In Abu Umamah's letter, Mu'awiyah had mentioned the deputation of the Prophet and his ascension to the position of revelation and wrote in such a manner as though it was a matter not known to or not understood by Amir al-mu'minin and that he was in need of being informed and told of it. This is just like a stranger who may draw the map of a house for the guidance of those who dwell in it and apprise them of things already known to them. That is why Amir al-mu'minin has compared him to the man who carried dates to Hajar which was itself noted for abundant growth of dates.

This is a proverb employed when someone brings to tell a person matters which he already knows better. The basis of this proverb is that a man of Hajar, which is a town near Bahrain (Persian Gulf), went to Basrah to sell goods and make purchases. After finishing the sale, he looked about the market to make his purchases and found nothing cheaper than dates. He therefore decided to purchase dates, and when he reached Hajar with his load of dates their plenty and cheapness there did not leave him any alternative but to store them so as to sell them later when their price had risen. The price however continued to fall day by day till all of them became rotten leaving to him nothing except their stones. In short, after referring to the Prophet's ascension to prophethood Mu'awiyah recounted the distinction and merits of the three Caliphs according to his view and wrote:

The most distinguished among the companions and the highest ranking in the view of the Muslims was the first Caliph who collected all the Muslims under one voice, removed their disunity and fought those who were forsaking Islam. After him is the second Caliph who won victories, founded cities and humiliated the unbelievers. Then comes the third Caliph who was the victim of oppression. He propagated religion and spread the word of Allah far and wide. (Siffin, al-Minqari, pp.86-87; al-'Iqd al-farid, vol.4, pp.334-335; Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.15, p.186)

Mu'awiyah's purpose behind in bringing up these pointless warblings was to injure Amir al-mu'minin's feelings and to rouse his temper so as to make him produce such words through his tongue or pen which would so disparage the caliphs that he would instigate the people of Syria and Iraq against him by exploiting them. In fact, he had already set it in the minds of these people that Amir al-mu'minin had instigated the people against 'Uthman, had got Talhah and az-Zubayr killed, had turned 'A'ishah out from her house and had shed the blood of thousands of Muslims. Being unaware of the real facts they were convinced of these baseless allegations, yet to strengthen the opposition, he thought it advisable to make them believe that Amir al-mu'minin did not recognize the achievements of the three caliphs and bore enmity and malice towards them, and to produce Amir al-mu'minin's writing in evidence, and also to use it for rousing the people of Iraq, because their majority was much impressed with the environment created by the caliphs and with their greatness. But Amir al-mu'minin guessed his intention and gave him such a reply which put a knot in his tongue and which he could not dare show to anyone.

So, Amir al-mu'minin exposed his lowness by referring to his enmity towards Islam and his accepting subjugation under force, and advised him to keep within his bounds, and warned him against fixing grades of distinction among those muhajirun who were in any case superior to him in so far as they had been the preceders in hijrah (immigration from Mecca). Whereas since Mu'awiyah himself was only one of those whose life had been spared (on the day of fall of Mecca), he had not the remotest connection with the muhajirun. Consequently, in the matter under discussion Amir al-mu'minin has put Mu'awiyah's position as that of a false arrow among real arrows. This is a proverb which is employed when a man boasts over persons with whom he has no connection. As regards his statement that so - and - so is greater in distinction, Amir al-mu'minin has, by using the

word "you think", shown that it is his personal opinion which has not the remotest connection with fact, because this word is used when a false or unreal statement is made.

After refuting this claim of being the most distinguished, Amir al-mu'minin has referred to these qualities and distinctions of Banu Hashim which show conspicuously the high degree of their attainments. Thus, the people who took part in jihad with the Prophet and secured martyrdom attained high positions but the distinction that fell to Hamzah by virtue of his high performance was not secured by anyone else. The Prophet gave him the title of Master of the Martyrs and said his funeral prayer fourteen times whereby the number of takbir (Allahu akbar) rose to seventy. Similarly, in various battles the hands of the fighters were cut off. For example, in the battle of Badr the hands of Khubayb ibn Isaf al-Ansari and Mu'adh ibn Jabal and in the battle of Uhud those of 'Amr ibn al-Jamuh as-Salami and 'Ubayd ('Atik) ibn at-Tayyihan (brother of Abu'l-Haytham at-Tayyihan) were cut off, but when in the battle of Mu'tah the hands of Ja'far ibn Abi Talib were cut off, the Prophet singled him out by naming him "the flier in Paradise" and the "two-winged". After recounting the peculiar achievements of Banu Hashim, Amir al-mu'minin has referred to his own attainments with which the histories and traditions are replete and which could not be tarnished with doubts and misgivings. Thus, traditionists like Ahmad ibn Hanbal (164/780-241/855), Ahmad ibn 'Ali an-Nasa'i (215/830 - 303/915) and others say that: The number of traditions that have been related through reliable sources in regard to the distinctions of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib have not been related about any other companion of the Prophet. (al-Mustadrak, vol.3, p.107; al-Isti'db, vol.3, p.1115; Tabaqat al-hanabilah, vol.1, p.319; al-Kamil, vol.3, p.399; Tahdhib at-tahdhib, vol.7, p.339; Fath al-bari, vol.7, p.57)

An important distinction out of these particular distinctions of Ahlul Bayt (the Household of the Holy Prophet) is the one to which Amir al-mu'minin has referred in these words that "We are the direct recipients of Allah's favours while others receive favours from us." This is the height of distinction that even the highest personality cannot reach its sublimity and every other distinction looks small before it. Acknowledging the greatness and supremacy of this sentence, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes:

Amir al-mu'minin intends to convey that we are not under obligation of any person since Allah has bestowed all blessings on us directly, there being no intermediary between us and Allah, while all other people are under our obligation and protection, being the intermediary between them and Allah, the Glorified; this is a high position indeed. Its apparent meaning is what the words show but its real sense is that the Ahlul Bayt are the obedient servants of Allah and the people must be their obedient followers. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.15, p.194)

Now, since these people are the first recipients of the bounties of Allah and the source of bounties for the rest of the people, no one from among the people can be compared with them, nor can anyone be regarded as their equal on the basis of social contacts with them, much less than those individuals who were in direct contrast to the attainments and characteristics of these people, and used to oppose truth and right on every occasion. Amir al-mu'minin places both the sides of the picture before Mu'awiyah and says:

The Prophet was from us while your father Abu Sufyan was foremost in opposing him. Hamzah was from us and the Prophet gave him the title of "Lion of Allah" while your maternal grandfather, 'Utbah ibn Rabi'ah was proud of being the "lion of swearers (against the Prophet)."

When in the battle of Badr, Hamzah and 'Utbah ibn Rabi'ah came face to face, Hamzah said, "I am Hamzah son of 'Abd al-Muttalib; I am the lion of Allah and the lion of His Prophet," whereupon 'Utbah said, "I am the lion of swearers (against the Prophet)." In another version, the word "Asadu'l-ahlaf" has been recorded. The meaning is that he was the Chief of the allying parties. The story of swearing is that when Banu 'Abd Manaf acquired a distinct position among the Arab tribes they thought they should take over from Banu 'Abdi'd-Dar the offices relating to the Ka'bah and to depose them from these offices. In this connection, Banu 'Abd Manaf allied with themselves the tribes of Banu Asad ibn 'Abdi'l-Uzza, Banu Taym, Banu Zuhrah and Banu al-Harith, and concluded an agreement with them. In order to solemnize this agreement they drenched their hands in tib (perfume) and swore that they would help each other. For this reason, these tribes were called: "Tribes of sworn chaste parties".

On the other side the tribes of Banu 'Abdi'd-Dar, Banu Makhzum, Banu Sahn and Banu 'Adi also swore that they would resist Banu 'Abd Manaf and their allies. These tribes are called the "allies". 'Utbah has deemed himself the head of the allying parties. Some commentators have taken the word Asadu'l-ahlaf to mean Abu Sufyan, because he made different tribes swear against the Prophet in the battle of the Trench, while some commentators take it to mean Asad ibn 'Abdi'l-'Uzzah, but this interpretation does not carry weight because here Amir al-mu'minin is addressing Mu'awiyah and this interpretation does not hit Mu'awiyah since Banu 'Abd Manaf were a party to this alliance. Then Amir al-mu'minin says, "they have among themselves the masters of the youth of Paradise". Referring to the Prophet's saying, "al-Hasan and al-Husayn are the masters of the youth of Paradise", while the boys of the other side are in Hell. This reference is to the sons of 'Uqbah ibn Abi Mu'ayt, about whom the Prophet has said, "For you and your sons is Hell". Then Amir al-mu'minin says that among them is the chief of all the women of the worlds, namely Fatimatu'z-Zahra' (p.b.u.h.), while in the other party is the bearer of the wood which refers to Umm Jamil, the sister of Abu Sufyan. This woman used to spread thorns in the path of the Prophet. She has been mentioned in the Qur'an along with Abu Lahab, in these words:

In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful May perish both the hands of Abu Lahab, may perish (he himself); Shall avail him not his wealth nor what he earneth; Soon shall he burn in the flaming fire; And his wife, the bearer of the firewood; Upon her neck shall be a halter of twisted rope. (Qur'an, 111)

2. It is narrated from Amir al-mu'minin, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, Hudhayfah ibn Yaman, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, Abu Hurayrah, etc., that the Holy Prophet (may Allah bless him and his descendants) said:

Verily, Fatimah is the Supreme Lady of the women of Paradise, and al-Hasan and al-Husayn are the two Supreme Youth of Paradise. But their father ('Ali) is Superior to them. (al-Jami'as -sahih,at-Tirmidhi, vol.5, pp.656, 661; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol. 3, pp.3,62,64, 82; vol.5, pp.391, 392; as-Sunan, Ibn Majah, vol.1, p. 56; al-Mustadrak, al-Hakim, vol.3, p. 167; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, pp. 183, 184,201; Kanz al-ummal, al-Muttaqi, vol.13, pp. 127, 128; al-Isti'ab, vol.4, p.1895; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, p.574; Tarikh Baghdad, vol.1, p.140; vol.6, p.372; vol.10, p.230; at-Tarikh, Ibn 'Asakir, vol.7, p.365).

3. It is narrated from 'Imran ibn al-Husayn and Abu Tha'labah al-Khushni that the Holy Prophet (S) said to Fatimah (p.b.u.h.):

"O' my little daughter, are you not satisfied that you are verily the Supreme Lady of all women in the worlds?" She said, "O' father, then what about Maryam (Mary) daughter of 'Imran?" He said, "She was the Supreme Lady of her age, and you are the Supreme Lady of your age. Truly, by Allah, I married you to one who is the Master in this world and the hereafter. No one hates him save a hypocrite." (Hilyah al-awliya', vol.2, p.92; al-Isti'ab, vol.4, p. 1895; al-Isabah, vol.4, p.275)

Also, A'ishah narrated that the Holy Prophet (S) said:

O' Fatimah, will you not be satisfied to be the Supreme Lady of the women of the worlds (or) to be the Supreme Lady of all women of this ummah (community) or of the women believers? (as-Sahih, al-Bukhari, vol.8, p.79; as-Sahih, Muslim, vol.7, pp. 142-144; as-Sunan,Ibn Majah, vol.1, p.518; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.6, p.282; al-Mustadrak 'ala as-sahihayn, al-Hakim, vol.3, p.156)

4. The meaning is that the person who goes too far in counselling others will be thought to have his personal ends in so doing, even though his counsel may well be based on sincerity of intention and selflessness. This line is used as a proverb on such occasions. The whole couplet runs as follows:

How often a good counsel I offered you, but sometimes the only reward a counsellor reaps is suspicion.

5. This line is of Hamal ibn Badr. The full couplet runs thus:

Wait a bit till Hamal reaches the battlefield; How pretty is death when it comes.

The story behind it is that Malik ibn Zuhayr threatened Hamal ibn Badr with battle and in reply he recited this couplet and then attacked Malik and killed him. When Malik's brother saw this, he killed Hamal and his brother Hudhayfah in revenge. Then, he described this in his following couplet:

I appeased my heart by killing Hamal ibn Badr and my sword appeased me by killing Hudhayfah.

Letter 29: To the People of Basrah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى أهل البصرة

Whatever disunity and schism you have is not hidden to you. I have forgiven your wrong-doers and held back my sword from those who ran away. I received everyone who came to me from among you. If devastating matters and wrong and silly views are prompting you to break the pledge with me and to oppose me then (listen) I have kept ready my horses and put saddles (on my riding camels), and if you force me to advance towards you I shall come down in such a manner that before it the battle of Jamal too would appear like the last licking of the tongue. At the same time I know the high position of the obedient among you and the right of the sincere without confusing the sinless with the offenders or the faithful with the pledge-breakers.

وَقَدْ كَانَ مِنْ انْتِشَارِ حَبْلِكُمْ وَشِقَاقِكُمْ مَا لَوْ تَعَبُوا عَنْهُ، فَعَفَوْتُ عَنْ مُجْرِمِكُمْ، وَرَفَعْتُ
السَّيْفَ عَنْ مُدْبِرِكُمْ، وَقَبِلْتُ مِنْ مُقْبِلِكُمْ. فَإِنْ حَطَّتْ بِكُمْ الْأُمُورُ الْمُرْدِيَّةُ، وَسَفَهُ الْأَرَاءِ
الْجَائِرَةِ. إِلَى مُنَابَدَتِي وَخِلَافِي، فَهَا أَنَاذًا قَدْ قَرَّبْتُ جِيَادِي، وَرَحَلْتُ رِكَابِي. وَلَيْسَ الْجَائِمُونِي إِلَى
الْمَسِيرِ إِلَيْكُمْ، لَأَوْفَعَنَّ بِكُمْ وَفَعَةً لَا يَكُونُ يَوْمَ الْجَمَلِ إِلَيْهَا إِلَّا كَلْعَمَةَ لَاعِقٍ، مَعَ أَبِي عَارِفٍ
لِذِي الطَّاعَةِ مِنْكُمْ فَضْلُهُ، وَلِذِي النَّصِيحَةِ حَقُّهُ، غَيْرُ مُتَجَاوِزٍ مُتَّهَمًا إِلَى بَرِيٍّ، وَلَا نَاكِثًا إِلَى
وَقِي.

Letter 30: To Mu'awiyah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى معاوية

Fear Allah regarding what you have amassed and find out your true right therein, and turn to understand for what you will not be excused on the grounds of ignorance. Certainly, for (following the path of) obedience there are clear signs, shining ways, straight highways and a fixed aim.

The shrewd proceed towards them while the mean turn away from them. Whoever turns his face from them deviates from the right and gropes in bewilderment. Allah takes away His bounty from him and afflicts him with His chastisement. Therefore, beware of yourself. Allah has already shown you your way and the end where your affairs will terminate. You are speeding towards the aim of loss and the position of unbelief. Your ego has pushed you towards evil, thrown you into misguidance conveyed you to destruction and created difficulties in your way.

فَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ فِيمَا لَدَيْكَ، وَانظُرْ فِي حَقِّهِ عَلَيْكَ، وَارْجِعْ إِلَى مَعْرِفَةِ مَا لَا تُعْذَرُ بِجَهَالَتِهِ، فَإِنَّ
لِلطَّاعَةِ أَعْلَامًا وَاضِحَةً، وَسُبُلًا نَبِيْرَةً، وَمَحَجَّةً نَهْجَةً، وَعَايَةً مُطَلَّبَةً، يَرُدُّهَا الْأَكْيَاسُ، وَيُخَالِفُهَا
الْأُنْكَاسُ، مَنْ نَكَبَ عَنْهَا جَارَ عَنِ الْحَقِّ، وَحَبَطَ فِي التَّيْبِ، وَعَبَّرَ اللَّهُ نِعْمَتَهُ، وَأَحَلَّ بِهِ نِقْمَتَهُ.
فَنَفْسَكَ نَفْسَكَ! فَقَدْ بَيَّنَّ اللَّهُ لَكَ سَبِيلَكَ، وَحَيْثُ تَنَاهَتْ بِكَ أُمُورُكَ، فَقَدْ أَجْرَيْتَ إِلَى
عَايَةِ حُسْرٍ، وَمَحَلَّةِ كُفْرٍ، وَإِنَّ نَفْسَكَ قَدْ أَوْحَلَّتْكَ شَرًّا، وَأَفْحَمَتْكَ غِيًّا، وَأَوْرَدَتْكَ الْمَهَالِكِ،
وَأَوْعَرَتْ عَلَيْكَ الْمَسَالِكِ.

Letter 31: Advice to one of his sons after returning from the Battle of Siffin

He wrote this letter for al-Hasan ibn `Ali ¹ (his son - peace be upon them), when Amir al-mu'minin encamped at al-Hadirin on his way back from Siffin.

ومن وصيته (عليه السلام)

للحسن بن علي (عليه السلام)،

كتبها إليه بـ "حاضرين" عند انصرافه من صفين

From the father who is (shortly) to die, who acknowledges the hardships of the times, who has turned away from life, who has submitted himself to the (calamities of) time, who realizes the evils of the world, who is living in the abodes of the dead and is due to depart from them any day; to the son who yearns for what is not to be achieved, who is treading the path of those who have died, who is the victim of ailments, who is entangled in the (worries of the) days, who is a target of hardships, a slave of the world, a trader of its deception, a debtor of wishes, a prisoner of mortality, an ally of worries, a neighbour of grief, a victim of distresses, who has been overpowered by desires, and who is a successor of the dead.

مِنَ الْوَالِدِ الْفَانِ، الْمُقَرَّرِ لِلزَّمَانِ، الْمُدْبِرِ الْعُمُرِ، الْمُسْتَسْلِمِ لِلدَّهْرِ، الدَّامِ لِلدُّنْيَا، السَّاكِنِ مَسَاكِنِ الْمَوْتَى، الطَّاعِنِ عَنْهَا عَدَاً، إِلَى الْمُؤَلُّودِ الْمُؤَمَّلِ مَا لَا يُدْرِكُ، السَّالِكِ سَبِيلَ مَنْ قَدْ هَلَكَ، عَرَضِ الْأَسْقَامِ، رَهِينَةِ الْأَيَّامِ، وَرَمِيَةِ الْمَصَائِبِ، وَعَبْدِ الدُّنْيَا، وَتَاجِرِ الْعُرُورِ، وَغَرِيمِ الْمَنَايَا، وَأَسِيرِ الْمَوْتِ، وَخَلِيفِ الْهُمُومِ، قَرِينِ الْأَحْزَانِ، وَنُصْبِ الْأَقَاتِ، وَصَرِيحِ الشَّهَوَاتِ، وَخَلِيفَةِ الْأَمْوَاتِ .

Now (you should know that) what I have learnt from the turning away of this world from me, the onslaught of time over me and the advancing of the next world towards me is enough to prevent me from remembering anyone except myself and from thinking beyond myself. But when I confined myself to my own worries leaving the worries of others, my intelligence saved me and protected me from my desires. It clarified to me my affairs and led me to seriousness wherein there was no trickery and truth which was not tarnished by falsehood. Here, I found you a part of myself, rather I found you my whole, so much so that if anything befell you, it was as though it befell me and if death came to you it was as though it came to me. Consequently, your affairs meant to me what my own matters meant to me. So, I have written this piece of advice (to you) as an instrument of seeking help through it, whether I remain alive for you or cease to exist.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ فِيمَا تَبَيَّنْتُ مِنْ إِدْبَارِ الدُّنْيَا عَنِّي، وَجُوحِ الدَّهْرِ عَلَيَّ، وَإِقْبَالِ الْآخِرَةِ إِلَيَّ، مَا يَزْعُمُنِي عَنْ ذِكْرٍ مِنْ سِوَايَ، وَالْأَهْتِمَامِ بِمَا وَرَائِي غَيْرَ أَبِي حَيْثُ تَفَرَّدَ بِي دُونَ هُمُومِ النَّاسِ هَمُّ نَفْسِي، فَصَدَقَنِي رَأْيِي، وَصَرَفَنِي عَنْ هَوَايَ، وَصَرَّحَ لِي بِمُحْضِ أَمْرِي فَأَقْضَى بِي إِلَى جِدِّ لَا

يَكُونُ فِيهِ لَعِبٌ، وَصِدْقٍ لَا يَشُوْبُهُ كَذِبٌ . وَوَجَدْتُكَ بَعْضِي، بَلْ وَجَدْتُكَ كُلِّي، حَتَّى كَأَنَّ شَيْئاً لَوْ أَصَابَكَ أَصَابِي، وَكَأَنَّ الْمَوْتَ لَوْ أَتَاكَ أَتَانِي، فَعَنَانِي مِنْ أَمْرِكَ مَا يَعْجِنِي مِنْ أَمْرِ نَفْسِي، فَكَتَبْتُ إِلَيْكَ كِتَابِي هَذَا، مُسْتَظْهِراً بِهِ إِنَّ أُنَا بَقِيْتُ لَكَ أَوْ فَنَيْتُ.

I advise you to fear Allah, O my child, abide by His commands, fill your heart with remembrance of Him and cling to hope from Him. No connection is more reliable than the connection between you and Allah provided you take hold of it. Enliven your heart with preaching, kill it by denial, energise it with firm belief, enlighten it with wisdom, humiliate it by recalling death, make it believe in mortality, make it see the misfortunate of this world, make it fear the authority of the time and the severity of some changes during the nights and the days, place before it the events of past people, recall to it what befell those who were before you and walk among their cities and ruins, then see what they did and from what they have gone away and where they have gone and stayed. You will find that they departed from (their) friends and remain in loneliness. Shortly, you too will be like one of them. Therefore, plan for your place of stay and do not sell your next life with this world.

فَأِيَّ أَوْصِيكَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ أَيُّ بُيِّ، وَلُزُومِ أَمْرِهِ، وَعِمَارَةِ قَلْبِكَ بِذِكْرِهِ، وَالْأَعْتِصَامِ بِحَبْلِهِ، وَأَيُّ سَبَبٍ أَوْثَقَ مِنْ سَبَبِ بَيْنِكَ وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ إِنْ أَنْتَ أَخَذْتَ بِهِ، أَحْيِي قَلْبَكَ بِالْمَوْعِظَةِ، وَأَمِنْتَهُ بِالزَّهَادَةِ، وَقَوِّهِ بِالْيَقِينِ، وَنَوِّرْهُ بِالْحِكْمَةِ، وَدَلِّلْهُ بِذِكْرِ الْمَوْتِ، وَقَرِّزْهُ بِالْفَنَاءِ، وَبَصِّرْهُ فَجَائِعِ الدُّنْيَا، وَحَدِّرْهُ صَوْلَةَ الدَّهْرِ، وَفُحْشَ تَقَلُّبِ اللَّيَالِي وَالْأَيَّامِ، وَاعْرِضْ عَلَيْهِ أَخْبَارَ الْمَاضِيْنَ، وَذَكِّرْهُ بِمَا أَصَابَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكَ مِنَ الْأَوَّلِينَ، وَسِرِّي دِيَارِهِمْ وَأَثَارِهِمْ، فَانظُرْ فِيمَا فَعَلُوا وَعَمَّا انْتَفَلُوا، وَأَيِّنْ حَلُّوا وَنَزَلُوا، فَإِنَّكَ بَجِدْهُمْ انْتَفَلُوا عَنِ الْأَجْبَةِ، وَحَلُّوا دَارَ الْعُرْبَةِ، وَكَأَنَّكَ عَنْ قَلِيلٍ قَدْ صِرْتَ كَأَحَدِهِمْ، فَأَصْلِحْ مَثْوَاكَ، وَلَا تَبِعْ آخِرَتَكَ بِدُنْيَاكَ،

Give up discussing what you do not know and speaking about what does not concern you. Keep off track from which you fear to go astray because refraining (from moving) when fear of straying is better than embarking on dangers. Ask others to do good; you will thus be among good doers. Desist others from evil with your action as well as speech and keep off, to the best of your ability, from he who commits it. Struggle for Allah as is His due; and the insults of a reviler should not stop you in matters of Allah.

Leap into dangers for the sake of right wherever it be. Acquire insight into religious law. Accustom yourself to endure hardships since the best trait of character is endurance in matters of right. In all affairs resign yourself to Allah, because you will thus be resigning yourself to a secure shelter and a strong protector. You should ask only from your Lord because in His hand is all the giving and depriving. Seek good (from Allah) as much as you can. Understand my advice and do not turn away from it, because the best saying is that which benefits. Know that there is no good in that knowledge which does not benefit, and if knowledge is not made use of then its acquisition is not justified.

وَدَعَ الْقَوْلَ فِيمَا لَا تَعْرِفُ، وَالْحِطَابَ فِيمَا لَمْ تُكَلِّفْ، وَأَمْسَيْتَ عَنْ طَرِيقِ إِذَا خِفْتَ ضَلَاكَلْتَهُ
فَإِنَّ الْكُفَّ عِنْدَ خَيْرِ الضَّلَالِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ رُكُوبِ الْأَهْوَالِ. وَأَمُرٌ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ تَكُنْ مِنْ أَهْلِهِ،
وَأَنْكِرِ الْمُنْكَرَ بِيَدِكَ وَلِسَانِكَ، وَبَابِنِ مَنْ فَعَلَهُ بِجُهْدِكَ، وَجَاهِدْ فِي اللَّهِ حَقَّ جِهَادِهِ، وَلَا
تَأْخُذْكَ فِي اللَّهِ لَوْمَةٌ لِأَنَّهُمْ، وَخُضِ الْعَمَرَاتِ لِلْحَقِّ حَيْثُ كَانَ، وَتَفَقَّهُ فِي الدِّينِ، وَعَوِّدْ نَفْسَكَ
التَّصَبُّرَ عَلَى الْمَكْرُوهِ، وَنِعْمَ الْخُلُقُ التَّصَبُّرُ فِي الْحَقِّ! وَالْحَيُّ نَفْسَكَ فِي أُمُورِكَ كُلِّهَا إِلَى إِهْلِكَ،
فَإِنَّكَ تُلْجِئُهَا إِلَى كَهْفِ حَرِيرٍ، وَمَنَاعِ عَزِيزٍ. وَأَخْلِصْ فِي الْمَسْأَلَةِ لِرَبِّكَ، فَإِنَّ بِيَدِهِ الْعَطَاءَ
وَالْحِرْمَانَ، وَأَكْثَرَ الْأَسْتِحَارَةِ، وَتَفَهَّمْ وَصِيَّتِي، وَلَا تَذْهَبَنَّ عَنْكَ صَفْحًا، فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الْقَوْلِ مَا
نَعَعَ. وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَا خَيْرَ فِي عِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ، وَلَا يُنْتَفَعُ بِعِلْمٍ لَا يَحِقُّ تَعَلُّمُهُ.

O my child, when I noticed I was of goodly age and noticed I was increasing in weakness I hastened with my will for you and wrote down prominent points of it in case death overtook before I divulged to you what I have in my heart, or in case my wit be affected as my body has been affected, or forces of passions or mischief of the world overtake you making you like a stubborn camel. Certainly, the heart of a young man is like uncultivated land. It accepts whatever is strewn on it. So, I hastened to mould you properly before your heart hardened up and your mind became occupied, so you might be ready to accept through your intelligence the results of the experience of others and be saved from going through these experiences yourself. In this way, you would avoid the hardship of seeking them and the difficulties of experimenting. Thus, you are getting to know what we had experienced and even those things are becoming clear to you which we might have missed.

أَجِبْتُ بِيٍّ، وَإِي لَمَّا رَأَيْتُنِي قَدْ بَلَغْتُ سِنًا، وَرَأَيْتُنِي أَزْدَادًا وَهَنًا، بَادَرْتُ بِوَصِيَّتِي إِلَيْكَ، وَأَوْرَدْتُ
خِصَالًا مِنْهَا قَبْلَ أَنْ يَعْجَلَ بِي أَجْلِي دُونَ أَنْ أُفْضِيَ إِلَيْكَ بِمَا فِي نَفْسِي، أَوْ أَنْ أَنْفَصَ فِي
رَأْيِي كَمَا تَقْصُتُ فِي جِسْمِي، أَوْ يَسْبِقُنِي إِلَيْكَ بَعْضُ غَلَبَاتِ الْهَوَى وَفِتَنِ الدُّنْيَا، فَتَكُونُ
كَالصَّعْبِ النَّفُورِ. وَإِنَّمَا قَلْبُ الْحَدِيثِ كَالأَرْضِ الْحَالِيَةِ مَا أَلْقَى فِيهَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ قَبِلَتْهُ، فَبَادَرْتُكَ
بِالْأَدَبِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَقْسُو قَلْبُكَ، وَيَسْتَعْجَلَ لُبُّكَ، لِتَسْتَقْبَلَ بِحَدِّ رَأْيِكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مَا قَدْ كَفَاكَ أَهْلُ
التَّجَارِبِ بُعَيْتَهُ وَتَجَرَّبْتَهُ، فَتَكُونَ قَدْ كُفَيْتَ مَوْوَنَةَ الطَّلَبِ، وَعُوفِيَتْ مِنْ عِلَاجِ التَّجْرِبَةِ، فَأَتَاكَ
مِنْ ذَلِكَ مَا قَدْ كُنَّا نَأْتِيهِ، وَاسْتَبَانَ لَكَ مَا رُبَّمَا أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْنَا مِنْهُ.

O my child, even though I have not reached the age which those before me have, yet I looked into their behaviour and thought over events of their lives. I walked among their ruins till I was as one of them. In fact, by virtue of those of their affairs that have become known to me it is as though I have lived with them from the first to the last. I have therefore been able to discern the impure from the clean and the benefit from the harm.

يَ بُنَيَّ، إِنِّي وَإِنْ لَمْ أَكُنْ عُمِّرْتُ عُمُرَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلِي، فَقَدْ نَظَرْتُ فِي أَعْمَالِهِمْ، وَفَكَّرْتُ فِي أَحْبَابِهِمْ، وَسَرْتُ فِي آثَارِهِمْ; حَتَّى عُدْتُ كَأَحَدِهِمْ; بَلْ كَأَنِّي بِمَا انْتَهَى إِلَيَّ مِنْ أُمُورِهِمْ قَدْ عُمِّرْتُ مَعَ أَوْلِهِمْ إِلَى آخِرِهِمْ، فَعَرَفْتُ صَفْوَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ كَدْرِهِ، وَنَفَعَهُ مِنْ ضَرَرِهِ،

I have selected for you the choicest of those matters and collected for you their good points and have kept away from you their useless points. Since I feel for your affairs as a living father should feel and I aim at giving you training, I thought it should be at a time when you are advancing in age and new on the stage of the world, possessing upright intention and clean heart and that I should begin with the teaching of the Book of Allah, and its interpretation, the laws of Islam and its commands, its lawful matters and unlawful matters and that I should not go beyond these for you. Then I feared lest you should get confused as other people had been confused on account of their passions and (different) views. Therefore, in spite of my dislike for you being so warned, I thought it better for me to make this position strong rather than leave you in a position where I do not regard you safe from falling into destruction. I hoped that Allah would help you in your straightforwardness and guide you in your resoluteness. Consequently, I wrote this piece of my will for you.

فَاسْتَحْلَصْتُ لَكَ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ نَخِيلَهُ، وَتَوَخَّيْتُ لَكَ جَمِيلَهُ، وَصَرَفْتُ عَنْكَ مَجْهُولَهُ، وَرَأَيْتُ حَيْثُ عَنَانِي مِنْ أَمْرِكَ مَا يَغْنِي الْوَالِدَ الشَّفِيقَ، وَأَجْمَعْتُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَدَبِكَ أَنْ يَكُونَ ذَلِكَ وَأَنْتَ مُقْبِلُ الْعُمُرِ وَمُقْتَبِلُ الدَّهْرِ، ذُو نَبِيَّةٍ سَلِيمَةٍ، وَنَفْسٍ صَافِيَةٍ، وَأَنْ أُبْتَدِثَكَ بِتَعْلِيمِ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ وَتَأْوِيلِهِ، وَشَرَائِعِ الْأَسْلَامِ وَأَحْكَامِهِ، وَحَلَالِهِ وَحَرَامِهِ، لَا أُجَاوِزُ ذَلِكَ بِكَ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ. ثُمَّ أَشْفَقْتُ أَنْ يَلْتَبَسَ عَلَيْكَ مَا اخْتَلَفَ النَّاسُ فِيهِ مِنْ أَهْوَائِهِمْ وَأَرَائِهِمْ مِثْلَ الَّذِي التَّبَسَّ عَلَيْهِمْ، فَكَانَ إِحْكَامُ ذَلِكَ عَلَى مَا كَرِهْتُ مِنْ تَنْبِيهِكَ لَهُ أَحَبَّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ إِسْلَامِكَ إِلَيَّ إِلَى أَمْرٍ لَا آمَنُ عَلَيْكَ بِهِ الْهَلَكَةَ وَرَجُوتُ أَنْ يُؤَفِّقَكَ اللَّهُ فِيهِ لِرُشْدِكَ، وَأَنْ يَهْدِيكَ لِقَصْدِكَ، فَعَهَدْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَصِيَّتِي هَذِهِ.

Know O my child, what I love most for you to adopt from my will is to fear Allah, to confine yourself to what Allah has made obligatory on you, and to follow the actions of your forefathers and the virtuous people of your household, because they did not fall short in seeing for themselves what you will see for yourself, and they did about their affairs as you would like to think (about your affairs). Thereafter, their thinking led them to discharge the obligations they came to know of and to desist from what they were not required to do. If your heart does not accept this without acquiring knowledge as they acquired it, then your search should first be by way of understanding and learning and not by falling into doubts or getting entangled in quarrels.

وَاعْلَمْ يَا بُنَيَّ أَنْ أَحَبَّ مَا أَنْتَ آخِذٌ بِهِ إِلَيَّ مِنْ وَصِيَّتِي تَقْوَى اللَّهِ وَالْإِقْتِصَارُ عَلَى مَا فَرَضَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ، وَالْأَخْذُ بِمَا مَضَى عَلَيْهِ الْأَوْلُونَ مِنْ آبَائِكَ، وَالصَّالِحُونَ مِنْ أَهْلِ بَيْتِكَ، فَإِنَّهُمْ لَمْ

يَدْعُوا أَنْ نَظُرُوا لِأَنفُسِهِمْ كَمَا أَنْتَ نَاطِرٌ، وَفَكَّرُوا كَمَا أَنْتَ مُفَكِّرٌ، ثُمَّ رَدَّهُمْ آخِرُ ذَلِكَ إِلَى الْأَحْزَابِ بِمَا عَرَفُوا، وَالْأَمْسَاكِ عَمَّا لَمْ يُكَلِّفُوا، فَإِنْ أَبَتْ نَفْسُكَ أَنْ تَقْبَلَ ذَلِكَ دُونَ أَنْ تَعْلَمَ كَمَا عَلِمُوا فَلْيَكُنْ طَلَبُكَ ذَلِكَ بَتَفَهُمْ وَتَعْلَمَ، لَا بِتَوَرُّطِ الشُّبُهَاتِ، وَعُلْقِ الْخُصُومَاتِ.

And before you probe into this, you should begin by seeking your Allah's help and turning to Him for competence and keeping aloof from everything that throws you into doubt or flings you towards misguidance. When you have made sure that your heart is clean and humble and your thoughts have come together and you have only one thought which is about this matter, then you will see what I have explained to you; but if you have not been able to achieve that peace of observation and thinking which you would like to have, then know that you are only stamping the ground like a blind she-camel and falling into darkness while a seeker of religion should not grope in the dark or create confusion. It is better to avoid this.

وَابْدَأْ قَبْلَ نَظْرِكَ فِي ذَلِكَ بِالْأَسْبَعَانَةِ بِإِهْلِكَ، وَالرَّغْبَةِ إِلَيْهِ فِي تَوْفِيقِكَ، وَتَرْكِ كَلِّ شَائِئِيَّةٍ أَوْلَجْتِكَ فِي شُبُهَةٍ، أَوْ أَسْلَمْتِكَ إِلَى ضَلَالَةٍ. فَإِنْ أَبَيْتَ أَنْ قَدْ صَفَا قَلْبُكَ فَحَشَعِ، وَتَمَّ رَأْيُكَ فَاجْتَمَعَ، وَكَانَ هَمُّكَ فِي ذَلِكَ هَمًّا وَاحِدًا، فَانْظُرْ فِيمَا فَسَّرْتَ لَكَ، وَإِنْ أَنْتَ لَمْ يَجْتَمِعْ لَكَ مَا تُحِبُّ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ، وَفَرَاغِ نَظْرِكَ وَفِكْرِكَ، فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّكَ إِيمًا تَخْبِطُ الْعَشَوَاءِ، وَتَتَوَرَّطُ الظُّلْمَاءِ. وَلَيْسَ طَالِبُ الدِّينِ مِنْ حَبَطٍ أَوْ حَلَطٍ، وَالْأَمْسَاكِ عَنْ ذَلِكَ أَمْتَلٌ.

Appreciate my advice, O my child, and know He Who is the Master of death is also the Master of life, that the Creator causes death as well; that He Who destroys is also the restorer of life and that He Who inflicts disease is also the curer. This world continues in the way Allah has made it with regard to its pleasures, trials, rewards on the Day of Judgement and all that He wishes and you do not know. If anything of this advice is not understood by you then attribute it to your ignorance of it, because when you were first born you were born ignorant. Thereafter, you acquired knowledge. There are many matters of which you are ignorant and in which your sight first wonders and your eye wanders then after this you see them. Therefore, cling to Him Who created you, fed you and put you in order. Your worship should be for Him, your eagerness should be towards Him and your fear should be of Him.

فَتَفَهُمْ يَا بُنَيَّ وَصِيَّتِي، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ مَالِكَ الْمَوْتِ هُوَ مَالِكُ الْحَيَاةِ، وَأَنَّ الْخَالِقَ هُوَ الْمُمِيتُ، وَأَنَّ الْمُفْنِي هُوَ الْمُعِيدُ، وَأَنَّ الْمُبْتَلِي هُوَ الْمُعَافِي، وَأَنَّ الدُّنْيَا لَمْ تَكُنْ لَتَسْتَقَرَّ إِلَّا عَلَى مَا جَعَلَهَا اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ النَّعْمَاءِ، وَالْإِتْبَالِ، وَالْجَزَاءِ فِي الْمَعَادِ، أَوْ مَا شَاءَ مِمَّا لَا تَعْلَمُ، فَإِنْ أَشْكَلَ عَلَيْكَ شَيْءٌ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فَاحْمِلْهُ عَلَى جَهَاتِكَ، فَإِنَّكَ أَوَّلُ مَا خُلِقْتَ بِهِ جَاهِلًا ثُمَّ عِلِمْتَ، وَمَا أَكْثَرَ مَا يَجْهَلُ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ، وَيَتَحَيَّرُ فِيهِ رَأْيُكَ، وَيَبْضِلُ فِيهِ بَصْرُكَ ثُمَّ تُبْصِرُهُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ! فَاعْتَصِمِ بِاللَّيِّ خَلْقِكَ وَرَزَقِكَ وَسَوَاكَ، وَلْيَكُنْ لَهُ تَعَبُّدُكَ، وَإِلَيْهِ رَغْبَتُكَ، وَمِنْهُ شَفَقَتُكَ.

Know O my child, that no one received messages from Allah, the Glorified, as the Prophet (S) did. Therefore, regard him as your forerunner and leader towards deliverance. Certainly, I shall spare no effort in giving you advice and surely even if you try, you cannot acquire that insight for your welfare as I have for you.

وَأَعْلَمُ يَا بُنَيَّ أَنَّ أَحَدًا لَمْ يُنْبِئْ عَنِ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ كَمَا أَنْبَأَ عَنْهُ نَبِيْنَا . صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ .
فَارْضَ بِهِ زَائِدًا، وَإِلَى النَّجَاةِ قَائِدًا، فَإِنِّي لَمْ أَلِكْ نَصِيحَةً . وَإِنَّكَ لَنْ تَبْلُغَ فِي النَّظَرِ لِنَفْسِكَ
وَإِنِ اجْتَهَدْتَ مَبْلَغَ نَظَرِي لَكَ .

Know O my child, if there had been a partner with your Lord, his messengers too should have come to you and you would have seen signs of his authority and power and have known his deeds and qualities. But He is only One God as He has described Himself. No one can dispute with Him in His authority. He is from ever and will be for ever. He is before all things without any beginning. He will remain after all things without any end. He is far too great to have His divinity proved by the encompassing heart or eye. When you have understood this then you should do what is done by him who is like you by way of his low position, his lack of authority, his increasing incapability, and his great need of his Lord for seeking His obedience, fearing His chastisement and apprehending His anger, because He does not command you save for virtue and does not refrain you save from evil.

وَأَعْلَمُ يَا بُنَيَّ أَنَّهُ لَوْ كَانَ لِرَبِّكَ شَرِيكٌ لَأَتَتْكَ رُسُلُهُ، وَلَرَأَيْتَ آثَارَ مُلْكِهِ وَسُلْطَانِهِ، وَلَعَرَفْتَ
أَفْعَالَهُ وَصِفَاتَهُ، وَلَكِنَّهُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ كَمَا وَصَفَ نَفْسَهُ، لَا يُضَادُّهُ فِي مُلْكِهِ أَحَدٌ، وَلَا يُرْوُلُ أَبَدًا
وَلَمْ يَزَلْ . أَوَّلُ قَبْلِ الْأَشْيَاءِ بِلَا أَوْلِيَّةٍ، وَآخِرُ بَعْدَ الْأَشْيَاءِ بِلَا نَهَائَةٍ . عَظُمَ عَنْ أَنْ تَتَّبِعَ رُبُوبِيَّتَهُ
بِإِحْاطَةٍ قَلْبٍ أَوْ بَصَرٍ . فَإِذَا عَرَفْتَ ذَلِكَ فَافْعَلْ كَمَا يَنْبَغِي لِمِثْلِكَ أَنْ يَفْعَلَهُ فِي صِعْرِ حَظْرِهِ،
وَقَلَّةِ مَقْدَرَتِهِ، وَكَثْرَةِ عَجْزِهِ، وَعَظِيمِ حَاجَتِهِ إِلَى رَبِّهِ، فِي طَلَبِ طَاعَتِهِ، وَالْحُسْنِيَّةِ مِنْ عُقُوبَتِهِ،
وَالشَّفَقَةِ مِنْ سُخْطِهِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَأْمُرْكَ إِلَّا بِحَسَنٍ، وَلَمْ يَنْهَكَ إِلَّا عَنِ قَبِيحٍ .

O my child, I have informed you about the world, its condition, decay and its passing away and I have informed you of the next world and of what has been provided in it for its people. I have recounted to you parables about it so that you may draw instruction from them and act upon them. The example of those who have understood the world is like those travellers who, being disgusted with drought-stricken places set off for greenery and a fruitful place. Then they endure difficulties on the way, separation from friends, hardships of the journey and unwholesome food in order to reach their fields of plenty and place of stay. Consequently, they do not feel any pain in all this and do not regard any expenditure to be waste.

Nothing is more lovable to them than what takes them near their goal and carries them closer to their place of stay. (Against this), the example of those who are deceived by this world is like the people who were in a green place but they became disgusted with it and went to a drought-stricken place. Therefore, for them nothing is more detestable or abominable than to

leave the place where they were to go to a place which they will reach unexpectedly and for which they are heading.

يَا بُيَّيِّ إِنِّي قَدْ أَنْبَأْتُكَ عَنِ الدُّنْيَا وَحَالِهَا، وَرَوَاهَا وَانْتِفَالِهَا، وَأَنْبَأْتُكَ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ وَمَا أُعِدَّ لِأَهْلِهَا، وَضَرَبْتُ لَكَ فِيهِمَا الْأَمْثَالَ، لَتَعْتَبِرَ بِهَا، وَتَحْذُو عَلَيْهَا. إِنَّمَا مَثَلٌ مِنْ حَبْرِ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ قَوْمٍ سَفَرُوا نَبَأَ بِهِمْ مَنْزِلٌ جَدِيدٌ، فَأَمُّوا مَنْزِلًا حَصِيبًا وَجَنَابًا مَرِيعًا، فَاحْتَمَلُوا وَعَثَاءَ الطَّرِيقِ، وَفَرَّاقَ الصَّدِيقِ، وَحُشُونَةَ السَّفَرِ، وَجُشُونَةَ الْمَطْعَمِ، لِيَأْتُوا سَعَةَ دَارِهِمْ، وَمَنْزِلَ قَرَارِهِمْ، فَلَيْسَ يَجِدُونَ لِشَيْءٍ مِنْ ذَلِكَ أَلْمًا، وَلَا يَبْرُونَ نَفَقَةً فِيهِ مَعْرَمًا. وَلَا شَيْءٌ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْهِمْ مِمَّا قَرَّبَهُمْ مِنْ مَنْزِلِهِمْ وَأَدْنَاهُمْ إِلَى مَحَلَّتِهِمْ. وَمَثَلٌ مِنْ اغْتَرَّ بِهَا كَمَثَلِ قَوْمٍ كَانُوا بِمَنْزِلٍ حَصِيبٍ، فَنَبَأَ بِهِمْ إِلَى مَنْزِلٍ جَدِيدٍ، فَلَيْسَ شَيْءٌ أَكْرَهَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا أَفْطَحَ عِنْدَهُمْ مِنْ مُفَارَقَةِ مَا كَانُوا فِيهِ، إِلَى مَا يَهْجُمُونَ عَلَيْهِ، وَيَصِيرُونَ إِلَيْهِ.

O my child, make yourself the measure (for dealings) between you and others. Thus, you should desire for others what you desire for yourself and hate for others what you hate for yourself. Do not oppress as you do not like to be oppressed. Do good to others as you would like good to be done to you. Regard bad for yourself whatever you regard bad for others. Accept that (treatment) from others which you would like others to accept from you. Do not talk about what you do not know even though what you know be very little. Do not say to others what you do not like to be said to you.

Know that self-admiration is contrary to propriety (of action) and is a calamity for the mind. Therefore, increase your striving and do not become a treasurer for (wealth to be inherited by) others. When you have been guided on the right path humble yourself before Allah as much as you can.

يَا بُيَّيِّ اجْعَلْ نَفْسَكَ مِيزَانًا فِيمَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ غَيْرِكَ، فَأَحْبِبْ لِعَيْرِكَ مَا تُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِكَ، وَأَكْرَهْ لَهُ مَا تَكْرَهُ لَهَا، وَلَا تَظْلِمْ كَمَا لَا تُحِبُّ أَنْ تُظْلَمَ، وَأَحْسِنْ كَمَا تُحِبُّ أَنْ يُحْسِنَ إِلَيْكَ، وَاسْتَفْبِحْ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ مَا تَسْتَفْبِحُهُ مِنْ غَيْرِكَ، وَارْضَ مِنَ النَّاسِ بِمَا تَرْضَاهُ هُمْ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ، وَلَا تَقُلْ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُ وَإِنْ قَلَّ مَا تَعْلَمُ، وَلَا تَقُلْ مَا لَا تُحِبُّ أَنْ يُقَالَ لَكَ.

وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الْأَعْجَابَ ضِدُّ الصَّوَابِ، وَأَفَةُ الْأَلْبَابِ، فَاسْعَ فِي كَدْحِكَ، وَلَا تَكُنْ خَازِنًا لِعَيْرِكَ، وَإِذَا أَنْتَ هُدَيْتَ لِقُصْدِكَ فَكُنْ أَحْشَعَ مَا تَكُونُ لِرَبِّكَ.

Know in front of you lies a road of long distance and severe hardship and you cannot avoid seeking it. Take your requirements of provision keeping the burden light. Do not load your back beyond your power lest its weight become a mischief for you. Whenever you come across a needy person who can carry for you your provision to hand it back to you on the Day of Judgement when you will need it, then accept him as a good opportunity and get him to carry it. Put in that provision as much-as you are able to, for it is likely that if you may need him (afterwards), you may not get hold of him. If a person is willing to borrow from you in the days of your affluence

to pay it back to you at the time of your need then make use of this opportunity.

وَأَعْلَمَ أَنَّ أَمَامَكَ طَرِيقًا دَا مَسَافَةً بَعِيدَةً، وَمَشَقَّةً شَدِيدَةً، وَأَنَّهُ لَا غِنَى بِكَ فِيهِ عَنْ حُسْنِ الْأَرْتِيَادِ، وَقَدْرِ بِلَاغِكَ مِنَ الرَّادِ، مَعَ خِفَّةِ الظَّهْرِ، فَلَا تَحْمِلَنَّ عَلَى ظَهْرِكَ فَوْقَ طَاقَتِكَ، فَيَكُونَ ثِقْلًا ذَلِكَ وَبَالًا عَلَيْكَ، وَإِذَا وَجَدْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْفَاقَةِ مَنْ يَحْمِلُ لَكَ زَادَكَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، فَيُؤَافِيكَ بِهِ غَدًا حَيْثُ تَحْتَاجُ إِلَيْهِ فَاعْتَنِمُهُ وَحَمَلُهُ إِبَاهُ، وَأَكْبِرْ مِنْ تَرْوِيدِهِ وَأَنْتَ قَادِرٌ عَلَيْهِ، فَاعْلَمَنَّكَ تَطَلُّبُهُ فَلَا بَجْدُهُ . وَاعْتَنِمَنَّ مِنْ اسْتَفْرَضَكَ فِي حَالِ غِنَاكَ، لِيَجْعَلَ قَضَاءَهُ لَكَ فِي يَوْمِ عُسْرَتِكَ.

Know that in front of you lies an impassable valley wherein the light-burdened man will be in a better condition than the heavy-burden one, and the slow- paced would be in a worse condition than the swift-paced. Your terminating point at the other end of this passage will necessarily be either Paradise or Hell. Therefore, investigate for yourself before alighting, and prepare the place before getting down, because after death there can be no preparation nor return to this world.

وَأَعْلَمَ أَنَّ أَمَامَكَ عَقَبَةً كَثُودًا، الْمُخِفُّ فِيهَا أَحْسَنُ حَالًا مِنَ الْمُثْقَلِ، وَالْمُبْطِئُ عَلَيْهَا أَقْبَحُ حَالًا مِنَ الْمُسْرِعِ، وَأَنَّ مَهْبِطَكَ بِهَا لَا مَحَالَةَ إِلَّا مَّا عَلَى جَنَّةٍ أَوْ عَلَى نَارٍ، فَارْتَدِّ لِنَفْسِكَ قَبْلَ نُزُولِكَ، وَوَطِئِ الْمَنْزِلَ قَبْلَ حُلُولِكَ، فَلَيْسَ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ مُسْتَعْتَبٌ، وَلَا إِلَى الدُّنْيَا مُنْصَرَفٌ.

Know that He Who owns the treasures of the heavens and of the earth has permitted you to pray to Him and has promised you acceptance of the prayer. He has commanded you to beg from Him in order that He may give you and to seek His mercy in order that He may have mercy on you. He has not placed any thing between you and Him that may veil Him from you. He has not required you to get a mediator for you to Him, and if you err, He has not prevented you from repentance. He does not hasten with punishment. He does not taunt you for repenting, nor does He humiliate you when humiliation is more appropriate for you. He has not been harsh in accepting repentance. He does not severely question you about your sins. He does not disappoint you of His mercy. Rather He regards abstention from sin as a virtue. He counts your one sin as one while He counts your one virtue as ten.

وَأَعْلَمَ أَنَّ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ خَزَائِنُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ قَدْ أَذِنَ لَكَ فِي الدُّعَاءِ، وَتَكَفَّلَ لَكَ بِالْأَجَابَةِ، وَأَمَرَكَ أَنْ تَسْأَلَهُ لِيُعْطِيكَ، وَتَسْتَرْحِمَهُ لِيَرْحِمَكَ، وَمَنْ يَجْعَلُ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ مَنْ يَحْجُبُكَ عَنْهُ، وَمَنْ يُلْجِئُكَ إِلَى مَنْ يَشْفَعُ لَكَ إِلَيْهِ، وَمَنْ يَمْتَعَكَ إِنْ أَسَأْتَ مِنَ التَّوْبَةِ، وَمَنْ يُعَاجِلُكَ بِالنِّقْمَةِ، وَمَنْ يَفْضَحَكَ حَيْثُ تَعَرَّضْتَ الْفَضِيحَةَ، وَمَنْ يُشَدِّدُ عَلَيْكَ فِي قَبُولِ الْإِنَابَةِ، وَمَنْ

يُنَاقِشُكَ بِالْجُرْمَةِ، وَلَمْ يُؤْيِسْكَ مِنَ الرَّحْمَةِ، بَلْ جَعَلَ نُزُوعَكَ عَنِ الذَّنْبِ حَسَنَةً، وَحَسَبَ سَيِّئَتَكَ وَاحِدَةً، وَحَسَبَ حَسَنَتَكَ عَشْرًا،

He has opened for you the door of repentance. Therefore, whenever you call Him He hears your call, and whenever you whisper to Him He knows the whisper. You place before Him your needs, unveil yourself before Him, complain to Him of your worries, beseech Him to remove your troubles, seek His help in your affairs and ask from the treasuries of His mercy that which no one else has power to give, namely length of life, health of body and increase in sustenance. Then He has placed the keys of His treasuries in your hands in the sense that He has shown you the way to ask Him.

وَفَتَحَ لَكَ بَابَ الْمَتَابِ، وَبَابَ الْأَسْعِتَابِ؛ فَإِذَا نَادَيْتَهُ سَمِعَ نِدَاءَكَ، وَإِذَا نَاجَيْتَهُ عَلِمَ نَجْوَاكَ، فَأَفْضَيْتَ إِلَيْهِ بِحَاجَتِكَ، وَأَثْبَتْتَهُ ذَاتَ نَفْسِكَ، وَشَكَوْتَ إِلَيْهِ هُمُومَكَ، وَاسْتَكْشَفْتَهُ كُرُوبَكَ، وَاسْتَعْنَيْتَهُ عَلَى أُمُورِكَ، وَسَأَلْتَهُ مِنْ حَزَائِنِ رَحْمَتِهِ مَا لَا يَقْدِرُ عَلَى إِعْطَائِهِ غَيْرُهُ، مِنْ زِيَادَةِ الْأَعْمَارِ، وَصِحَّةِ الْأَبْدَانِ، وَسَعَةِ الْأَرْزَاقِ. ثُمَّ جَعَلَ فِي يَدَيْكَ مَفَاتِيحَ حَزَائِنِهِ بِمَا أَذِنَ لَكَ فِيهِ مِنْ مَسْأَلَتِهِ،

Therefore, wherever you wish, open the doors of His favour with prayer, and let abundant rains of His mercy fall on you. Delay in acceptance of prayer should not disappoint you because grant of prayer is according to the measure of (your) intention. Sometimes acceptance (of prayer) is delayed with a view to its being a source of greater reward to the asker and of better gifts to the expectant. Sometimes you ask for a thing but it is not given to you, and a better thing is given to you later, or a thing is taken away from you for some greater good of yours, because sometimes you ask for a thing which contains ruin for your religion if it is given to you. Therefore, your request should be for things whose beauty should be lasting and whose burden should remain away from you. As for wealth it will not last for you nor will you live for it.

فَمَتَى شِئْتَ اسْتَفْتَحْتَ بِالدُّعَاءِ أَبْوَابَ نِعْمَتِهِ، وَاسْتَمَطَّرْتَ شَأْيِبَ رَحْمَتِهِ، فَلَا يُفْطِنُكَ إِطْيَاءُ إِجَابَتِهِ، فَإِنَّ الْعُطِيَّةَ عَلَى قَدْرِ النِّيَّةِ، وَرُبَّمَا أُخْرِتَ عَنْكَ الْأَجَابَةُ، لِيَكُونَ ذَلِكَ أَعْظَمَ لِأَجْرِ السَّائِلِ، وَأَجْزَلَ لِعَطَاءِ الْأَمَلِ. وَرُبَّمَا سَأَلْتَ الشَّيْءَ فَلَا تُؤْتَاهُ، وَأُوتِيْتَ خَيْرًا مِنْهُ عَاجِلًا أَوْ آجِلًا، أَوْ صُرِفَ عَنْكَ لِمَا هُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكَ، فَلَرُبَّ أَمْرٍ قَدْ طَلَبْتَهُ فِيهِ هَلَاكُ دِينِكَ لَوْ أُوتِيْتَهُ، فَلْتَكُنْ مَسْأَلَتُكَ فِيمَا يَبْقَى لَكَ جَمَالُهُ، وَيُنْفَى عَنْكَ وَبَالُهُ؛ فَالْمَالُ لَا يَبْقَى لَكَ وَلَا تَبْقَى لَهُ.

O my child, know that you have been created for the next world, not for this world, for destruction (in this world) not for lasting, and for dying not for living. You are in a place which does not belong to you, a house for making preparations and a passage towards the next world. You are being chased by death from which the runner -away cannot escape, as it would surely overtake him. So, be on guard against it lest it overtakes you at a time when you are in a sinful state and you are thinking of repenting but it creates

obstruction between you and repentance. In such a case you will ruin yourself.

وَأَعْلَمَ يَا بُنَيَّ أَنَّكَ إِذَا حُلِقْتَ لِلْآخِرَةِ لَا لِلدُّنْيَا، وَلِلْفَنَاءِ لَا لِلْبَقَاءِ، وَلِلْمَوْتِ لَا لِلْحَيَاةِ؛
وَأَنَّكَ فِي مَنْزِلٍ قُلْعَةٍ، وَدَارِ بُلْعَةٍ، وَطَرِيقٍ إِلَى الْآخِرَةِ، وَأَنَّكَ طَرِيدُ الْمَوْتِ الَّذِي لَا يَنْجُو مِنْهُ
هَارِبُهُ، وَلَا يُفَوِّتُهُ طَالِبُهُ، وَلَا يُبَدِّدُ أَنَّهُ مُدْرِكُهُ، فَكُنْ مِنْهُ عَلَى حَذَرٍ أَنْ يُدْرِكَكَ وَأَنْتَ عَلَى حَالِ
سَيِّئَةٍ، قَدْ كُنْتَ تُحَدِّثُ نَفْسَكَ مِنْهَا بِالتَّوْبَةِ، فَيَحْوِلَ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ ذَلِكَ، فَإِذَا أَنْتَ قَدْ أَهْلَكْتَ
نَفْسَكَ.

O my child, remember death very much and the place where you have to go suddenly and reach after death, so that when it comes you are already on your guard against it and have prepared yourself for it and it does not come to you all of a sudden and surprise you. Beware, lest you become deceived by the leanings of the people towards worldly attraction and their rushing upon it. Allah has warned you about it and the world has informed you of its mortal character and unveiled to you its evils.

يَا بُنَيَّ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذِكْرِ الْمَوْتِ، وَذِكْرِ مَا تَهْجُمُ عَلَيْهِ، وَتُقْضِي بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ إِلَيْهِ، حَتَّى
يَأْتِيكَ وَقَدْ أَحَدَتْ مِنْهُ حَذْرَكَ، وَشَدَدَتْ لَهُ أَرْزَاكَ، وَلَا يَأْتِيكَ بَعْتَةً فَيَبْهَرَكَ، وَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ تَعْتَرَّ بِمَا
تَرَى مِنْ إِخْلَادِ أَهْلِ الدُّنْيَا إِلَيْهَا، وَتَكَالِبِهِمْ عَلَيْهَا، فَقَدْ نَبَّأَكَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا، وَنَعَتْ هِيَ لَكَ عَنْ
نَفْسِهَا، وَتَكَشَّفَتْ لَكَ عَنْ مَسَاوِيهَا،

Surely, those (who go) after it are like barking dogs or devouring carnivore who hate each other. The stronger among them eat away the weaker and the big among them tramples over the small. Some are like tied cattle and some like untied cattle who have lost their wits and are running in unknown directions. They are flocks of calamities wandering in rugged valleys. There is no herdsman to detain them nor any tenderer to take them to grazing. The world has put them on the track of blindness and taken away their eyes from the beacons of guidance. They have therefore perplexed in its bewilderings and sunk in its pleasures. They took it as a god so it played with them. They too played with it and forgot what is beyond it.

فَإِنَّمَا أَهْلُهَا كِلَابٌ عَاوِيَةٌ، وَسِبَاعٌ ضَارِيَةٌ، يَهْرُ بَعْضُهَا عَلَى بَعْضٍ، وَيَأْكُلُ عَزِيرُهَا ذَلِيلَهَا،
وَيَقْتَهَرُ كَبِيرُهَا صَغِيرَهَا. نَعَمٌ مُعَقَّلَةٌ، وَأُخْرَى مُهْمَلَةٌ، قَدْ أَضَلَّتْ عُقُولَهَا، وَرَكِبَتْ مَجْهُولَهَا. سُورُخٌ
عَاهَةٌ بِوَادٍ وَعَثٌ، لَيْسَ لَهَا رَاعٌ يُقِيمُهَا، وَلَا مُسِيمٌ يُسَيِّمُهَا. سَلَكَتْ بِهِنَّ الدُّنْيَا طَرِيقَ الْعَمَى،
وَأَحَدَتْ بِأَبْصَارِهِمْ عَنْ مَنَارِ الْهُدَى، فَتَاهُوا فِي حَيْرَتِهَا، وَعَرَفُوا فِي نِعَمَتِهَا، وَأَخَذُوا رِبًّا،
فَلَعِبَتْ بِهِنَّ وَأَلْعَبُوا بِهَا، وَنَسُوا مَا وَرَاءَهَا.

Darkness is disappearing gradually. Now it is as though travellers have got down and the hasteners will soon meet. Know, O my child, that everyone who is riding on the carriage of night and day is being carried by them even though he may be stationary, and he is covering the distance even though he is staying and resting.

رُوَيْدًا يُسْفِرُ الظَّلَامَ، كَأَنَّ قَدْ وَرَدَتِ الْأَطْعَانُ؛ يُوشِكُ مِنْ أَسْرَعِ أَنْ يَلْحَقَ! وَاَعْلَمَ يَا بُيَّيَّ
أَنَّ مَنْ كَانَتْ مَطِيئَتُهُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ، فَإِنَّهُ يُسَارُ بِهِ وَإِنْ كَانَ وَاقِفًا، وَيَقْطَعُ الْمَسَافَةَ وَإِنْ كَانَ
مُقِيمًا وَادِعًا.

Know with certainty you cannot achieve your desire and exceed your destined life. You are on the track of those before you. Therefore, be humble in seeking and moderate in earning because often seeking leads to deprivation. Every seeker of livelihood does not get it, nor is everyone who is moderate in seeking deprived. Keep yourself away from every low thing even though they may take you to your desired aims, because you will not get any return for your own respect which you spend. Do not be the slave of others for Allah had made you free. There is no good in good which is achieved through evil and no good in comfort that is achieved through (disgracing) hardship.

وَاَعْلَمَ يَقِينًا أَنَّكَ لَنْ تَبْلُغَ أَمْلَكَ، وَلَنْ تَعْدُوَ أَجْلَكَ، وَأَنَّكَ فِي سَبِيلٍ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكَ.
فَحَقِّضْ فِي الطَّلَبِ، وَأَجْمِلْ فِي الْمُكْتَسَبِ، فَإِنَّهُ رَبُّ طَلَبٍ قَدْ جَرَّ إِلَى حَرْبٍ؛ فَلَيْسَ كُلُّ
طَالِبٍ بِمَرْزُوقٍ، وَلَا كُلُّ مُجْمِلٍ بِمَحْرُومٍ. وَأَكْرَمُ نَفْسِكَ عَنْ كُلِّ دَنِيَّةٍ وَإِنْ سَاقَتَكَ إِلَى الرَّغَائِبِ،
فَإِنَّكَ لَنْ تَعْتَاضَ بِمَا تَبْدُلُ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ عَوْضًا. وَلَا تُكُنْ عَبْدَ غَيْرِكَ وَقَدْ جَعَلَكَ اللَّهُ حُرًّا. وَمَا
خَيْرُ خَيْرٍ لَا يُنَالُ إِلَّا بِشَرٍّ، وَيُسْرَ لَا يُنَالُ إِلَّا بِعُسْرٍ.

Beware lest bearers of greed should carry you and make you descend down to the springs of destruction. If you can manage that there be no wealthy person between yourself and Allah, do so, because in any case you will find what is for you and get your share. A little received directly from Allah the Glorified, is more dignified than that which is more but is received through (the obligation of) His creatures, although (really) all is from Allah.
وَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ تُوجِفَ بِكَ مَطَايَا الطَّمَعِ، فَتُورِدَكَ مَنَاهِلَ الْهَلَكَةِ. وَإِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَلَّا يَكُونَ
بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ دُو نِعْمَةٍ فَافْعَلْ، فَإِنَّكَ مُدْرِكُ قَسْمِكَ، وَآخِذُ سَهْمِكَ، وَإِنَّ الْبَيْسِيرَ مِنَ اللَّهِ
سُبْحَانَهُ أَعْظَمُ وَأَكْرَمُ مِنَ الْكَثِيرِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ وَإِنْ كَانَ كُلُّ مِنْهُ.

It is easier to rectify what you miss by silence than to secure what you lose by speaking. Whatever is in a pot can be retained by closing the lid. I should prefer you to retain what is in your hands rather to seek what is in other's hands. Bitterness of disappointment is better than seeking from people. Manual labour. with chastity is better than the riches of a vicious life. A man is the best guard of his own secrets. Often a man strives for what harms him. He who speaks much speaks nonsense. Whoever ponders perceives. Associate with people of virtue; you will become one of them. Keep aloof from people of vice; you will remain safe from them. The worst food is that which is unlawful. Oppressing the weak is the worst oppression.
وَتَلَافِيكَ مَا فَرَطَ مِنْ صَمْتِكَ أَيْسَرُ مِنْ إِدْرَاكِكَ مَا فَاتَ مِنْ مَنْطِقِكَ، وَحِفْظُ مَا فِي
الْوَعَاءِ بِشَدِّ الْوُكَاةِ. وَحِفْظُ مَا فِي يَدَيْكَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ طَلَبِ مَا فِي يَدَيْ غَيْرِكَ، وَمَرَارَةُ الْيَأْسِ

خَيْرٌ مِنَ الطَّلَبِ إِلَى النَّاسِ. وَالْحِرْفَةُ مَعَ الْعِقَّةِ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الْعِنَى مَعَ الْفُجُورِ، وَالْمَرْءُ أَحْفَظُ لِسِرِّهِ،
وَرُبَّ سَاعٍ فِيمَا يَبْصُرُهُ! مَنْ أَكْثَرَ أَهْجَرَ، وَمَنْ تَفَكَّرَ أَبْصَرَ. قَارِنِ أَهْلَ الْخَيْرِ تَكُنْ مِنْهُمْ، وَبَايِنِ
أَهْلَ الشَّرِّ تَبَيَّنْ عَنْهُمْ. يَنْسِ الطَّعَامُ الْحَرَامَ! وَظَلَمَ الضَّعِيفَ أَفْحَشُ الظُّلْمِ!

Where leniency is unsuitable, harshness is lenience. Often cure is illness and illness is cure. Often the ill-wisher gives correct advice while the well-wisher cheats. Do not depend upon hopes because hopes are the mainstay of fools. It is wise to preserve one's experience. Your best experience is that which teaches you a lesson. Make use of leisure before it changes into (the hour of) grief. Every seeker does not achieve (what he seeks); and every departed does not return. To lose provision and to earn evil for the Day of Judgement means ruin.

Every matter has a consequence. What is destined for you will shortly come to you. A trader undertakes a risk. Often a small quantity is more beneficial than a large quantity. There is no good in an ignoble helper, nor in a suspicious friend. Be compliant with the world as long as it is in your grip. Do not put yourself to risk as regards anything in expectation for more than that. Beware lest the feeling of enmity should overpower you.

إِذَا كَانَ الرَّفِيقُ حُرْقًا كَانَ الْحُرْقُ رِفْقًا. رَبِّمَا كَانَ الدَّوَاءُ دَاءً، وَالدَّاءُ دَوَاءً، وَرَبِّمَا نَصَحَ غَيْرُ
النَّاصِحِ، وَعَشَّ الْمُسْتَنْصَحُ. وَإِيَّاكَ وَالْأَيْتَانَ عَلَى الْمُنَى فَإِنَّهَا بَضَائِعُ النَّوْكَى، وَالْعَمَلُ حِفْظُ
التَّجَارِبِ، وَخَيْرٌ مَا جَرَّبْتَ مَا وَعَظَكَ. بَادِرِ الْفُرْصَةَ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَكُونَ غُصَّةً. لَيْسَ كُلُّ طَالِبٍ
يُصِيبُ، وَلَا كُلُّ غَائِبٍ يُؤُوبُ، وَمِنَ الْفَسَادِ إِضَاعَةُ الرَّادِ، وَمَفْسَدَةُ الْمَعَادِ، وَلِكُلِّ أَمْرٍ عَاقِبَةٌ،
سَوْفَ يَأْتِيكَ مَا قَدَّرَ لَكَ، التَّاجِرُ مُحَاطِرٌ، وَرُبَّ يَسِيرٍ أَمَى مِنْ كَثِيرٍ! لَا خَيْرَ فِي مُعِينٍ مِهِينٍ،
وَلَا فِي صَدِيقٍ ظَنِينٍ. سَاهِلِ الدَّهْرَ مَا دَلَّ لَكَ فَعُودُهُ، وَلَا تُحَاطِرْ بِشَيْءٍ رَجَاءَ أَكْثَرِ مِنْهُ،
وَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ تَجْمَعَ بِكَ مَطِيئَةَ اللِّجَاجِ.

Bear yourself towards your brother in such a way that if he disregards kinship you keep to it; when he turns away be kind to him and draw near to him; when he withholds spend for him; when he goes away approach him; when he is harsh be lenient; when he commits wrong think of (his) excuse for it, so much so as though you are a slave of him and he is the benevolent master over you. But take care that this should not be done inappropriately, and that you should not behave so with an undeserving person. Do not take the enemy of your friend as a friend because you will thus antagonize your friend. Give true advice to your brother, be it good or bitter. Swallow your anger because I did not find a sweeter thing than it in the end, and nothing more pleasant in consequence. Be lenient to him who is harsh to you for it is likely that he will shortly become lenient to you. Treat your enemy with favours, because this is sweeter of the two successes (the success of revenge and the success of doing favour).

احْمِلْ نَفْسَكَ مِنْ أَخِيكَ عِنْدَ صَرْمِهِ عَلَى الصِّلَةِ، وَعِنْدَ ضُدُودِهِ عَلَى اللَّطْفِ وَالْمُقَارَبَةِ،
وَعِنْدَ جُمُودِهِ عَلَى الْبَدْلِ، وَعِنْدَ تَبَاعُدِهِ عَلَى الدُّنُوِّ، وَعِنْدَ شِدَّتِهِ عَلَى اللَّيْنِ، وَعِنْدَ جُرْمِهِ عَلَى
الْعُدْرِ، حَتَّى كَأَنَّكَ لَهُ عَبْدٌ، وَكَأَنَّهُ ذُو نِعْمَةٍ عَلَيْكَ. وَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ تَضَعَ ذَلِكَ فِي غَيْرِ مَوْضِعِهِ، أَوْ
أَنْ تَفْعَلَهُ بِغَيْرِ أَهْلِهِ. لَا تَتَّخِذَنَّ عَدُوَّ صَدِيقِكَ صَدِيقاً فَتُعَادِيَ صَدِيقَكَ، وَالمُحْضُ أَخَاكَ
النَّصِيحَةَ، حَسَنَةً كَانَتْ أَوْ قَبِيحَةً، وَتَجَرَّعِ الْعَيْطَ فَإِنِّي لَمْ أَرْ جُرْعَةً أَحْلَى مِنْهَا عَاقِبَةً، وَلَا أَلَدَّ
مَعَبَّةً. وَلَنْ لِمَنْ غَالَطَكَ، فَإِنَّهُ يُوشِكُ أَنْ يَلِينَنَّ لَكَ، وَخُذْ عَلَى عَدُوِّكَ بِالْفَضْلِ فَإِنَّهُ أَحَدُ
الظَّالِمِينَ.

If you intend to cut yourself off from a friend leave some scope for him from your side by which he may resume friendship if it occurs to him some day. If anyone has a good idea about you prove it to be true. Do not disregard interests of your brother depending upon your terms with him, for he is not your brother if you disregard his interests. Your household should not become the most miserable people through you. Do not lean towards him who turns away from you. Your brother should not be more firm in his disregard of kinship than you in paying regard to it, and you should exceed in doing good to him than is evil to you. Do not feel too much the oppression of a person who oppresses you, because he is only busy in harming himself and benefiting you. The reward of him who pleases you is not that you displease him.

وَإِنْ أَرَدْتَ قَطِيعَةَ أَخِيكَ فَاسْتَبِقِ لَهُ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ بَقِيَّةً يَرْجِعُ إِلَيْهَا إِنْ بَدَأَ لَهُ ذَلِكَ يَوْمًا مآ،
وَمَنْ ظَنَّ بِكَ خَيْرًا فَصَدِّقْ ظَنَّهُ، وَلَا تُضِيعَنَّ حَقَّ أَخِيكَ اتِّكَالًا عَلَى مَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ، فَإِنَّهُ
لَيْسَ لَكَ بِأَخٍ مَنْ أَضَعْتَ حَقَّهُ. وَلَا يَكُنْ أَهْلَكَ أَشَقَى الْخَلْقِ بِكَ، وَلَا تَرْعَبَنَّ فِيمَنْ زَهَدَ
عَنكَ، وَلَا يَكُونَنَّ أَحْوَجَ أَقْوَى عَلَى قَطِيعَتِكَ مِنْكَ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِ، وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ عَلَى الْأَسَاءَةِ
أَقْوَى مِنْكَ عَلَى الْأَحْسَانِ. وَلَا يَكْبُرَنَّ عَلَيْكَ ظُلْمٌ مِنْ ظَلَمِكَ، فَإِنَّهُ يَسْعَى فِي مَضَرَّتِهِ
وَنَفْعِكَ، وَلَيْسَ جَزَاءُ مَنْ سَرَّكَ أَنْ تَسُوَّهُ.

Know O my child, that livelihood is of two kinds - a livelihood that you seek and a livelihood that seeks you, which is such that if you do not reach it, it will come to you. How bad it is to bend down at the time of need and to be harsh in riches. You should have from this world only that with which you can adorn your permanent abode. If you cry over what has gone out of your hands then also cry for what has not at all come to you. Infer about what has not yet happened from what has already happened, because occurrences are ever similar. Do not be like those whom preaching does not benefit unless you inflict pain on them, because the wise take instruction from teaching while beasts learn only from beating.

وَاعْلَمْ يَا بُحَيَّ أَنَّ الرِّزْقَ رِزْقَانِ: رِزْقٌ تَطْلُبُهُ، وَرِزْقٌ يَطْلُبُكَ، فَإِنْ أَنْتَ لَمْ تَأْتِهِ أَتَاكَ. مَا أَقْبَحَ
الْحُضُوعَ عِنْدَ الْحَاجَةِ، وَالْجَفَاءَ عِنْدَ الْعَيْ! إِنَّمَا لَكَ مِنْ دُنْيَاكَ مَا أَصْلَحْتَ بِهِ مَثْوَاكَ. وَإِنْ

كُنْتَ جَارِعاً عَلَى مَا تَقَلَّتْ مِنْ يَدَيْكَ، فَاجْزَعْ عَلَى كُلِّ مَا لَمْ يَصِلْ إِلَيْكَ. اسْتَدِلَّ عَلَى مَا لَمْ يَكُنْ بِمَا قَدْ كَانَ، فَإِنَّ الْأُمُورَ أَشْبَاهٌ. وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ مِمَّنْ لَا تَنْفَعُهُ الْعِظَةُ إِلَّا إِذَا بَالَعْتَ فِي إِيْلَامِهِ، فَإِنَّ الْعَاقِلَ يَتَّعِظُ بِالْأَدَابِ، وَالْبَهَائِمَ لَا تَتَّعِظُ إِلَّا بِالضَّرْبِ.

Ward off from yourself the onslaught of worries by firmness of endurance and purity of belief. He who gives up moderation commits excess. A companion is like a relation. A friend is he whose absence also proves the friendship. Passion is a partner of distress. Often the near ones are remoter than the distant ones, and often the distant ones are nearer than the near ones. A stranger is he who has no friend. He who transgresses right narrows his own passage. He who stays in his position remains constant upon it. The most trustworthy intermediary is that which you adopt between yourself and Allah the Glorified. He who does not care for your interests is your enemy. When greed leads to ruin deprivation is an achievement. Not every defect can be reviewed, and not every opportunity recurs.

اطْرُحْ عَنْكَ وَاِرْدَاتِ الْهُمُومِ بِعَزَائِمِ الصَّبْرِ وَحُسْنِ الْيَقِينِ. مَنْ تَرَكَ الْقَصْدَ جَارًا. وَالصَّاحِبُ مُنَاسِبٌ. وَالصَّدِيقُ مَنْ صَدَقَ عَيْنُهُ. وَالهُوَى شَرِيكُ الْعَمَى. وَرُبَّ بَعِيدٍ أَقْرَبُ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ، وَقَرِيبٌ أَبْعَدُ مِنْ بَعِيدٍ. وَالْعَرِيبُ مَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ حَبِيبٌ. مَنْ تَعَدَّى الْحَقَّ ضَاقَ مَذْهَبُهُ، وَمَنْ اِقْتَصَرَ عَلَى قَدْرِهِ كَانَ أَبْقَى لَهُ. وَأَوْثَقُ سَبَبٍ أَخَذْتَ بِهِ سَبَبٌ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ. وَمَنْ لَمْ يُبَالِكْ فَهُوَ عَدُوٌّكَ. قَدْ يَكُونُ الْيَأْسُ إِذْرَاكًا إِذَا كَانَ الطَّمَعُ هَلَاكًا. لَيْسَ كُلُّ عَوْرَةٍ تَظْهَرُ، وَلَا كُلُّ فُرْصَةٍ تُصَابُ.

Often a person with eyes misses the track while a blind person finds the correct path. Delay an evil because you will be able to hasten it whenever you desire. The disregard of kinship of the ignorant is equal to the regard for kinship of the wise. Whoever takes the world to be safe, it will betray him. Whoever regards the world as great, it will humiliate him. Every one who shoots does not hit. When authority changes, the time changes too. Consult the friend before adopting a course and the neighbour before taking a house. Beware, lest you mention in your speech what may rouse laughter even though you may be relating it from others.

وَرُبَّمَا أَخْطَأَ الْبَصِيرُ قَصْدَهُ، وَأَصَابَ الْأَعْمَى رُشْدَهُ. أَخْرَجِ الشَّرَّ فَإِنَّكَ إِذَا شِئْتَ تَعَجَّلْتَهُ. وَقَطِيعَةُ الْجَاهِلِ تَعْدِلُ صِلَةَ الْعَاقِلِ. مَنْ أَمِنَ الزَّمَانَ حَانَهُ، وَمَنْ أَعْظَمَهُ أَهَانَهُ. لَيْسَ كُلُّ مَنْ رَمَى أَصَابَ. إِذَا تَعَيَّرَ السُّلْطَانُ تَعَيَّرَ الزَّمَانُ. سَلْ عَنِ الرَّفِيقِ قَبْلَ الطَّرِيقِ، وَعَنِ الْجَارِ قَبْلَ الدَّارِ. إِيَّاكَ أَنْ تَذْكَرَ مِنَ الْكَلَامِ مَا يَكُونُ مُضْحِكًا، وَإِنْ حَكَيْتَ ذَلِكَ عَنْ غَيْرِكَ.

Do not consult women because their view is weak and their determination unstable. Cover their eyes by keeping them under the veil because strictness of veiling keeps them for long. Their coming out is not worse than your allowing an unreliable man to visit them. If you can manage that they should not know anyone other than you, do so. Do not allow a woman matters other than those about herself, because a woman is

a flower not an administrator. Do not pay her regard beyond herself. Do not encourage her to intercede for others. Do not show suspicion out of place, because this leads a correct woman to evil and a chaste woman to deflection. For everyone among your servants fix a work for which you may hold him responsible. In this way, they will not fling the work one over the other. Respect your kinsmen because they are your wings with which you fly, the origin towards which you return and your hands with which you attack. Place your religion and your world at Allah's disposal and beg Him to ordain the best for you in respect of the near and the far, this world and the next; and that is an end to the matter.

وَإِيَّاكَ وَمُشَاوَرَةَ النِّسَاءِ فَإِنَّ رَأْيَهُنَّ إِلَى أَفْنٍ، وَعَزْمُهُنَّ إِلَى وَهْنٍ. وَاكْتُفُفَ عَلَيْهِنَّ مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِنَّ بِحِجَابِكَ إِيَّاهُنَّ، فَإِنَّ شِدَّةَ الْحِجَابِ أَبْقَى عَلَيْهِنَّ، وَلَيْسَ خُرُوجُهُنَّ بِأَشَدَّ مِنْ إِدْخَالِكَ مَنْ لَا يُوثِقُ بِهِ عَلَيْهِنَّ، وَإِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَلَّا يَعْرِفَنَّ غَيْرَكَ فَافْعَلْ. وَلَا تَمْلِكِ الْمَرْأَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهَا مَا جَاوَزَ نَفْسَهَا، فَإِنَّ الْمَرْأَةَ رِيحَانَةٌ وَلَيْسَتْ بِقَهْرْمَانَةٍ، وَلَا تَعُدْ بِكَرَامَتِهَا نَفْسَهَا، وَلَا تُطْمِعْهَا فِي أَنْ تَشْفَعَ لِعَيْرِهَا. وَإِيَّاكَ وَالتَّغَايُرَ فِي غَيْرِ مَوْضِعٍ غَيْرَةٍ، فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ يَدْعُو الصَّحِيحَةَ إِلَى السُّقْمِ، وَالْبَرِيئَةَ إِلَى الرَّيْبِ. وَاجْعَلْ لِكُلِّ إِنْسَانٍ مِنْ خَدَمِكَ عَمَلًا تَأْخُذُهُ بِهِ، فَإِنَّهُ آخَرَى أَلَّا يَتَوَاكَلُوا فِي خِدْمَتِكَ. وَأَكْرِمْ عَشِيرَتَكَ، فَإِنَّهُمْ جَنَاحُكَ الَّذِي بِهِ تَطِيرُ، وَأَصْلُكَ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ تَصِيرُ، وَيَدُكَ الَّتِي بِهَا تَصُولُ. اسْتَوْدِعِ اللَّهَ دِينَكَ وَدُنْيَاكَ، وَاسْأَلْهُ خَيْرَ الْقَضَاءِ لَكَ فِي الْعَاجِلَةِ وَالْآجِلَةِ، وَالدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ، وَالسَّلَامُ .

Notes

1. Ibn Maytham al-Bahrani (vol.5, p.2) has quoted Abu Ja`far ibn Babawayh al-Qummi to have stated that Amir al-mu'minin wrote this piece of advice in the name of his son Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah, while al-`Allamah as-Sayyid ar-Radi has written that its addressee is Imam al-Hasan (p.b.u.h.). But the fact is that Amir al-mu' minin wrote another piece of advice to Ibn al-Hanafiyyah in brief which included a part of the same which he wrote to al-Imam al-Hasan. (Kashf al-mahajjah, Ibn Tawus, pp.157- 159; al-Bihar, vol.77, pp.196-198)

In any case, whether the addressee is al-Imam al-Hasan or Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah, this manifesto of the Imam is a lesson of guidance to action in which the ways of success and achievement can be opened and the straying caravans of mankind can tread the path of guidance. It contains principles of correcting the matters of this world and the next, creating the sense of morality and improving economic and social matters whose like cannot be produced by the epitomes of scholars and philosophers. Its truthful preachings are a strong incentive for recalling to humanity the lessons it has forgotten, reviving the dead lines of social dealings and raising the standards of morality.

Letter 32: To Mu'awiyah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى معاوية

You have ruined a large group of people whom you have deceived by your misguidance, and have flung them into the currents of your sea where darkness has covered them and misgivings toss them about. As a result they have strayed from the right path and turned on their backs. They turned their backs and pushed forward except those wise ones who came back because they left you after understanding you and ran towards Allah away from your assistance when you put them to troubles and deviated them from the middle path. Therefore, O Mu'awiyah, fear Allah about yourself and take away your rein from Satan, since this world is shortly to be cut off from you and the next world is near you; and that is an end to the matter.

وَأَرَدَيْتَ جِيلاً مِنَ النَّاسِ كَثِيراً، خَدَعْتَهُمْ بِعَيْبِكَ، وَالْقَيْتَهُمْ فِي مَوْجِ بَحْرِكَ، تَعَشَاهُمْ
الظُّلُمَاتِ، تَتَلَاطَمُ بِهِمُ الشُّبُهَاتُ، فَجَارُوا عَنْ وَجْهِتِهِمْ، وَنَكَصُوا عَلَى أَعْقَابِهِمْ، وَتَوَلَّوْا عَلَى
أَذْبَارِهِمْ، وَعَوَّلُوا عَلَى أَحْسَانِهِمْ، إِلَّا مَنْ فَاءَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبَصَائِرِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ فَارَقُوكَ بَعْدَ مَعْرِفَتِكَ،
وَهَرَبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ مِنْ مُوَارَظَتِكَ، إِذْ حَمَلْتَهُمْ عَلَى الصَّعْبِ، وَعَدَلْتَ بِهِمْ عَنِ الْقَصْدِ.
فَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَا مُعَاوِيَةَ فِي نَفْسِكَ، وَجَادِبِ الشَّيْطَانَ قِيَادَكَ، فَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا مُنْقَطِعَةٌ عَنْكَ،
وَالْآخِرَةُ قَرِيبَةٌ مِنْكَ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 33: To Qutham ibn al- 'Abbas, his Governor of Mecca

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى قُثَمِّ بْنِ الْعَبَّاسِ، وهو عامله على مَكَّة

My spy in the West has written ¹ to me telling me that some people of Syria have been sent for hajj who are blind of heart, deaf of ears and devoid of eyesight. They confound the truth with vanity, obey men in disobeying Allah, claim the milk of the world in the name of religion, and trade in the pleasures of this world by forsaking the rewards of the virtuous and the God-fearing. No one achieves good except he who acts for it, and no one is awarded the recompense of evil except he who commits it. Therefore, behave yourself in your duties like an intelligent, experienced, well-wishing and wise man who follows his superior and is obedient to his Imam. You should avoid what you may have to explain. Do not be exultant and assume superiority in riches nor lose courage in distress; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ عَيْنِي - بِالْمَغْرِبِ - كَتَبَ إِلَيَّ يُعَلِّمُنِي أَنَّهُ وَجَّهَ إِلَى الْمَوْسِمِ أَنْاسَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ،
الْعُمِّيِّ الْقُلُوبِ، الصَّمِّ الْأَسْمَاعِ، الْكُمِّ الْأَبْصَارِ، الَّذِينَ يَلْتَمِسُونَ الْحَقَّ بِالْبَاطِلِ، وَيُطِيعُونَ
الْمَخْلُوقَ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ الْخَالِقِ، وَيَحْتَلِبُونَ الدُّنْيَا دَرَّهَا بِالْإِيمَانِ، وَيَشْتَرُونَ عَاجِلَهَا بِأَجْلِ الْأَبْرَارِ
الْمُتَّقِينَ، وَلَنْ يَفُوزَ بِالْخَيْرِ إِلَّا عَامِلُهُ، وَلَا يُجْزَى جَزَاءَ الشَّرِّ إِلَّا فَاعِلُهُ. فَأَقِمْ عَلَيَّ مَا فِي يَدَيْكَ
قِيَامَ الْحَازِمِ الصَّلِيبِ، وَالنَّاصِحِ اللَّيْبِ، التَّابِعِ لِسُلْطَانِهِ، الْمُطِيعِ لِأَمَامِهِ. وَإِيَّاكَ وَمَا يُعْتَدَّرُ مِنْهُ،
وَلَا تَكُنْ عِنْدَ التَّعْمَاءِ بَطْرًا، وَلَا عِنْدَ الْبَأْسَاءِ قَشِلًا، وَالسَّلَامُ .

Notes

1. Mu'awiyah sent some men in the garb of pilgrims to Mecca in order to create sensation in the peaceful atmosphere of the place, by taking common men into their confidence, by a show of piety and God-fearing and then convincing them that 'Ali ibn Abi Talib has instigated the people against 'Uthman and in the end succeeded in getting him killed. In this way, they were to hold him responsible for the killing of 'Uthman and to turn the people against him, and also to incline the people towards him (Mu'awiyah) by mentioning the greatness of his character, the sublimity of his manners and stories of his generosity. But when the men whom Amir al-mu'minin had put on the job gave him the information, he wrote this letter to Qutham ibn al-'Abbas to keep an eye on their movements and to put a stop to their mischief - mongerings.

Letter 34: To Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr

To Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, when Amir al-mu'minin, peace be on him, heard that he was grieved at being replaced as Governor of Egypt by (Malik) al-Ashtar; then al-Ashtar died on his way to Egypt.

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى محمد بن أبي بكر

لما بلغه توجده من عزله بالاشتر عن مصر، ثم توفي الاشتر في توجهه إلى هناك قبل

وصوله إليها

I have come to know of your anger at the posting of al-Ashtar in your place, but I did not do so because of any shortcoming on your part or to get you to increase your efforts, but when I had taken away what was under your authority I would have placed you at a position which would have been less exacting and more attractive to you.

أما بعد، وَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي مَوْجِدُكَ مِنْ تَسْرِيحِ الْأَشْتَرِ إِلَى عَمَلِكَ وَإِنِّي لَمْ أَفْعَلْ ذَلِكَ اسْتِبْطَاءً لَكَ فِي الْجُهْدِ، وَلَا ازدياداً لَكَ فِي الْجِدِّ، وَلَوْ نَزَعْتُ مَا تَحْتَ يَدِكَ مِنْ سُلْطَانِكَ، لَوَلَّيْتُكَ مَا هُوَ أَيْسَرُ عَلَيْكَ مَوْوَنَةً، وَأَعْجَبُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَايَةً

The man whom I have made Governor of Egypt was my well-wisher, and very severe and vengeful towards our enemies. May Allah have mercy on him, as he has finished his days and met his death. I am quite pleased with him. May Allah too accord him His pleasure, and multiply his reward. Now get ready for your enemy and act according to your intelligence. Prepare for fighting him who fights you and calling to the path of Allah. Seek Allah's help exceedingly. If Allah wills He will assist you in what worries you and help you with what befalls you.

إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ الَّذِي كُنْتُ وَلِيِّتُهُ أَمَرَ مِصْرَ كَانَ رَجُلًا لَنَا نَاصِحًا، وَعَلَى عَدُونَا شَدِيدًا نَاقِمًا فَرَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ! فَلَقَدْ اسْتَكْمَلَ أَيَّامَهُ، وَلَاقَى حِمَامَهُ وَنَحْنُ عَنْهُ رَاضُونَ، أَوْلَاهُ اللَّهُ رِضْوَانَهُ، وَضَاعَفَ النَّوَابَ لَهُ. فَأَصْحِرْ لِعَدُوِّكَ، وَامْضِ عَلَى بَصِيرَتِكَ، وَشِمِّرْ لِحَرْبِ مَنْ حَارَبَكَ، وَادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ، وَأَكْثِرِ الْإِسْتِعَانَةَ بِاللَّهِ يَكْفِكَ مَا أَهَمَّكَ، وَيُعِينَكَ عَلَى مَا يُنْزِلُ بِكَ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ.

Letter 35: To 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas after Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr had been killed.

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى عبدالله بن العباس، بعد مقتل محمد بن أبي بكر بمصر

Now then, Egypt has been conquered and Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, may Allah have mercy on him, has been martyred. We seek his reward from Allah. He was a son who was a well-wisher, a hard worker, a sharp sword and a bastion of defence. I had roused the people to join him and ordered them to reach him to help before this incident. I called to them secretly as well as openly repeatedly. Some of them came half-heartedly, some put up false excuses and some sat away leaving me. I ask Allah the Sublime, to give me early relief from them, for by Allah, had I not been yearning to meet the enemy for martyrdom and not prepared myself for death, I would not have liked to be with these people for a single day nor ever to face the enemy with them.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ مِصْرَ قَدْ افْتُيِحَتْ، وَمُحَمَّدُ بْنُ أَبِي بَكْرٍ . رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ . قَدْ اسْتُشْهِدَ، فَعِنْدَ اللَّهِ نَحْتَسِبُهُ، وَوَلَدًا نَاصِحًا، وَعَامِلًا كَادِحًا، وَسَيْفًا قَاطِعًا، وَرُكْنًا دَافِعًا. وَقَدْ كُنْتُ حَثَّيْتُ النَّاسَ عَلَى لِحَاقِهِ، وَأَمَرْتُهُمْ بِغِيَاثِهِ قَبْلَ الْوَقْعَةِ، وَدَعَوْتُهُمْ سِرًّا وَجَهْرًا، وَعَوْدًا وَبَدَاءً، فَمِنْهُمْ الْإِنِّي كَارِهًا، وَمِنْهُمْ الْمُعْتَلُّ كَاذِبًا، وَمِنْهُمْ الْقَاعِدُ حَاذِلًا. أَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى أَنْ يَجْعَلَ لِي مِنْهُمْ فَرَجًا عَاجِلًا، فَوَاللَّهِ لَوْ لَا طَمَعِي عِنْدَ لِقَائِي عَدُوِّي فِي الشَّهَادَةِ، وَتَوَطُّبِي نَفْسِي عَلَى الْمَنِيَّةِ، لَأَحْبَبْتُ أَلَّا أَبْقَى مَعَ هَؤُلَاءِ يَوْمًا وَاحِدًا، وَلَا أَلْتَقِيَ بِهِمْ أَبَدًا.

Letter 36: To his brother 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib

To his brother 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib, ¹ in reply to his letter which contained a reference to the army Amir al-mu'minin had sent to some enemy.

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

في ذكر جيش أنفذه إلى بعض الأعداء، وهو جواب كتاب كتبه إليه أخوه عقيل بن أبي

طالب

I had sent towards him a large army of Muslims. When he came to know of it he fled away and retreated repenting. They met him on the way when the sun was about to set. They grappled for a while like nothing. It was about an hour and then he rescued himself half-dead as he had almost been taken by the neck and only the last breath had remained in him. In this way, he escaped in a panic.

فَسَرَّحْتُ إِلَيْهِ جَيْشًا كَثِيرًا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، فَلَمَّا بَلَغَهُ ذَلِكَ شَمَّرَ هَارِبًا، وَنَكَّصَ نَادِمًا، فَلَجَّحُوهُ بِبَعْضِ الطَّرِيقِ، وَقَدْ طَفَلَتِ الشَّمْسُ لِلْأَيَّامِ، فَأَقْتَتَلُوا شَيْئًا كَلًّا وَلَا، فَمَا كَانَ إِلَّا كَمَوْقِفِ سَاعَةٍ حَتَّى نَجَا جَرِيضًا بَعْدَمَا أُخِذَ مِنْهُ بِالْمُحَنَّقِ، وَمَمَّ يَبْقَ مِنْهُ غَيْرَ الرَّمَقِ، فَلَا يَأِي مَا نَجَا.

Leave the Quraysh in their rushing into misguidance, their galloping in disunity and their leaping over destruction. They have joined together to fight me as they had joined to fight the Messenger of Allah (S) before me. I wish the Quraysh will get the reward of their treatment of me. For they disregarded my kinship and deprived me of the power due to me from the son of my mother (i.e. the Holy Prophet).

فَدَعُ عَنْكَ قُرَيْشًا وَتَرَكَاصَهُمْ فِي الضَّلَالِ، وَتَجَوَّاهُمْ فِي السِّنْقِاقِ، وَجَمَّاحَهُمْ فِي التَّيِّهِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ قَدْ أَجْمَعُوا عَلَيَّ حَزْبِي كِجْمَاعِهِمْ عَلَيَّ حَزْبِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) قَبْلِي، فَجَزَرْتُ قُرَيْشًا عَنِّي الْجَوَازِي! فَقَدْ فَطَعُوا رَجْمِي، وَسَلَبُونِي سُلْطَانَ ابْنِ أُبَيِّ.

As for your enquiry about my opinion on fighting, I am in favour of fighting those who regard fighting as lawful until I die. The abundance of men around me does not increase me in strength nor does their dispersal from me cause any loneliness. Surely, do not consider the son of your father as being weak or afraid, even though all people have forsaken him, or bowing down submissively before injustice or handing over his reins into the hand of the puller, or allowing his back to be used by the rider to sit upon. But he is as the man of Banu Salim has said:

If you enquire how I am, then listen that I am enduring and strong against the vicissitudes of time.

I do not allow myself to be grieved lest the foe feels joyful and the friend feels sorry.

وَأَمَّا مَا سَأَلْتَ عَنْهُ مِنْ رَأْيِي فِي الْقِتَالِ، فَإِنَّ رَأْيِي قِتَالُ الْمُحِلِّينَ حَتَّى أَلْفَى اللَّهَ، لَا يَرِيدُنِي كَثْرَةُ النَّاسِ حَوْلِي عِزَّةً، وَلَا تَفَرُّقُهُمْ عَنِّي وَحَشَنَةً، وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ ابْنَ أُبَيْكَ . وَلَوْ أَسْلَمَهُ النَّاسُ .

مُتَّصِرَةً مُتَّحِشِعَةً، وَلَا مُقَرَّراً لِلصَّيْمِ وَاهِنًا، وَلَا سَلِسَ الرِّمَامِ لِلْقَائِدِ، وَلَا وَطِيءَ الظَّهْرِ لِلرَّاكِبِ
المُهْتَمِدِ، وَلَكِنَّهُ كَمَا قَالَ أَحُو بَنِي سُلَيْمِ:
فَإِنْ تَسْأَلِينِي كَيْفَ أَنْتَ فَإِنِّي * صَبُورٌ عَلَى رَبِّ الرِّمَانِ صَلِيبُ
يَعْرِزُ عَلَيَّ أَنْ تُرَى بِي كَابَةٌ * فَيَشْمَتَ عَادٌ أَوْ يُسَاءَ حَبِيبُ

Notes

1. When after arbitration Mu'awiyah started a campaign of killing and devastation, he sent a force of four thousand under ad-Dahhak ibn Qays al-Fihri to attack Amir al-mu'minin's cities. When Amir al-mu'minin came to know of his activities he roused the people of Kufah to put up a defence, but they began to offer lame excuses. At last Hujr ibn 'Adi al-Kindi rose with a force of four thousand men and, chasing the enemy, overtook him at Tadmur. The two parties had only a few grapplings when darkness came in and ad-Dahhak fled away under its cover. This was the time when 'Aqil ibn Abi Talib had come to Mecca for 'umrah. When he came to know that after attacking al-Hirah, ad -Dahhak had escaped alive and that the people of Kufah were afraid of war and all their activities had come to a stop, he sent a letter to Amir al-mu'minin through 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Ubayd al-Azdi offering his help. In reply to that Amir al-mu'minin wrote this letter wherein He complains of the behaviour of the people of Kufah and mentions the flight of ad-Dahhak.

Letter 37: To Muawiyah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى معاوية

Glory be to Allah! How staunchly you cling to innovated passions and painful bewilderment along with ignoring the facts and rejecting strong reasons which are liked by Allah and serve as pleas for the people. As regards your prolonging the question of 'Uthman's ¹ murder the position is that you helped 'Uthman when it was really your own help while you forsook him when he was in need of help; and that is an end to the matter.

فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ! مَا أَشَدَّ لُزُومَكَ لِلْأَهْوَاءِ الْمُبْتَدَعَةِ، وَالْخَيْرَةِ الْمُتَّبَعَةِ، مَعَ تَضْيِيعِ الْحَقَائِقِ
وَاطِّرَاحِ الْوَثَائِقِ، الَّتِي هِيَ لِلَّهِ طَلِبَةٌ، وَعَلَى عِبَادِهِ حُجَّةٌ. فَأَمَّا إِكْتِنَارُكَ الْحِجَاجِ فِي عُثْمَانَ
وَقَتْلِهِ، فَإِنَّكَ إِثْمًا نَصَرْتَ عُثْمَانَ حَيْثُ كَانَ النَّصْرُ لَكَ، وَحَدَلْتَهُ حَيْثُ كَانَ النَّصْرُ لَهُ،
وَالسَّلَامُ.

Notes

1. There is no question of denying that Mu'awiyah claimed to help 'Uthman after he had been killed, although when he was surrounded and clamoured for his help by writing letter after letter Mu'awiyah never budged an inch. However, just to make a show he had sent a contingent towards Medina under Yazid ibn Asad al-Qasri, but had ordered it to remain in waiting in the valley of Dhu Khushub near Medina. Eventually, 'Uthman was murdered and he went back with his contingent.

No doubt Mu'awiyah wished 'Uthman to be killed so that he should create confusion in the name of his blood and through these disturbances clear the way for allegiance to himself (as Caliph). That is why he neither helped him when he was surrounded nor thought it necessary to trace the murderers of 'Uthman after securing power.

Letter 38: To the people of Egypt when he appointed (Malik) al-Ashtar as their Governor

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى أهل مصر، لما ولى عليهم الاشر رحمة الله

From the slave of Allah, 'Ali, Amir al-mu'minin to the people who became wrathful for the sake of Allah when He was disobeyed on His earth and His rights were ignored and oppression had spread its coverings over the virtuous as well as the vicious, on the local as well as the foreigner. Consequently, no good was acted upon nor any evil was avoided.

مِنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلِيِّ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، إِلَى الْقَوْمِ الَّذِينَ غَضِبُوا اللَّهَ حِينَ غَضِيَ فِي أَرْضِهِ، وَذُهِبَ بِحَقِّهِ، فَضَرَبَ الْجُورُ سَرَادِقَهُ عَلَى الْبَرِّ وَالْفَاجِرِ، وَالْمُتَقِيمِ وَالطَّاعِنِ، فَلَا مَعْرُوفٌ يُسْتَرَاحُ إِلَيْهِ، وَلَا مُنْكَرٌ يُتَنَاهَى عَنْهُ.

Now, I have sent to you a man from among the servants of Allah who allows himself no sleep in days of danger, nor does he shrink from the enemy at critical moments. He is severer on the wicked than a blazing fire. He is Malik ibn al-Harith, our brother from (the tribe of) Madhhij.

Therefore, listen to him and obey his orders that accord with right, because he is a sword among the swords of Allah, whose edge is not dull and which does not miss its victim. If he orders you to advance, advance, and if he orders you to stay, stay, because he surely neither advances or attacks nor puts anyone backward or forward save with my command. I have preferred him for you rather than for myself because of his being your well-wisher and (because of) the severity of his harshness over your enemies.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ بَعَثْتُ إِلَيْكُمْ عَبْدًا مِنْ عِبَادِ اللَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ، لَا يَنَامُ أَيَّامَ الْحَوْفِ، وَلَا يَنْكُلُ عَنِ الْأَعْدَاءِ سَاعَاتِ الرَّوْعِ، أَشَدَّ عَلَى الْفُجَّارِ مِنْ حَرِيقِ النَّارِ، وَهُوَ مَالِكُ بْنُ الْحَارِثِ أَحْوُ مَدْحِجٍ، فَاسْمَعُوا لَهُ أَطِيعُوا أَمْرَهُ فِيمَا طَابَقَ الْحَقُّ، فَإِنَّهُ سَيْفٌ مِنْ سِيُوفِ اللَّهِ، لَا كَلِيلُ الطُّبَّةِ، وَلَا نَابِي الضَّرِيَّةِ، فَإِنْ أَمَرَكُمْ أَنْ تَنْفَرُوا فَانْفَرُوا، وَإِنْ أَمَرَكُمْ أَنْ تُقِيمُوا فَأَقِيمُوا، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يُقَدِّمُ وَلَا يُخَجِّمُ، وَلَا يُؤَخِّرُ وَلَا يُقَدِّمُ إِلَّا عَنْ أَمْرِي، وَقَدْ آثَرْتُكُمْ بِهِ عَلَى نَفْسِي لِتَصِيحَتِهِ لَكُمْ، وَشِدَّةِ شَكِيمَتِهِ عَلَى عَدُوِّكُمْ.

Letter 39: To 'Amr ibn al-'As

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى عمرو بن العاص

You have surely made your religion subservient to the worldly seekings of a man whose misguidance is not a concealed affair and whose veil has been torn away. He mars an honourable man with his company and befools those who keep his society. You are following in his footsteps and seeking his favours like the dog that follows the lion looking at his paws and waiting for whatever remnants of his prey fall down to him. In this way, you have ruined your world as well as the next life, although if you had stuck to the right, you would have got what you were after. If Allah grants me power over you and Ibn Abi Sufyan (Mu'awiyah), I shall award you both recompense of what you have done, but if you escape and survive then hereafter there is only evil for you both; and that is an end to the matter.

فَإِنَّكَ جَعَلْتَ دِينَكَ تَبَعاً لِدُنْيَا امْرِئٍ ظَاهِرٍ عَيْهٖ، مَهْتُوكِ سِتْرُهُ، يَشِيئُ الْكَرِيمَ بِمَجْلِسِهِ،
وَيُسْفِئُ الْحَلِيمَ بِخِلَاطَتِهِ، فَاتَّبَعْتَ أَثَرَهُ، وَطَلَبْتَ فَضْلَهُ، اتَّبَاعَ الْكَلْبِ لِلصَّرْعَامِ، يَلُودُ إِلَى مَخَالِيهِ،
وَيَنْتَظِرُ مَا يُلْقَى إِلَيْهِ مِنْ فَضْلِ فَرِيْسَتِهِ، فَأَذْهَبْتَ دُنْيَاكَ وَآخِرَتَكَ! وَلَوْ بِالْحَقِّ أَخَذْتَ أَدْرَكَتْ
مَا طَلَبْتَ، فَإِنْ يُمَكِّنَ اللَّهُ مِنْكَ وَمِنْ ابْنِ أَبِي سُفْيَانَ أَجْرُكُمَْا بِمَا قَدَّمْتُمَا، وَإِنْ تُعْجِزَا وَتَبْقِيَا فَمَا
أَمَامَكُمَا شَرٌّ لَكُمَا، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 40: To one of his officers

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى بعض عماله

Now, I have come to know such a thing about you that if you have done so then you have displeased your Lord, disobeyed your Imam and betrayed your trust.

I have come to know that you have razed the ground and taken away whatever was under your feet and devoured what ever was in your hands. Send me your account and know that the accounting to Allah will be severer than that to the people; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي عَنْكَ أَمْرٌ، إِنَّ كُنْتَ فَعَلْتَهُ فَقَدْ أَسْحَطْتَ رَبَّكَ، وَعَصَيْتَ إِمَامَكَ، وَأَحْزَيْتَ أَمَانَتَكَ. بَلَغَنِي أَنَّكَ جَرَدْتَ الْأَرْضَ فَأَخَذْتَ مَا تَحْتَ قَدَمَيْكَ، وَأَكَلْتَ مَا تَحْتَ يَدَيْكَ، فَارْفَعْ إِلَيَّ حِسَابَكَ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ حِسَابَ اللَّهِ أَعْظَمُ مِنْ حِسَابِ النَّاسِ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 41: To one of his officers

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى بعض عماله

Now, I had made you a partner in my trust, and made you my chief man. And for me no other person from my kinsmen was more trustworthy than you in the matter of sympathizing with me, assisting and respecting my trusts. But when you saw that time had attacked your cousin, the enemy had waged war, the trust of the people was being humiliated, and the whole community was trackless and disunited, you turned your back against your cousin and forsook him when others forsook him, you abandoned him when others abandoned him, and you betrayed him when others betrayed him. Thus, you showed no sympathy to your cousin, nor discharged the trust.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي كُنْتُ أَشْرَكْتُكَ فِي أَمَانَتِي، وَجَعَلْتُكَ شِعَارِي وَبِطَانَتِي، وَمَنْ يَكُنْ مِنْ أَهْلِي رَجُلًا أَوْثَقَ مِنْكَ فِي نَفْسِي، لِمُؤَاسَاةِي وَمُؤَاوَزَتِي وَأَدَاءِ الْأَمَانَةِ إِلَيَّ. فَلَمَّا رَأَيْتَ الزَّمَانَ عَلَى ابْنِ عَمِّكَ قَدْ كَلَبَ، وَالْعُدُوَّ قَدْ حَرَبَ، وَأَمَانَةَ النَّاسِ قَدْ حَزَبَتْ، وَهَذِهِ الْأُمَّةَ قَدْ فَتَنَتْ وَشَعَّرَتْ، قَالِبْتَ لِابْنِ عَمِّكَ ظَهَرَ الْمَجْرَى، فَفَارَقْتَهُ مَعَ الْمُفَارِقِينَ، وَخَذَلْتَهُ مَعَ الْخَائِذِلِينَ، وَخُونْتَهُ مَعَ الْخَائِنِينَ، فَلَا ابْنَ عَمِّكَ آسَيْتَ، وَلَا الْأَمَانَةَ أَذَيْتَ.

It seems as if you do not want (to please) Allah by your jihad, and as if you do not stand upon a clear sign from your Lord, and as if you have been playing tricks with this ummah (Muslim community) to earn (the pleasure of) this world and watching for the moment of their neglectfulness to usurp their share of the wealth. As soon as it was possible for you to misappropriate the ummah's trust, you hastened to turn around and attack (them), and made a swift leap to snatch away whatever you could from their property meant for their widows and their orphans as a wolf snatches a wounded and helpless goat. Then, you happily loaded it off to the Hijaz without feeling guilty for having appropriated it. Allah's woe be to your ill-wishers; it was as though you were sending to your family what you had inherited from your father and mother.

وَكَاَنَّكَ لَمْ تَكُنْ اللهُ تُرِيدُ بِجِهَادِكَ، وَكَأَنَّكَ لَمْ تَكُنْ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكَ، وَكَأَنَّكَ إِنَّمَا كُنْتَ تَكِيدُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةَ عَنْ دُنْيَاهُمْ، وَتَنْوِي غِرَّتَهُمْ عَنْ فَيْئِهِمْ! فَلَمَّا أَمَكَّنْتَكَ الشَّدَّةَ فِي خِيَانَةِ الْأُمَّةِ، أَسْرَعْتَ الْكَرَّةَ، وَعَاجَلْتَ الْوُثْبَةَ، وَاحْتَطَطْتَ مَا قَدَّرْتَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمُ الْمَصُونَةِ لِأَرْوَاحِهِمْ وَأَيْتَامِهِمْ، اخْتَطَفَ الدَّيْبُ الْأَزْلَ دَامِيَةَ الْمَغْرَى الْكَسِيرَةَ، فَحَمَلْتَهُ إِلَى الْحِجَازِ رَحِيبَ الصَّدْرِ بِحَمْلِهِ، غَيْرَ مُتَأَتِّمٍ مِنْ أَخْذِهِ، كَأَنَّكَ . لَا أَبَا لِعَيْرِكَ . حَدَرْتَ إِلَى أَهْلِكَ تُرَائِكَ مِنْ أَبِيكَ وَأُمَّكَ.

Glory be to Allah! Do you not believe in the Day of Judgement, or do you not fear the exaction of account? O you who were counted by us among the men possessed of mind, how can you enjoy food and drink when you

know that you are eating the unlawful and drinking the unlawful. You are purchasing slavemaids and wedding women with the money of the orphans, the poor, the believers and the participants in jihad to whom Allah had dedicated this money and through whom He had strengthened these cities. Fear Allah and return to these people their properties. If you do not do so and Allah grants me power over you I shall excuse myself before Allah about you and strike you with my sword with which I did not strike anyone but that he went to hell.

فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ! أَمَا تُؤْمِرُ بِالْمَعَادِ؟ أَوْ مَا تَخَافُ نِقَاشَ الْحِسَابِ! أَيُّهَا الْمَعْدُودُ . كَانَ . عِنْدَنَا مِنْ دَوِي الْأَبَابِ، كَيْفَ تُسَيِّعُ شَرَابًا وَطَعَامًا، وَأَنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَأْكُلُ حَرَامًا، وَتَشْرَبُ حَرَامًا، وَتَبْتَاعُ الْأَمْوَالَ وَتَنْكِحُ النِّسَاءَ مِنْ مَالِ الْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُجَاهِدِينَ، الَّذِينَ أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ هَذِهِ الْأَمْوَالَ، وَأَحْرَزَ بِهِمْ هَذِهِ الْبِلَادَ؟! فَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ، وَارْزُدْ إِلَى هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ أَمْوَالَهُمْ، فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ نُمَّ أَمْكَنِي اللَّهُ مِنْكَ لِأَعْدِرَنَّ إِلَى اللَّهِ فِيكَ، وَلَا ضَرِيَّتَكَ بِسِنِّيهِ الَّذِي مَا ضَرَبْتُ بِهِ أَحَدًا إِلَّا دَخَلَ النَّارَ!

By Allah, even if Hasan and Husayn had done what you did there would have been no leniency with me for them and they could not have won their way with me till I had recovered from them the right and destroyed the wrong produced by their unjust action. I swear by Allah, the Lord of all beings, that I would not be pleased to regard their money which you have appropriated as lawful for me and to leave it to my successors by way of inheritance. Mind yourself and consider for a while as though you had reached the end of life and had been buried under the earth. Then your actions will be presented before you in the place where the oppressor cries "Alas" while he who wasted his life yearns for return (to the world),

but time was none to escape. (Qur'an, 38:3)

وَ وَاللَّهِ لَوْ أَنَّ الْحَسَنَ وَالْحُسَيْنَ فَعَلَا مِثْلَ الَّذِي فَعَلْتَ، مَا كَانَتْ هُمَا عِنْدِي هَوَادَّةً، وَلَا ظَفِيرًا مِثِّي بِإِزَادَةٍ، حَتَّى آخُذَ الْحَقُّ مِنْهُمَا، وَأُزِيحَ الْبَاطِلَ عَنْ مَظْلَمَتَيْهِمَا. وَأُقْسِمُ بِاللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ مَا يَسْرُرُنِي أَنَّ مَا أَخَذْتَهُ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ خِلَالِي، أَتَرْتُهُ مِيرَاثًا لِمَنْ بَعْدِي، فَصَحَّ رُؤْيَدًا، فَكَأَنَّكَ قَدْ بَلَغْتَ الْمَدَى، وَدُفِنْتَ تَحْتَ التُّرَى، وَعَرِضْتَ عَلَيْكَ أَعْمَالُكَ بِالْمَحَلِّ الَّذِي يُبَادِي الظَّالِمُ فِيهِ بِالْحُسْرَةِ، وَيَتَمَتَّى الْمُضَيِّعُ الرَّجْعَةَ، (وَلَا تَ حِينَ مَنَاصٍ)! وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 42: To `Umar ihn Abi Salamah al-Makhzumi

To `Umar ihn Abi Salamah al-Makhzumi (foster son of the Holy Prophet from Umm al-mu'minin, Umm Salamah) who was Amir al-mu'minin's Governor of Bahrain, hut whom he removed and replaced by an- Nu'man ibn Ajlan az-Zuraqi.

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى عمر بن أبي سلمة المخزومي

وكان عامله على البحرين، فعزله، واستعمل النعمان بن عجلان الرزقي مكانه :

Now, I have posted an-Nu'man ibn `Ajlan az-Zuraqi at Bahrain and have released you from that position without any blame or or reproach on you, because you managed the governorship well and discharged the obligations. Therefore, proceed to me while you are neither suspected nor rebuked, neither blamed nor guilty. I have just intended to proceed towards the recalcitrant of Syria and desired that you should be with me because you are among those on whom I rely in fighting the enemy and erecting the pillars of religion, if Allah wills.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي قَدْ وُلِّيتُ النُّعْمَانَ بْنَ عَجْلَانَ الرُّزْقِيَّ عَلَى الْبَحْرَيْنِ، وَنَزَعْتُ يَدَكَ، بِلَا دَمٍ لَكَ، وَلَا تَثْرِيْبٍ عَلَيْكَ، فَلَقَدْ أَحْسَنْتَ الْوِلَايَةَ، وَأَدَّيْتَ الْأَمَانَةَ، فَأَقْبِلْ غَيْرَ ظَنِينٍ، وَلَا مَلُومٍ، وَلَا مُتَّهَمٍ، وَلَا مَأْتُومٍ، فَقَدْ أَرَدْتُ الْمَسِيرَ إِلَى ظَلَمَةِ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ، وَأَحْبَبْتُ أَنْ تَشْهَدَ مَعِيَ، فَإِنَّكَ بِمَنْ أَسْتَظْهَرُ بِهِ عَلَى جِهَادِ الْعُدُوِّ، وَإِقَامَةِ عَمُودِ الدِّينِ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ.

**Letter 43: To Masqalah ibn Hubayrah ash-Shaybani, the
Governor of Ardashir Khurrah (Iran)**

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى مصقلة بن هُبيرة الشيباني

وهو عامله على أردشير حُرّة

I have come to know concerning you a matter which if you have done it you have displeased your Allah and disobeyed your Imam. You are distributing among the Arabs (Bedouins) of your kin who tend towards you the property of the Muslims which they collected by dint of their spears and horses and on which their blood was shed. By Allah Who germinated the seed and created living beings, if this is true you will be humbled in my view and you will become light in weight. Therefore, do not treat lightly the obligations of your Lord and do not reform your world by ruining your religion, since then you will be among losers by the way of (your) actions.

بَلَّغَنِي عَنْكَ أَمْرٌ إِنْ كُنْتَ فَعَلْتَهُ فَقَدْ أَسْحَطْتَ إِلَيْهِ، وَأَغْضَبْتَ إِمَامَكَ: أَنْتَ تَقْسِمُ فِيءَ
الْمُسْلِمِينَ الَّذِي حَازَتْهُ رِمَاحُهُمْ وَحُيُوتُهُمْ، وَأُرِيقتَ عَلَيْهِ دِمَائُهُمْ، فِيمَنْ اعْتَمَاكَ مِنْ أَعْرَابِ
قَوْمِكَ، فَوَالَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ، وَبَرَأَ النَّسَمَةَ، لَئِنْ كَانَ ذَلِكَ حَقًّا لَتَجِدَنَّ بِكَ عَلَيَّ هَوَانًا، وَلَتَحْفَنَنَّ
عِنْدِي مِيزَانًا، فَلَا تَسْتَهِنَنَّ بِحَقِّ رَبِّكَ، وَلَا تُصْلِحْ دُنْيَاكَ بِمَحَقِّ دِينِكَ، فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الْأَخْسَرِينَ
أَعْمَالًا.

Know that the right of those Muslims who are around you and those who are around me in this property is equal. For that reason they come to me and take from it.

أَلَا وَإِنَّ حَقَّ مَنْ قَبْلَكَ وَقَبْلَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فِي قِسْمَةِ هَذَا الْقَيْءِ سَوَاءٌ، يَرِدُونَ عِنْدِي
عَلَيْهِ، يَصُدُّرُونَ عَنْهُ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 44: To Ziyad ibn Abih

To Ziyad ibn Abih when Amir al-mu'minin had come to know that Mu`awiyah had written to Ziyad to deceive him and to attach him to himself in kinship.

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى زياد بن أبيه

وقد بلغه أن معاوية كتب إليه يريد خديعته باستلحاقه

I have learnt that Mu`awiyah has written to you to deceive your wit and blunt your sharpness. You should be on guard against him because he is the Satan who approaches a believer from the front and from the back, from the right and from the left, to catch him suddenly in the hour of his carelessness and overcome his intelligence.

وَقَدْ عَرَفْتُ أَنَّ مُعَاوِيَةَ كَتَبَ إِلَيْكَ يَسْتَنْزِلُ لُبَّكَ، وَيَسْتَفِلُّ عَزَبَكَ، فَاحْذَرُهُ، فَإِنَّمَا هُوَ الشَّيْطَانُ يَأْتِي الْمَرْءَ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ، وَعَنْ يَمِينِهِ وَعَنْ شِمَالِهِ، لِيَقْتَحِمَ عَقْلَتَهُ، وَيَسْتَلْبِ عَزَبَتَهُ.

In the days of `Umar ibn al-Khattab, Abu Sufyan ¹ happened to utter a thoughtless point which was an evil suggestion of Satan, from which neither kinship is established nor entitlement to succession occurs. He who relies on it is like the uninvited guest to a drink-party or like the dangling cup (tied to a saddle).

وَقَدْ كَانَ مِنْ أَبِي سُفْيَانَ فِي زَمَنِ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ قُلْتُهُ مِنْ حَدِيثِ النَّفْسِ، وَنَزَعَةٌ مِنْ نَزَعَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ، لَا يَنْبُتُ بِهَا نَسَبٌ، وَلَا يُسْتَحَقُّ بِهَا إِرْثٌ، وَالْمُتَعَلِّقُ بِهَا كَالْوَاغِلِ الْمُدْفَعِ، وَالتَّنُوطِ الْمُدْبَذِّبِ.

[When Ziyad read this letter he said, "By Allah he has testified to it." This point remained in his mind till Mu`awiyah claimed him (as his brother by his father)].

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says Amir al-mu'minin's word "al-waghil" means the man who joins the drinking group so as to drink with them, but he is not one of them. He is therefore constantly turned out and pushed off. As for the words "an-nawtu'l-mudhabdhab", it is a wooden cup or a bowl or the like attached to the saddle of the rider so that it dangles when the rider drives the beast or quickens its pace.

فلما قرأ زياد الكتاب قال: شهد بها ورب الكعبة، ولم يزل في نفسه حتى ادّعاه معاوية.

قال الرضي: قوله (عليه السلام): "كَالْوَاغِلِ الْمُدْفَعِ" الواغِلُ: هو الذي يهجم على الشرب ليشرب معهم وليس منهم، فلا يزال مُدْفَعًا محاجزاً. و"التنوط المدبذب": هو ما يناط برحل الراكب من قعب أو قده أو ما أشبه ذلك، فهو أبداً يتقلقل إذا حث ظهره واستعجل سيره.

Notes

1. Caliph `Umar sent Ziyad to Yemen for some encounter. When he returned after finishing the job he addressed a gathering which included Amir al-mu`minin, `Umar, `Amr ibn al-`As and Abu Sufyan. Impressed with the speech `Amr ibn al-`As said:

"What a good man! Had he been from the Quraysh he would have led the whole of Arabia with his stick." Whereupon Abu Sufyan said, "He is from the Quraysh as I know who is his father." `Amr ibn al-`As enquired, "Who was his father?" Abu Sufyan said, "It is I." History also conclusively holds that Ziyad's mother Sumayyah, who was the slave-maid of al-Harith ibn Kaldah and was married to a slave named `Ubayd, used to lead an immoral life in a quarter of at-Ta'if known as Haratu 'l-Baghaya, and immoral men used to visit her. Once Abu Sufyan also got to her through Abu Maryam as-Saluli. As a result Ziyad was born. When `Amr ibn al-`As heard this from Abu Sufyan, he asked why he had not declared it. Abu Sufyan pointed to `Umar and said that he was afraid of him, otherwise he would have declared him his own son. Although he would not have dared to do this, when Mu`awiyah acquired power he started correspondence with him because Mu`awiyah was in need of such persons who were intelligent and cunning and expert in machinations. In any case, when Amir al-mu`minin got information about this correspondence he wrote this letter to Ziyad wherein he warned him against Mu`awiyah so that he should not fall in the trap. But he did fall in his trap and joined Mu`awiyah and the latter declared him his brother by attaching him in his kin, although the Prophet had declared.

The child goes to the (lawful) husband while the adulterer gets stones.

Letter 45: To `Uthman ibn Hunayf al-Ansari

To `Uthman ibn Hunayf al-Ansari who was Amir al-mu' minin's Governor of Basrah, when he came to know that the people of that place had invited `Uthman to a banquet and he had attended.

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى عثمان بن حنيف الانصاري

وهو عامله على البصرة، وقد بلغه أنه دعي إلى وليمة قوم من أهلها، فمضى إليهم

O Ibn Hunayf, I have come to know that a young man of Basrah invited you to a feast and you leapt towards it. Foods of different colours were being chosen for you and big bowls were being given to you. I never thought that you would accept the feast of a people who turn out the beggars and invite the rich. Look at the morsels you take, leave out that about which you are in doubt and take that about which you are sure that it has been secured lawfully.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، يَا بَنَ حَنِيفَ، فَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي أَنَّ رَجُلًا مِنْ فِتْيَةِ أَهْلِ الْبَصْرَةِ دَعَاكَ إِلَى مَأْدُبَةٍ، فَأَسْرَعْتَ إِلَيْهَا، تُسْتَطَابُ لَكَ الْأَلْوَانُ، وَتُنْقَلُ إِلَيْكَ الْجِفَانُ، وَمَا ظَنَنْتُ أَنَّكَ تُجِيبُ إِلَى طَعَامِ قَوْمٍ، عَائِلُهُمْ جَحْفُوٌّ وَعَيْنُهُمْ مَدْعُوٌّ. فَأَنْظُرْ إِلَى مَا تَقْضِمُهُ مِنْ هَذَا الْمَقْضَمِ، فَمَا اشْتَبَهَ عَلَيْكَ عِلْمُهُ فَالْفِظْهُ، وَمَا أَيَقَنْتَ بِطِيبِ وُجُوهِهِ فَتَلْ مِنْهُ.

Remember that every follower has a leader whom he follows and from the effulgence of whose knowledge he takes light. Realize that your Imam has contented himself with two shabby pieces of cloth out of the (comforts of the) world and two loaves for his meal. Certainly, you cannot do so but at least support me in piety, exertion, chastity and uprightness, because, by Allah, I have not treasured any gold out of your world nor amassed plentiful wealth nor collected any clothes other than the two shabby sheets.

أَلَا وَإِنَّ لِكُلِّ مَأْمُومٍ إِمَامًا، يَقْتَدِي بِهِ، وَيَسْتَضِيءُ بِنُورِ عِلْمِهِ. أَلَا وَإِنَّ إِمَامَكُمْ قَدْ اكْتَفَى مِنْ دُنْيَاهُ بِطَمْرِيهِ، وَمِنْ طُعْمِهِ بِفُرْصِيهِ. أَلَا وَإِنَّكُمْ لَا تَقْدِرُونَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ، وَلَكِنْ أَعْيُونِي بِوَرَعٍ وَاجْتِهَادٍ، وَعِقَّةٍ وَسَدَادٍ فَوَاللَّهِ مَا كَنْزْتُ مِنْ دُنْيَاكُمْ نَبْرًا، وَلَا ادَّخَرْتُ مِنْ غَنَائِمِهَا وَفَرًّا، وَلَا أَعَدَدْتُ لِيَالِي ثَوْبِي طِمْرًا.

Of course, all that we had in our possession under this sky was Fadak, but a group of people felt greedy for it and the other party withheld themselves from it. Allah is, after all, the best arbiter. What shall I do: Fadak, ¹ or no Fadak, while tomorrow this body is to go into the grave in whose darkness its traces will be destroyed and (even) news of it will disappear? It is a pit that, even if its width is widened or the hands of the digger make it broad and open, the stones and clods of clay will narrow it and the falling earth will close its aperture. I try to keep myself engaged in piety so that on the day of great fear it will be peaceful and steady in slippery places.

بَلَى! كَانَتْ فِي أَيْدِينَا فَدَكَ مِنْ كُلِّ مَا أَطْلَتْهُ السَّمَاءُ، فَشَحَّتْ عَلَيْهَا نُفُوسُ قَوْمٍ،
وَسَخَّتْ عَنْهَا نُفُوسُ آخَرِينَ، وَنِعَمَ الْحُكْمَ اللَّهُ. وَمَا أَصْنَعُ بِفَدَاكَ وَعَيْرِ فَدَاكَ، وَالتَّفَسُّ مَطَانُهَا
فِي عَدِّ جَدَثٍ، تَنْقَطِعُ فِي ظِلْمَتِهِ آثَارُهَا، وَتَغِيْبُ أَحْبَابُهَا، وَخُفْرَةٌ لَوْ زِيدَ فِي فُسْحَتِهَا،
وَأَوْسَعَتْ يَدَا حَافِرِهَا، لِأَضْعَظَهَا الْحَجْرُ وَالْمَدْرُ، وَسَدَّ فُرْجَهَا التُّرَابُ الْمُتْرَاكِمُ، وَإِنَّمَا هِيَ
نَفْسِي أَرُوضُهَا بِالتَّقْوَى لِتَأْتِيَّ أَمَنَةً يَوْمَ الْخَوْفِ الْأَكْبَرِ، وَتَثْبُتَ عَلَيَّ جَوَانِبِ الْمَرْزَاقِ.

If I wished I could have taken the way leading towards (worldly pleasures like) pure honey, fine wheat and silk clothes but it cannot be that my passions lead me and greed take me to choosing good meals while in the Hijaz or in Yamamah there may be people who have no hope of getting bread or who do not have a full meal. Shall I lie with a satiated belly while around me there may be hungry bellies and thirsty livers? Or shall I be as the poet has said:

It is enough for you to have a disease that you lie with your belly full while around you people may be badly yearning for dried leather.

وَلَوْ شِئْتُ لَاهْتَدَيْتُ الطَّرِيقَ، إِلَى مُصَفَّى هَذَا الْعَسَلِ، وَلُبَابِ هَذَا الْقَمْحِ، وَنَسَائِجِ هَذَا
الْقَرِّ، وَلَكِنْ هِيَ هَاتِ أَنْ يَغْلِبَنِي هَوَايَ، وَيَفُودَنِي جَشْعِي إِلَى تَخْيِيرِ الْأَطْعَمَةِ. وَلَعَلَّ بِالْحِجَازِ أَوْ
بِالْيَمَامَةِ مَنْ لِأَطْمَعَ لَهُ فِي الْفُرْصِ، وَلَا عَهْدَ لَهُ بِالتَّبَعِ. أَوْ أَيْتَ مِبْطَانًا وَحَوْلِي بُطُونٌ عَرَّتِي
وَأَكْبَادٌ حَرَّتِي، أَوْ أَكُونُ كَمَا قَالَ الْقَائِلُ:

وَحَسْبُكَ دَاءٌ أَنْ تَبَيْتَ بِيْطَنَةً * وَحَوْلَكَ أَكْبَادٌ تَحْنُ إِلَى الْقَيْدِ

Shall I be content with being called `Amir al-mu`minin' (The Commander of the Believers), although I do not share with the people the hardships of the world? Or shall I be an example for them in the distresses of life? I have not been created to keep myself busy in eating good foods like the tied animal whose only worry is his fodder or like a loose animal whose activity is to swallow. It fills its belly with its feed and forgets the purpose behind it. Shall I be left uncontrolled to pasture freely, or draw the rope of misguidance or roam aimlessly in the paths of bewilderment?

أَفْتَعُ مِنْ نَفْسِي بِأَنْ يُقَالَ: أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَلَا أَشَارِكُهُمْ فِي مَكَارِهِ الدَّهْرِ، أَوْ أَكُونُ أُسْوَةً
لَهُمْ فِي جُشُونَةِ الْعَيْشِ! فَمَا خُلِفْتُ لِيَشْعَلَنِي أَكْلُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ، كَالْبَهِيمَةِ الْمَرْبُوطَةِ هُمُّهَا عَلْفُهَا،
أَوْ الْمُرْسَلَةِ شُعْلُهَا تَقْمُمُهَا، تَكَتْرَشُ مِنْ أَعْلَانِهَا، وَتَلْهُو عَمَّا يُرَادُ بِهَا، أَوْ أَتْرُكُ سُدَى، أَوْ
أَهْمَلُ عَابِتًا، أَوْ أَجْرَّ حَبْلَ الضَّلَالَةِ، أَوْ أَعْتَسِفَ طَرِيقَ الْمَتَاهَةِ!

I see as if one of you would say that if this is what the son of Abi Talib eats then weakness must have made him unfit to fight his foes and encounter the brave. Remember that the tree of the forest is the best for timber, while green twigs have soft bark, and the wild bushes are very strong for burning and slow in dying off. My relation with the Messenger of Allah is that of one branch with another, or of the forearm with the upper arm. By Allah, if the Arabs join together to fight me I will not run away from them and if I

get the opportunity I will hasten to catch them by their necks. I shall surely strive to relieve the earth of this man of perverse mind and uncouth body, till the bits of earth are removed from the grain.

وَكَأَنِّي بِفَائِلِكُمْ يَقُولُ: إِذَا كَانَ هَذَا قُوْتُ ابْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ، فَقَدْ قَعَدَ بِهِ الضَّعْفُ عَنْ قِتَالِ الْأَقْرَانِ وَمُنَازَلَةِ الشُّجْعَانِ. أَلَا وَإِنَّ الشَّجَرَةَ الْبَرِّيَّةَ أَصْلَبُ عُودًا، وَالرَّوَائِعَ الْخَضِرَةَ أَرْقُ جُلُودًا، وَالنَّابِتَاتِ الْعِدِيَّةَ أَقْوَى وَفُودًا، وَأَبْطَأَ حُمُودًا، وَأَنَا مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) كَالصِّنْوِ مِنَ الصِّنْوِ، وَالذِّرَاعِ مِنَ الْعَضْدِ. وَاللَّهِ لَوْ تَظَاهَرَتِ الْعَرَبُ عَلَيَّ قِتَالِي لَمَا وَلَيْتُ عَنْهَا، وَلَوْ أَمَكَنْتِ الْفَرَسُ مِنْ رِقَابِهَا لَسَارَعَتْ إِلَيْهَا، سَأَجْهَدُ فِي أَنْ أُطَهِّرَ الْأَرْضَ مِنْ هَذَا الشَّخْصِ الْمَعْكُوسِ، وَالْجِسْمِ الْمَرْكُوسِ، حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ الْمَدْرَةُ مِنْ بَيْنِ حَبِّ الْحَصِيدِ

A part of the same which is the end of the letter

و من هذا الكتاب، و هو آخره:

Get away from me, O world. Your rein is on your own shoulders as I have released myself from your claws, removed myself of your snares and avoided walking into your slippery places. Where are those whom you have deceived by your jokes? Where are those communities whom you have enticed with your embellishments? They are all confined to graves and hidden in burial places.

By Allah, if you had been a visible personality and a body capable of feeling, I would have awarded you the penalties fixed by Allah because of the people whom you received through desires and the communities whom you threw into destruction and the rulers whom you consigned to ruin and drove to places of distress after which there is neither going nor returning. Indeed whoever stepped on your slippery place slipped, whoever rode your waves was drowned, and whoever evaded your snares received inward support. He who keeps himself safe from you does not worry even though his affairs may be straitened and the world to him is like a day which is near expiring.

إِنِّيكَ عَنِّي يَا دُنْيَا، فَحَبْلُكَ عَلَى غَارِبِكَ، قَدْ انْسَلَلْتُ مِنْ مَحَالِيكَ، وَأَفَلْتُ مِنْ حَبَائِلِكَ، وَاجْتَنَبْتُ الدَّهَابَ فِي مَدَاحِضِكَ. أَيُّنَ الْفُرُوقِ الَّذِينَ عَزَّرْتَهُمْ بِمَدَاعِيكَ؟! أَيُّنَ الْأُمَمِ الَّذِينَ فَتَنْتَهُمْ بِزُخْرَفِكَ؟! هَاهُمْ رَهَائِنُ الْقُبُورِ، وَمَضَامِينُ اللُّهُودِ. وَاللَّهِ لَوْ كُنْتُ شَخْصًا مَرْتَبًا، وَقَالَ بَأْسًا حَسِبًا، لَأَقَمْتُ عَلَيْكَ حُدُودَ اللَّهِ فِي عِبَادِ عَزَّرْتَهُمْ بِالْأَمَانِي، وَأُمَمِ أَلْقَيْتَهُمْ فِي الْمَهَاوِي، وَمُلُوكِ أَسَلَمْتَهُمْ إِلَى التَّلَفِ، وَأَوْرَدْتَهُمْ مَوَارِدَ الْبَلَاءِ، إِذْ لَا وَرْدَ وَلَا صَدْرَ! هَيْهَاتَ! مَنْ وَطِئَ دَحْضَكَ زَلِقَ، وَمَنْ رَكِبَ لُجْجَكَ عَرِقَ، وَمَنْ أَرُوْرَ عَنْ حَبَائِلِكَ وَفَقَّ، وَالسَّلَامُ مِنْكَ لَا يُبَالِي إِنْ ضَاقَ بِهِ مُنَاحُهُ وَالْدُنْيَا عِنْدَهُ كَيَوْمِ حَانَ انْسِلَاحُهُ.

Get away from me, for, by Allah, I do not bow before you so that you may humiliate me, nor do I let loose the reins for you so that you may drive me away. I swear by Allah an oath wherein I, except for the will of Allah,

shall so train my self that it will feel joyful if it gets one loaf for eating, and be content with only salt to season it. I shall let my eyes empty themselves of tears like the stream whose water has flown away. Should `Ali eat whatever he has and fall asleep like the cattle who fill their stomachs from the pasture land and lie down, or as the goats (who) graze, eat the green grass and go into their pen! His eyes may die if he, after long years, follows loose cattle and pasturing animals.

اغْزِي عَنِّي! فَوَاللَّهِ لَا أَذِلُّ لَكَ فَتَسْتَدِلِّي، وَلَا أَسْلَسُ لَكَ فَتَقُودِي. وَإِيْمَ اللّٰهِ - يَمِينًا أَسْتَنْي فِيهَا بِمَشِيئَةِ اللّٰهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ . لِأَرْضِضَنَّ نَفْسِي رِيَاضَةً تَهْمَشُ مَعَهَا إِلَى الْفُرْصِ إِذَا قَدَرْتُ عَلَيْهِ مَطْعُومًا، وَتَقْنَعُ بِالْمِلْحِ مَا دُومًا؛ وَلَا دَعَنَّ مَقْلَتِي كَعَيْنِ مَاءٍ، نَضَبَ مَعِينَهَا مُسْتَفْرِغَةً دُمُوعَهَا. أَتَمْتَلِي السَّائِمَةَ مِنْ رَعِيهَا فَتَبْرُكُ؟ وَتَشْبَعُ الرَّيْبِضَةَ مِنْ عُشْبِهَا فَتَبْرِيضَ؟ وَيَأْكُلُ عَلَيَّ مِنْ زَادِهِ فَيَهْجَعُ؟ فَتَرْتُ إِذَا عَيْنُهُ إِذَا افْتَدَى بَعْدَ السِّنِينَ الْمُتَطَاوِلَةِ بِالْبَهِيمَةِ الْهَامِلَةِ، وَالسَّائِمَةِ الْمُرْعِيَّةِ!

Blessed is he who discharges his obligations towards Allah and endures his hardships, allows himself no sleep in the night but when sleep overpowers him lies down on the ground using his hand as a pillow, along with those who keep their eyes wakeful in fear of the Day of Judgement, whose bodies are ever away from beds, whose lips are humming in remembrance of Allah and whose sins have been erased through their prolonged beseechings for forgiveness.

They are the party of Allah; be it known, verily the party of Allah alone shall be the successful ones (Qur'an, 58:22).

Therefore, O, Ibn Hunayf, fear Allah and be content with your own loaves so that you may escape Hell.

طُوبَى لِنَفْسٍ أَدَّتْ إِلَى رَبِّهَا فَرْضَهَا، وَعَرَكَتْ بِجَنْبِهَا بُؤْسَهَا، وَهَجَرَتْ فِي اللَّيْلِ عُمُضَهَا، حَتَّى إِذَا غَلَبَ الْكَرَى عَلَيْهَا افْتَرَشَتْ أَرْضَهَا، وَتَوَسَّدَتْ كَفَّهَا، فِي مَعْشَرِ أُسْهَرِ عُيُونِهِمْ خَوْفُ مَعَادِهِمْ، تَحَافَتٌ عَنْ مَضَاجِعِهِمْ جُنُوبُهُمْ، وَهَمَّهَمَتْ بِذِكْرِ رَبِّهِمْ شَفَاهُهُمْ، وَتَقَشَّعَتْ بِطُولِ اسْتِعْقَابِهِمْ دُنُوبُهُمْ. (أُولَئِكَ حِزْبُ اللّٰهِ، أَلَا إِنَّ حِزْبَ اللّٰهِ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ) فَاتَّقِ اللّٰهَ يَا بَنَى حُنَيْفٍ، وَتَلْتَكُفُّ أَفْرَاصُكَ، لِيَكُونَ مِنَ النَّارِ خَلَاصُكَ .

Notes

1. Fadak was a green fertile village near Medina in the Hijaz and it also had a fortress called ash-Shumruk. (Mu `jam al-buldan, vol.4, p.238; Mu`jam masta`jam, al-Bakri, vol.3, p.1015; ar-Rawd al-mi`tar, al-Himyari, p.437; Wafa' al-wafa, vol.4, p. 1280). Fadak belonged to the Jews and in the year 7 A. H. its ownership went from them to the Prophet under the terms of a settlement for peace. The reason for this settlement was that when after the fall of Khaybar the Jews realized the real power of the Muslims, their martial aspirations were lowered, and noting that the Prophet had spared some Jews on their seeking protection, they also sent a message of peace to the Prophet and expressed their wish that Fadak might be taken from them and their area should not be made a battlefield. Consequently, the Prophet accepted their request and allowed them an amnesty, and this land became his personal property wherein no one else had any interest, nor could there be any such interest; because the Muslims have a share only in those properties which they might have acquired as booty after jihad, while the property acquired without jihad is called

fay' and the Prophet alone is entitled to it. No other person has a share in it. Thus, Allah says:

And whatever hath Allah bestowed on His Apostle from them, ye pricked not against it any horse or a camel, but Allah granteth authority unto His apostles against whomsoever He willeth: And Allah over all things is All-powerful. (Qur'an, 59:6)

No one has ever disputed the fact that Fadak was secured without battle. It was therefore the Prophet's personal property to which no one else had any title. The Historians write:

Fadak was personal to the Prophet as the Muslims did not use their horses or camels for it. (at-Tarikh, at-Tabari, vol.1, pp.1582-1583, 1589; al-Kamil, Ibn al-Athir, vol.2, pp.224-225; as-Sirah, Ibn Hisham, vol.3, p.368; at-Tarikh, Ibn Khaldun, vol.2, part 2, p.40; Tarikh al-khamis, ad-Diyarbakri, vol.2, p.58; as-Sirah al-Halabiyyah, vol.3, p.50)

The historian and geographical scholar Ahmad ibn Yahya al-Baladhuri (d. 279/892) writes:

Fadak was the personal property of the Prophet as the Muslims had not used their horses or camels for it. (Futuh al-buldan, vol.1, p.33)

`Umar ibn al-Khattab had himself regarded Fadak as the unshared property of the Holy Prophet when he declared:

The property of Banu an-Nadir was among that which Allah has bestowed on His Messenger; against them neither horses nor camels were pricked but they belonged to the Messenger of Allah especially. (as-Sahih, al-Bukhari, vol.4, p.46; vol.7, p.82; vol.9, pp.121-122; as-Sahih, Muslim, vol.5, p.151; as-Sunan, Abu Dawud, vol.3, pp. 139-141; as-Sunan, an-Nasa'i, vol.7, p.132; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.1, pp.25.48.60,208; as-Sunan al-kubra, al-Bayhaqi, vol.6, pp.296-299)

It is also proved in the accepted way that the Prophet had in his lifetime given this land (Fadak) to Fatimah as a gift. It is narrated through al-Bazzar, Abu Ya'la, Ibn Abi Hatim, Ibn Marduwayh and others from Abu Sa'id al-Khudri and through Ibn Marduwayh from `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas that when the verse:

"And give to the near of kin his due. . ." (Qur'an, 17:26) was revealed, the Holy Prophet called Fatimah' and gifted Fadak to her. (ad-Durr al-manthur, as-Suyuti, vol.4, p.177; Majma' az-zawa'id, al-Haythami, vol.7, p.46; Kanz al-'ummal, al-Muttaqi, vol.3, p.439; Ruh al-ma'ani, al-Alusi, vol.15, p.62)

When Abu Bakr assumed power then in view of some benefits of State he turned out Fatimah from Fadak and took it from her possession. Thus, the historians write:

Certainly, Abu Bakr snatched Fadak from Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.16, p. 219; Wafa' al-wafa, as-Samhudi, vol.3, p.1000; as-Sawa'iq al-muhriqah, Ibn Hajar, p.32)

Fatimah raised a voice against it. Protesting to Abu Bakr, she said, "You have taken over possession of Fadak although the Prophet had gifted it to me during his lifetime." On this Abu Bakr asked her to produce witness of the gift. Consequently, Amir al-mu'minin and Umm Ayman gave evidence in her favour. (Umm Ayman was the freed bond maid and the dry nurse of the Holy Prophet. She was the mother of Usamah ibn Zayd ibn al-Harithah. The Holy Prophet used to say "Umm Ayman is my mother after my mother. [al-Mustadrak, vol.4, p.63; at-Tabari, vol.3, p. 3460; al-Isti'ab, vol.4, p. 1793; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, p.567] The Holy Prophet bore witness that she is among the people of Paradise. [Ibn Sa'd, vol.8, p.192; al-Isabah, vol.4, p.432]). But this evidence was held inadmissible by Abu Bakr and Fatimah's claim was rejected as being based on false statement. About this al-Baladhuri writes:

Fatimah said to Abu Bakr, "The Messenger of Allah had apportioned Fadak to me. Therefore, give it to me." Then he asked her for another witness than Umm Ayman, saying, "O' daughter of the Prophet, you know that evidence is not admissible except by two men or one man and two women."

After these facts there remains no possibility of denying that Fadak was the personal property of the Prophet and that he had completed its gifting to her by handing over possession in his lifetime. But Abu Bakr took over its possession and dislodged her from it. In this connection, he rejected the evidence of `Ali and Umm Ayman on the ground that the requirement of evidence was not completed by the evidence of one man and one woman. Besides them, Imam Hasan and Imam Husayn gave evidence in support of Fatimah, but

their evidence was rejected too on the ground that the evidence of the offspring and minors was not acceptable in favour of their parents. Then Rabah, the slave of the Holy Prophet was also produced as a witness in support of the claim of Fatimah but he was rejected too. (Futuh al-buldan, al-Baladhuri, vol. 1, p.35; at-Tarikh, al-Ya`qubi, vol.3, p.195; Muruj adh-dhahab, al-Mas`udi, vol.3, p.237; al-Awa'il, Abu Hilal al-`Askari, p.209; Wafa' al-wafa, vol.3, pp.999, 1000-1001; Mu`jam al-buldan, Yaqut al-Hamawi, vol.4, p.239; Sharh, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.16, pp.216, 219 - 220,274; al-Muhalla, Ibn Hazm, vol.6, p.507; as-Sirah al-Halabiyyah, vol.3, p.361 ; at-Tafsir, al-Fakhr ar-Razi, vol.29, p.284).

At this stage the question arises that when Fatimah's possession over Fadak is admitted as Amir al-mu`minin has also clarified in this letter by saying, "We had Fadak in our possession," what was the sense in asking Fatimah to produce evidence in support of her claim, because the onus of proof does not lie on the person in possession. The onus of proof lies on the person filing a counter claim because possession itself constitutes a proof.

As such it was on Abu Bakr to produce a proof of the lawfulness of his taking over the land, and in the case of his being unable to do so Fatimah's possession would mean a proof for her lawful ownership. As such it would be wrong to ask her to produce some more proof or evidence.

It is strange that when other claims of this nature came before Abu Bakr he allowed them in favour of the claimant merely on the basis of the claim, and the claimant is neither asked to furnish proof of his claim nor to produce witnesses. In this connection, the traditionalists write:

It is related from Jabir ibn `Abdillah al-Ansari that he said that the Messenger of Allah had said that when the booty from Bahrain arrived he would allow him such and such out of it, but the booty did not arrive till the Prophet's death. When it arrived in the days of Abu Bakr he went to him and Abu Bakr made the announcement that whoever had a claim against the Messenger of Allah or to whomever he had made a promise should come for his claim. So I went to him and told him that the Prophet had promised to give me such and such property out of the booty from Bahrain whereupon he gave me all that. (as-Sahih, al-Bukhari, vol.3, pp.119,209,236; vol.4, p.110; vol.5, p.218; as- Sahih, Muslim, vol.7, pp.75-76; al-Jami' as-sahih, at-Tirmidhi, vol.5, p.129; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.3, pp.307-308; at-Tabaqat al-kabir, Ibn Sa'd, vol.2, part 2, pp.88-89).

In the annotations of this tradition, Shihabu'd-Din Ahmad ibn `Ali (Ibn Hajar) al-`Asqalani ash-Shafi`i (773/1372 - 852/1449) and Badru'd- Din Mabmud ibn Ahmad al-`Ayni al-Hanafi (762/1361 - 855/1451) have written:

This tradition leads to the conclusion that the evidence of one just companion can also be admitted as full evidence even though it may be in his own favour, because Abu Bakr did not ask jabir to produce any witness in proof of his claim. (Fath al-bari fi sharh sahih al-Bukhari, vol.5, p.380; `Umdatul-qari fi sharh sahih al-Bukhari, vol.12, p.121)

If it was lawful to allow property to Jabir on the basis of good impression without calling for witness or evidence then what stopped allowing Fatimah's claim on the basis of similar good impression. If good impression could exist in the case of Jabir to such an effect that he would not benefit by speaking a lie, then why should there not be the good belief about Fatimah that she would not attribute a false saying to the Prophet just for a piece of land. Firstly, her admitted truthfulness and honesty was enough for holding her truthful in her claim and the evidence of `Ali and Umm Ayman in her favour was also available besides other evidences. It has been said that the claim could not be decided in favour of Fatimah on the basis of these two witnesses because the holy Qur'an lays down the principle of evidence that:

. . .then call to witness two witnesses from among your men and if there not be two men, then (take) a man and two women, (Qur'an, 2:282)

If this principle is universal and general then it should be taken into regard on every occasion, but on some occasions it is found not to have been followed; for example, when an Arab had a dispute with the Prophet about a camel, Khuzaymah ibn Thabit al-Ansari gave evidence in favour of the Prophet and this one evidence was deemed to be equal to two, because there was no doubt in the honesty and truthfulness of the individual in whose favour the evidence was led. It was for this reason that the Holy Prophet granted him the title of Dhu'sh-Shahadatayn (i.e., one whose evidence is equivalent to the evidence of two witnesses). (al-Bukhari, vol.4, p.24; vol.6, p.146; Abu Dawud, vol.3, p.308; an-Nasa'i,

vol.7, p.302; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.5, pp.188, 189,216; al-Isti'ab, vol.2, p.448; Usd al-ghabah, vol.2, p.114; al-Isabah,vol.1, pp.425 -426; al-Musannaf, as-San`ani, vol.8, pp.366 - 368).

Consequently, neither was the generality of the verse about evidence affected by this action nor was it deemed to be against the canons of evidence. So, if here in view of the Prophet's truthfulness one evidence in his favour was deemed to be equal to two, then could not the evidence of `Ali and Umm Ayman be regarded enough for Fatimah in view of her moral greatness and truthfulness? Besides, this verse does not show that there can be no other way of establishing a claim other than these two ways. In this connection, al-Qadi Nuru'llah al-Mar'ashi at-Tustari (956/1549 - 1019/ 1610) has written in Ihqaq al-haqq, chapter on al-Mata'in:

The view of the objector that by Umm Ayman's evidence the requirement of evidence remains incomplete is wrong, on the grounds that from certain traditions it is seen that it is lawful to give a decision on the basis of one witness and it does not necessarily mean that the injunction of the Qur'an has been violated, because this verse means that a decision can be given on the strength of the evidence of two men or one man and two women, and that their evidence is enough. From this it does not appear that if there are some other grounds besides evidence of witnesses that are unacceptable, and that verdict cannot be given on its basis, unless it is argued that this is the only sense of the verse. But since every sense is not final argument, this sense can be brushed aside, particularly because the tradition clearly points to a contrary sense, and ignoring the sense does not necessarily mean violation of the verse. Secondly, the verse allows a choice between the evidence of two men or of one man and two women. If by virtue of the tradition a third choice is added namely that a verdict can be passed by means of other evidence as well, then how does it necessitate that the Qur'anic verse should stand violated?

In any case, from this reply it is clear that a claimant is not obliged to produce the evidence of two men or one man and two women in support of the claim because if there is one witness and the claimant swears on oath, then he can be taken to have legitimacy in his claim and a decision can be given in his favour. In this connection, it has been narrated by more than twelve companions of the Holy Prophet that:

The Messenger of Allah used to decide cases on the strength of one witness and the taking of oath.

It has been explained by some companions (of the Prophet) and some scholars of jurisprudence that this decision is specially related to rights, property and transactions and this decision was practised by the three Caliphs, Abu Bakr, `Umar and `Uthman. (Muslim, vol.5, p.128; Abu Dawud, vol.3, pp.308-309; at-Tirmidhi, vol.3, pp.627-629; Ibn Majah, vol.2, p.793; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.1, pp.248,315,323, vol.3, p.305; vol.5, p.285; Malik ibn Anas, al-Muwatta', vol.2, pp.721-725; al-Bayhaqi, as-Sunan al-kubra, vol.10, pp.167 - 176;as-Sunan, ad-Dar'qutni, vol.4, pp.212 - 215; Majma` az-zawa'id, vol.4, p.202; Kanz al-'ummal, vol.7, p.13)

When decisions were passed on the strength of one witness and swearing, then even if in Abu Bakr's view the requirement of evidence was incomplete, he should have asked her to swear and given the judgement in her favour. But here the very object was to tarnish the truthfulness of Fatimah so that in future the question of her testimony should not arise.

However, when Fatimah's claim was rejected in this manner and Fadak was not accepted as the Prophet's gift to her, she claimed it on the basis of inheritance saying:

"If you do not agree that the Prophet had gifted it to me, you cannot at least deny that Fadak and the revenues of Khaybar as well as the lands around Medina were the Prophet's personal properties, and I am his only successor." But she was deprived of her inheritance on the basis of a tradition related by Abu Bakr himself that the Holy Prophet said: "We prophets have no successors and whatever we leave behind constitutes charity." (al-Bukhari, vol.4, p. 96; vol.5, pp.25 - 26,115,117; vol.8, p.185; Muslim, vol.5, pp.153-155; at-Tirmidhi, vol.4, pp.157-158; Abu Dawud, vol.3, pp.142-143; an-Nasa'i, vol.7, p.132; Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.1, pp.4,6,9,10; al-Bayhaqi, vol.6, p.300; Ibn Sa'd, vol.2, part2, pp.86-87; at-Tabari, vol.1, p.1825; Tarikh al-khamis, vol.2, pp.173-174).

Besides Abu Bakr no one else had knowledge of this saying which was shown to be a tradition of the Prophet nor had anyone from among the companions heard it. Thus, Jalalu'd-Din `Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Bakr as-Suyuti ash-Shafi'i (849/1445-911/1505) and

Shihabu'd-Din Ahmad ibn Muhammad (Ibn Hajar) al-Haytami ash-Shafi'i (909/1504-974/1567) have written:

After the death of the Prophet there was a difference of view about the inheritance and no one had any information in this matter. Then, Abu Bakr said that he had heard the Messenger of Allah saying that: "We prophets leave no successors and whatever we leave behind constitutes charity". (Tarikh al-khulafa', p.73; as Sawa'iq al-muhriqah, p. 19)

The mind refuses to believe that the Prophet should not tell those individuals who could be deemed his successors that they would not inherit, and inform a third party who had not the remotest kinship that there would be no successor to him. Then this story was made public only when the case for Fadak had been filed in his court and he himself constituted the contesting party. In such circumstances how can his presenting in his own support a tradition which no one else had heard be deemed permissible. If it is argued that this tradition should be relied upon in view of the greatness of position of Abu Bakr, then why cannot Fatimah's claim to the gift be relied upon because of her honesty and truthfulness, more so when the evidence of Amir al-mu'minin and Umm Ayman as well as others was also in her favour. If necessity was felt to call more evidence in her case, then evidence can also be called for about this tradition, particularly, since this tradition hits against the general instructions of the Qur'an on succession. How can a tradition which is weak in the manner of its relating and altered and is questioned on the basis of facts be deemed to particularize a generality of the Qur'anic injunction on succession, because the question of the inheritance of the prophets is clearly mentioned in the Qur'an. Thus, Allah says:

And Solomon inherited David . . . (Qur'an, 27:16)

At another place it is stated through the words of Prophet Zakariyya:

So grant me from yourself an heir, who shall inherit me and inherit from the family of Jacob. . . (Qur'an, 19:5-6)

In these verses succession refers to succession in estate and to take it in its figurative meaning of succession in prophetic knowledge would not only be obtuse but also against facts, because knowledge and prophethood are not objects of succession, nor do they possess the quality of transmission through inheritance, for in that case all the progeny of the prophets would have been prophets. There is no sense in making a distinction that the progeny of some prophets may inherit prophethood while others should remain deprived of it. It is strange that the theory of transmission of prophethood through inheritance is propagated by those who have always laid the objection against the Shi'ahs that they regard the Imamate and the caliphate as an object of inheritance and confined to one family only. Will not prophethood become an object of inheritance by taking succession in this verse to mean succession to the prophethood?

If in Abu Bakr's view by virtue of this tradition there could be no successor of the Prophet then where was this tradition when a document had been written admitting Fatimah's claim for succession? Thus, Nuru'd- Din `Ali ibn Ibrahim al-Halabi ash-Shafi'i (975/1567 - 1044/1635) quoting from Shamsu'd-Din Yusuf (Sibt ibn al-Jawzi) al-Hanafi (581/1185 - 654/ 1256) narrated:

Abu Bakr was on the pulpit when Fatimah came to him and said, "O' Abu Bakr, the Qur'an should allow your daughter to inherit you but I am not to inherit my father!" Abu Bakr started weeping and alighted from the pulpit. Then he wrote for her about Fadak. At that time `Umar arrived and enquired what it was. Abu Bakr replied, "It is a document I have written for Fatimah about her inheritance from her father." `Umar said, "What will you spend on the Muslims while the Arabs are waging war against you, as you see?" Then, `Umar took the document and tore it. (as-Sirah al-Halabiyyah, vol.3, pp. 361-362)

Every sensible person who remarks this behaviour can easily reach the conclusion that this tradition is concocted and wrong, and was fabricated only to secure possession over Fadak and other inheritances. Consequently, Fatimah refused to accept it and expressed her anger in this way that she made a will about Abu Bakr and `Umar that the two should not join in her funeral prayer. `A'ishah narrated:

Fatimah (p.b.u.h.), the daughter of the Holy Prophet (S) sent for Abu Bakr (after he became Caliph after the death of the Holy Prophet) claiming from him her inheritance left by the Messenger of Allah from what Allah had bestowed (especially) upon him at Medina and Fadak and what was left from one-fifth (khums) of the income (annually received) from Khaybar. . . , Abu Bakr refused to hand over anything from it to Fatimah. Then,

Fatimah became angry with Abu Bakr and forsook him and did not talk to him until the end of her life...When she died, her husband, `Ali ibn Abi Talib buried her at night. He did not inform Abu Bakr about her death and offered the funeral prayer over her himself. . . (al-Bukhari, vol.5, p.177; vol.8; p.185; Muslim, vol.5, pp.153-155; al-Bayhari, vol.4, p.29; vol.6, pp. 300-301; Ibn Sa'd, vol.2, part 2, p.86; Ahmad ibn Hanbal ,vol.1,p.9; at-Tabari, vol.1, p.1825; Ibn Kathir, at-Tarikh, vol.5, pp.285-286; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.6, p.46 and Wafa' al-wafa', vol.3, p.995)

In this connection, Umm Ja'far, the daughter of Muhammad ibn Ja'far, narrated about the request of Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) to Asma' bint `Umays near her death that:

When I die, I want you and `Ali to wash me, and do not allow anyone to go in to me (in my house).

When she died `A'ishah came to enter, Asma' told her, "Do not enter." `A'ishah complained to Abu Bakr (her father) saying, "This Khath`amiyyah (a woman from the tribe of Kath'am, i.e. Asma') intervenes between us and the daughter of the Messenger of Allah . . ." Then, Abu Bakr came and stood at the door and said, "O' Asma', what makes you prevent the wives of the Prophet from entering in to the daughter of the Messenger of Allah?" Asma' replied, "She had herself ordered me not to allow anyone to enter into her . . ." Abu Bakr said, "Do what she has ordered you." (Hilyah al-awliya', vol.2, p.43; as-Sunan al-kubra, vol.3, p.396; vol.4, p.334; Ansab al-ashraf, vol.1, p.405; al-Isti`ab, vol.4, pp.1897-1898; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, p.524; al-Isabah, vol.4, pp.378-379)

Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) had also made a request to Amir al-mu'minin `Ali that she must be buried at night and that no one should come to her, that Abu Bakr and `Umar should not be notified about her death and burial, and that Abu Bakr should not be allowed to say the prayer over her body.

When she died, `Ali washed and buried her in the quietness of the night, not notifying Abu Bakr and `Umar. So, these two were not aware of her burial.

Muhammad ibn `Umar al-Waqidi (130/747 - 207/823) said:

It has been proved to us that `Ali (p.b.u.h.) performed her funeral prayer and buried her by night, accompanied by al-`Abbas (ibn `Abd al-Muttalib) and (his son) al-Fadl, and did not notify anyone.

it was for this reason that the burial place of Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) was hidden and unknown, and no one is sure about it. (al-Mustadrak, vol.3, pp.162-163; al-Musannaf, vol.4, p.141; Ansab al-ashraf, vol.1, pp.402, 405. al-Isti`ab, vol.4, p.1898; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, pp. 524-525; al-Isabah, vol.4, pp.379-380; at-Tabari, vol.3, pp.2435-2436; Ibn Sa'd, vol.8, pp.19-20; Wafa' al-wafa', vol.3, pp.901-902,904,905; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.16, pp.279-281) To attribute this displeasure of Fatimah to sentiments and thereby to lower its importance does not evince a correct sentiment, because if this displeasure had been the result of sentiments then Amir al-mu'minin would have stopped her from this misplaced displeasure, but no history shows that Amir al-mu'minin took this displeasure to be misplaced. Besides, how could her displeasure be the result of personal feelings or sentiments since her pleasure or displeasure always accord with Allah's will. The Prophet's following saying is a proof of this:

O' Fatimah, surely Allah is enraged in your rage and is pleased in your pleasure. (al-Mustadrak, vol.3, p.153; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, p.522; al-Isabah, vol.4, p.366; Tahdhib at-tahdhib, vol.12, p.441; al-Khasa'is al-kubra, vol.2, p.265; Kanz al-`ummal, vol.13, p.96; vol.16, p.280; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, p.203)

A short history of Fadak after the death of Fatimah

The motive which causes us to pursue the history of Fadak and to extract the continuation of events after it for a period of three centuries from the texts of historical books is to clarify three questions:-

a. The rule of annulment of inheritance from prophets made by the Holy Prophet, in other words, that the property of the Holy Prophet is a part of the public treasury and belongs to all Muslims. This was claimed by the first caliph Abu Bakr, and was rejected by his successors, both by next the two caliphs (Umar and Uthman) and by the Umayyads and the `Abbassids. We must consider that the lawfulness and rightfulness of their caliphate depended upon the correctness and lawfulness of the caliphate of the first Caliph and his actions.

b. Amir al-mu'minin (ʿAli p.b.u.h.) and the descendants of Fatimah never had any hesitation regarding the rightfulness and justifiability of their claim. They insisted and confirmed that Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) had always been right and that Abu Bakr's claim had always been rejected, and they did not yield to the false claim.

c. Whenever one of the Caliphs made a decision to put into effect Allah's command, in regard to Fadak, to observe justice and equity, and to restore the right to the entitled one in conformity with Islamic rules, he used to return back the Fadak to the descendants of Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) and to hand it over to them.

Notes

1. ʿUmar ibn al-Khattab was the most harsh person in keeping Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) from Fadak and her inheritance as he himself confessed:

When the Messenger of Allah died I came along with Abu Bakr to ʿAli ibn Abi Talib and said, "What do you say about what has been left by the Messenger of Allah?" He replied, "We have the most rights with the Holy Prophet." I (ʿUmar) said, "Even those properties of Khaybar?" He said, "Yes, even those of Khaybar." I said, "Even those of Fadak?" He replied, "Yes, even those of Fadak." Then, I said, "By Allah, we say no, even if you cut our necks with saws." (Majmaʿ az-zawaʿid, vol.9, pp.39-40)

As it has been mentioned before, ʿUmar then took the document of Fadak and tore it up. But when ʿUmar became Caliph (13/634 - 23/644) he gave back the Fadak to inheritors of the Holy Prophet. Yaqut al-Hamawi (574/1178 - 626/1229), the famous historian and geographer, following the event of Fadak said:

...Then, when ʿUmar ibn al-Khattab became caliph and gained victories and the Muslims had secured abundant wealth (i.e. the public treasury satisfied the Caliphate's needs) he made his judgement contrary to that of his predecessor, and that was to give it (Fadak) back to the Prophet's heirs. At that time ʿAli ibn Abi Talib and ʿAbbas ibn ʿAbd al-Muttalib disputed Fadak.

ʿAli said that Holy Prophet (S) had bestowed it on Fatimah during his lifetime. ʿAbbas denied this and used to say, "This was in the possession of the Holy Prophet (S) and I am sharing with his heirs." They were disputing this* among each other and asked ʿUmar to settle the case. He refused to judge between them and said, "Both of you are more conscious and aware to your problem; but I only give it to you..." (Muʿjam al-buldan, vol.4, pp.238-239; Wafa' al-wafa, vol.3, p.999; Tahdhib al-Lughah, vol.10, p.124; Lisan al-ʿArab, vol.10, p.473; Taj al-ʿarus, vol.7, p.166)

The reason that ʿUmar and Abu Bakr were trying to seize Fadak was an economic and political reason, not merely a religious one as the previous episode shows, for when the economic and political condition of the caliphate improved, and there was no need of the income obtained from Fadak, ʿUmar's judgement changed also.

The last part of this historic event has been inserted afterwards to demonstrate the matter of inheritance by the brother of the deceased or the paternal uncle of the deceased when he has no sons. This problem is a matter of dispute between Islamic sects. The judicial and jurisprudential discussion is separate from our goal. We are only discussing the matter historically.

ʿAbbas had no claim in this case because he had not shown that he had a share in this property nor did his descendants consider it to be among their own assets even when they had become caliphs and were reigning. They owned this estate either in their position as caliphs, or they used to return it to the descendants of Fatimah when they had decided to be just governors.2. When ʿUthman ibn Affan became caliph after the death of ʿUmar (23/644 - 35/656) he granted Fadak to Marwan ibn al-Hakam, his cousin (as-Sunan al-kubra, vol.6, p.301; Wafa' al-wafa, vol.3, p. 1000; Ibn Abi'l- Hadid, vol.1, p.198), and this was one of the causes of vindictive feelings among the Muslims towards ʿUthman (al-Maʿarif, Ibn Qutaybah, p. 195; al-Iqd al-farid, vol.4, pp.283, 435; at-Tarikh, Abu'l-Fida', vol.1, p.168; at-Tarikh, Ibn al-Wardi, vol.1, p.204) which ended in the revolt against him and his murder. "While previously Fatimah used to claim it. sometimes as her inheritance and sometimes as a gift (from her father), she was driven away from it (Fadak)" as Ibn Abi'l-Hadid said. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah). In this way Fadak fell into the possession of Marwan. He used to sell its crops and products for at least ten thousand Dinars per year, and if in some years its income decreased this drop was not very pronounced. This was its usual

profit until the time of the caliphate of `Umar ibn `Abd al- `Aziz (in 100/718). (Ibn Sa`d. vol.5, pp.286, 287; Subh al-a`sha, vol.4, p.291)

3. When Mu`awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan became caliph (41/661 - 60/ 680) he became a partner with Marwan and others in Fadak. He allotted one third to Marwan and one third to `Amr ibn `Uthman ibn `Affan and one third to his son Yazid. This was after the death of al-Hasan ibn `Ali (p.b. u.h.). "To make angry the progeny of the Holy Prophet" al-Ya`qubi states: (at-Tarikh, vol.2, p.199)

It was in the possession of the three above mentioned persons until Marwan became caliph (64/684 - 65/685) and he completely took over possession of it. Then he donated it to his two sons, `Abd al-Malik and `Abd al-'Aziz. Then `Abd al-`Aziz donated his share to his son (`Umar ibn `Abd al.`Aziz).

4. When `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz became caliph (99/717 - 101/ 720) he delivered a lecture and mentioned that: "Verily, Fadak was among the things that Allah had bestowed on His Messenger, and no horse, nor camel was pricked against it..." and mentioned the case of Fadak during the past caliphates until He said: "Then Marwan gave it (Fadak) to my father and to `Abd al-Malik. It became mine and al-Walid's and Sulayman's (two sons of `Abd al-Malik). When al-Walid became caliph (86/705 - 96/715)I asked him for his share and He gave it to me. I asked also for Sulayman's share and he gave it to me. Then I gathered the three parts and I possess no property more preferable to me than this. Be witness that I returned it to its original state." He wrote this to his governor of Medina (Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn `Amr ibn Hazm) and ordered him to carry out what he had declared in the speech he delivered. Then Fadak came into the possession of the children of Fatimah. "This was the first removal of oppression by returning it (Fadak) to the children of `Ali." (al-Awa'il, Abu Hilal al-`Askari, p.209). They possessed it during the reign of this caliph.

5. When Yazid ibn `Abd al-Malik became caliph (101/720 - 105/ 724) he seized Fadak and they (the children of `Ali) were dispossessed. It fell into the possession of the Banu Marwan as it had been previously. They passed it from hand to hand until their caliphate expired and passed away to the Banu al-Abbas.

6. When Abu'l-`Abbas Abdullah as-Saffah became the first caliph of the `Abbasid dynasty (132/749-136/754) he gave back Fadak to the children of Fatimah and submitted it to `Abdullah ibn al-Hasan ibn al-Hasan ibn `Ali ibn Abi Talib.

7. When Abu Ja`far `Abdullah al-Mansur ad-Dawanaqi (136/754 - 158/775) became caliph, he seized Fadak from the children of al-Hasan.

8. When Muhammad al-Mahdi ibn al-Mansur became caliph (158/775 - 169/785) he returned Fadak to the children of Fatimah.

9. Then Musa al-Hadi ibn al-Mahdi (169/785 - 170/786) and his brother Harun ar-Rashid (170/786 - 193/809) seized it from the descendants of Fatimah and it was in the possession of Banu al-`Abbas until the time that al-Ma'mun became caliph (198/813 - 218/833).

10. al-Ma'mun al-`Abbasi gave it back to the descendants of Fatimah (210/826). It is narrated through al-Mahdi ibn Sabiq that:

Al-Ma'mun one day sat to hear the complaints of the people and to judge in cases. The first utter of complaint which he received caused him to weep when he looked at it. He asked where the attorney of Fatimah daughter of the Holy Prophet was? An old man stood up and came forth, arguing with him about Fadak and al-Ma'mun also argued with him until he overcame al-Ma'mun. (al-Awa'il, p.209)

Al-Ma'mun summoned the Islamic jurists (al-Fuqaha') and interrogated them about the claim of the Banu Fatimah. They narrated to al-Ma'mun that the Holy Prophet gifted Fadak to Fatimah and that after the death of the Holy Prophet, Fatimah demanded Abu Bakr to return Fadak to her. He asked her to bring witnesses to her claim regarding this gift. She brought `Ali, al-Hasan, al-Husayn and Umm Ayman as her witnesses. They witnessed the case in her favour. Abu Bakr rejected their witness. Then al-Ma'mun asked the Islamic jurists: "What is your view about Umm Ayman?" They replied, "She is a woman to whom the Holy Prophet bore witness that she is an inhabitant of Paradise." al-Ma'mun disputed at length with them and forced them to accept the argument by proofs till they confessed that `Ali, al-Hasan, al-Husayn and Umm Ayman had witnessed only the

truth. When they unanimously accepted this matter, he restored Fadak to the descendants of Fatimah. (at-Tarikh, al-Ya`qubi, vol.3, pp. 195 - 196)

Then al-Ma'mun ordered that the estate (of Fadak) should be registered among the property (of the descendants of Fatimah) and it was registered and al-Ma'mun signed it.

Then he wrote a letter to his governor in Medina named Qutham ibn Ja'far as follows:

"Know that Amir al-mu'minin, in exercise of the authority vested upon him by the divine religion as the Caliph, successor and the kinsman of the Holy Prophet has considered himself more deserving to follow the precedent of the Holy Prophet (sunnatu'n-nabi) and to carry out his commands. And (the chief is more entitled) to restore to the rightful persons any endowment gifted by the Holy Prophet or thing which the Holy Prophet had gifted to someone. The success and safeguard of Amir al-mu'minin is by Allah and he is particularly anxious to act in a way which will win the pleasure of the Almighty Allah for him.

"Verily, the Holy Prophet had gifted the estate of Fadak to his daughter Fatimah (p.b.u.h.). He had transferred its ownership to her. It is a clear and established fact. None of the kindred of the Holy Prophet have any difference of view. Fatimah always claimed that which was more deserving (to be justified) than the person (Abu Bakr) whose word was accepted. Amir al-mu'minin considers it right and proper to restore Fadak to the heirs of Fatimah. He would hereby win nearness to Almighty Allah by establishing His justice and right. It would win the appreciation of the Holy Prophet by carrying into effect his commandments. Amir al-mu'minin has commanded that this restoration of Fadak should duly be registered. The commands should be transmitted to all the officials.

"Then, if, as it was, a custom to proclaim on every hajj gathering (every year), following the death of the Holy Prophet, that anyone to whom the Holy Prophet had promised (the donation) of a gift or a present, should come forward, his statement will be accepted and the promise will be fulfilled. Certainly, Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) had a superior right to have her statements accepted in the matter of the gifting of Fadak by the Holy Prophet (may Allah bless him and his descendants) to her.

"Verily, Amir al-mu'minin has commanded his slave Mubarak at-Tabari to restore Fadak to the descendants of Fatimah the daughter of the holy Prophet with all its borders, its rights and all slaves attached thereto. cereal crops and other things.

"The same has been restored to Muhammad ibn Yahya ibn al-Hasan ibn Zayd ibn `Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn `Ali ibn Abi Talib and Muhammad ibn `Abdullah ibn al-Hasan ibn `Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn `Ali ibn Abi Talib.

"Amir al-mu'minin has appointed the two of them as the agents representing the owners of the lands - the heirs of Fatimah. Know then this is the view of Amir al-mu'minin and that Allah has inspired him to obey the order of Allah and to win His pleasure and the pleasure of the Holy Prophet. Let also your subordinates know this. Behave towards Muhammad ibn Yahya and Muhammad ibn `Abdillah in the same manner as you used to behave towards Mubarak at-Tabari. Help them both to everything which has to do with its flourishing and prosperity and its improvement in abundance of cereals by Allah's will; and that is an end to the matter."

This is written this Wednesday, two nights past Dhu'l-qi'dah, the year 210 (15/2/826).

11. During the period of al-Ma'mun's caliphate Fadak was in the possession of Fatimah's descendants, and this continued during the caliphate of al-Mu'tasim (218/833 - 227/842) and al-Wathiq (227/842 - 232/ 847).

12. When Ja'far al-Mutawakkil became caliph (232/847 - 247/ 861), the one among them who was marked as an archenemy of the progeny of the Holy Prophet both of those alive and of those dead, gave the order to recapture Fadak from the descendants of Fatimah. (He seized it and granted it to Harmalah al-Hajjam or the Cupper), and after the death of al-Hajjam he granted it to al-Bazyar or the Falconer, a native of Tabaristan. (Kashf al-ghumnah, vol.2, pp.121 - 122; al-Bihar, [1st ed.], vol.8., p.108; Safinah al-bihar, vol.2, p.351). Abu Hilal al-`Askari- mentioned that his name was `Abdullah ibn `Umar al-Bazyar and added: "And there were in it (Fadak) eleven date-palm trees which the Holy Prophet had planted by his own hands. The descendants of Abu Talib used to gather these dates. When pilgrims (al-Hujjaj), entered Medina they donated the dates to them. Through this they received a considerable return. This news reached al-Mu- tawakkil. He ordered `Abdullah ibn `Umar to cut up the fruits and to squeeze the juice from them. `Abdullah ibn `Umar sent a man named Bishr ibn Umayyah ath-Thaqafi who squeezed the fruits. It was

reported that he made it into wine. It had not reached Basrah (on its way to the Caliph) before it decayed and al-Mutawakkil was killed." (al-Awa'il, p.209).

13. When al-Mutawakkil was killed and al-Muntasir (his son) succeeded him (247/861 - 248/862) he gave the order to restore Fadak to the descendants of al-Hasan and al-Husayn and delivered the donations of Abu Talib to them and this was in 248/862.

(Ref. for Nos.3-13-Futuh al-buldan, vol.1, pp.33-38; Mu`jam al-buldan, vol.4, pp.238-240; at-Tarikh, al-Ya`qubi, vol.2, p.199; vol.3, pp.48, 195-196; al-Kamil, Ibn al-Athir, vol.2, pp. 224-225; vol.3, pp. 457,497; vol.5, p.63; vol.7, p.116; al-`Iqd al-farid, vol.4, PP:216,283, 435; Wafa' alwafa, vol.3, pp.999-1000; at-Tabaqat al-kabir, vol.5, pp. 286-287; Tarikh al-Khulafa', pp.231-232, 356; Muruj adh-dhahab, vol.4, p.82; Sirah `Umar ibn `Abd al-`Aziz, Ibn al-Jawzi, p.110;Subh al-a`sha vol.4, p.291; Jamharah rasa'il al-`Arab, vol.2, pp.331-332; vol. 3, pp. 509-510; `Alam an-nisa', vol.3, pp.1211 -1212; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.16, pp.277- 278; al-Awa'il, p.209; Kashf al-ghummah, vol.2, pp.120-122; al-Bihar, vol.8, pp.107-108).

14. It seemed that Fadak was recaptured from the descendants of Fatimah after the death of al-Muntasir (248/862), because Abu'l-Hasan, `Ali ibn `Isa al-Irbili (d. 692/1293) mentioned, "al-Mu`tadid (279/892 - 289/902) returned Fadak to the descendants of Fatimah. Then he mentioned that al-Muqtafi (289/902 - 295/908) seized it from them. It is said also that al-Muqtadir (295/908 - 320/932) returned it to them (the descendants of Fatimah)." (Kashf al-ghummah, vol.2, p.122; al-Bihar, vol.8, p.108; Safinah, vol.2, p.351).

15. And after this long period of recapturing and restoration, Fadak was returned to the possession of the usurpers and their heirs as it seems, no further mention was made in history and the curtain fell.

Is it (then that) the judgement of (the times of pagan) ignorance they desire? And who (else) can be better than Allah to judge for a people of assured faith. (Qur'an, 5:50)

Letter 46: To one of his Officers

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى بعض عمّاله

Now, you are surely one of those whose help I take in establishing religion and with whose help I break the haughtiness of the sinful and guard critical boundaries. You should seek Allah's help in whatever causes you anxiety. Add a little harshness to the mixture of leniency and remain lenient where leniency is more appropriate. Adopt harshness when you cannot do without harshness. Bend your wings (in humbleness) before the subjects.

Meet them with your face broad and keep yourself lenient (in behaviour) with them. Treat them equally in looking at them with half eyes or full eyes, in signalling and in greeting so that the great should not expect transgression on your part and the weak should not lose hope in your justice; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّكَ بِمَنْ أَسْتَظْهِرُ بِهِ عَلَى إِقَامَةِ الدِّينِ، وَأَقْمَعُ بِهِ نَحْوَةَ الْأَثِيمِ، وَأَسُدُّ بِهِ لِهَاتَةِ
التَّغْرِ الْمُحُوفِ. فَاسْتَعِنَ بِاللَّهِ عَلَى مَا أَهَمَّكَ، وَاحْلِطِ الشَّدَّةَ بِضِعْفِ مِنَ اللَّيْنِ، وَأَرْفُقْ مَا كَانَ
الرِّفْقُ أَرْفَقَ، وَاعْتَرِمْ بِالشَّدَّةِ حِينَ لَا تُعْنِي عَنْكَ إِلَّا الشَّدَّةُ، وَاحْفِضِ لِلرَّعِيَّةِ جَنَاحَكَ، وَابْسِطْ
هُنَّ وَجْهَكَ وَأَلِنْ هُنَّ جَانِبَكَ، وَأَسِ بَيْنَهُمْ فِي اللَّحْظَةِ وَالنَّظَرَةِ، وَالْأَشَارَةِ وَالتَّحِيَّةِ، حَتَّى لَا
يَطْمَعَ الْعُظَمَاءُ فِي حَيْفِكَ، وَلَا يَبْتَاسَ الضُّعَفَاءُ مِنْ عَدْلِكَ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 47: Will To Imam Hasan (a) and Imam Husayn (a) after he was wounded by Abd al-Rahman b. Muljam whilst offered the morning prayers in the mosque of Kufa.

ومن وصية له

للحسن والحسين (عليهم السلام)

لما ضربه ابن ملجم لعنه الله

I advise you (both) to fear Allah and that you should not hanker after the (pleasures of this) world even though it may run after you. Do not be sorry for anything of this world that you have been denied. Speak the truth and act (in expectation) for reward. Be an enemy of the oppressor and helper of the oppressed.

I advise you (both) and all my children and members of my family and everyone whom my writing reaches, to fear Allah, to keep your affairs in order, and to maintain good relations among yourselves for I have heard your grand-father (the Holy Prophet - p.b.u.h.a.h.p.) saying, "Improvement of mutual differences is better than general prayers and fastings."

أوصيكم بتقوى الله، وأن لا تتبعوا الدنيا وإن بعثتكم، ولا تأسفوا على شيء منها زوي عنكم، وقولاً بالحق، وأعمالاً للأجر، وكوناً للظالم خصماً، وللمظلوم عوناً. أوصيكم، وجميع ولدي وأهلي ومن بلغه كتابي، بتقوى الله، ونظم أمركم، وصلاح ذات بينكم، فإنني سمعت جدكم . صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم . يقول: "صالح ذات البين أفضل من عامة الصلاة الصيام."

(Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of orphans. So do not allow them to starve and they should not be ruined in your presence.

(Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of your neighbours, because they were the subject of the Prophet's advice. He went on advising in their favour till we thought he would allow them a share in inheritance.

الله في الأيتام، فلا تغيبوا أفواههم، ولا يضيعوا بحضرتكم. والله الله في حيرانكم، فإنهم وصية نبيكم، ما زال يوصي بهم حتى ظننا أنه سيورثهم

(Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of the Qur'an. No one should excel you in acting upon it. (Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of prayer, because it is the pillar of your religion.

(Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of your Lord's House (Ka'bah). Do not forsake it so long as you live, because if it is abandoned you will not be spared.

(Fear) Allah (and) keep Allah in view in the matter of jihad with the help of your property, lives and tongues in the way of Allah.

وَاللَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي الْقُرْآنِ، لَا يَسْبِقُكُمْ بِالْعَمَلِ بِهِ غَيْرُكُمْ. وَاللَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي الصَّلَاةِ، فَإِنَّهَا عَمُودُ دِينِكُمْ. وَاللَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي بَيْتِ رَبِّكُمْ، لَا تُخْلَوْهُ مَا بَقِيْتُمْ، فَإِنَّهُ إِنْ تُرِكَ لَمْ تُنَاطَرُوا. وَاللَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي الْجِهَادِ بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ وَالسَّتِّكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ.

You should keep to a respect for kinship and spending for others. Avoid turning away from one another and severing mutual relations. Do not give up bidding for good and forbidding from evil lest the mischievous gain positions over you, and then if you will pray, the prayers will not be granted.

وَعَلَيْكُمْ بِالتَّوَاصِلِ وَالتَّبَادُلِ، وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالتَّنَادِبِ وَالتَّقَاطُعِ. لَا تَتْرَكُوا الأَمْرَ بِالمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيِ عَنِ المُنْكَرِ فَيُؤَلَّى عَلَيْكُمْ أَشْرَارُكُمْ، ثُمَّ تَدْعُونَ فَلَا يُسْتَجَابُ لَكُمْ.

Then he said: O sons of `Abd al-Muttalib, certainly I do not wish to see you plunging harshly into the blood of Muslims shouting "Amir al-mu'minin has been killed." Beware, do not kill on account of me except my killer.

Wait till I die by his (Ibn Muljam's) existing stroke. Then strike him one stroke for his stroke and do not dismember the limbs of the man, for I have heard the Messenger of Allah (S) saying, "Avoid cutting limbs even though it may be a rabid dog."

ثم قال: يَا بَنِي عَبْدِ الْمُطَّلِبِ، لَا أَلْفِينَكُمْ تَحُوضُونَ دِمَاءَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ حَوْضًا، تَقُولُونَ: قَتَلَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ. أَلَا لَا تَقْتُلُنِي إِلَّا قَاتِلِي. انظُرُوا إِذَا أَنَا مِتُّ مِنْ ضَرْبَتِهِ هَذِهِ، فَاضْرِبُوهُ ضَرْبَةً بِضَرْبَتِهِ، وَلَا يُمَثَّلُ بِالرَّجُلِ، فَإِنِّي سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) يَقُولُ: "إِيَّاكُمْ وَالمُثَلَّةَ وَلَوْ بِالْكَلبِ العَمُورِ."

Letter 48: To Mu'awiyah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى معاوية

Surely, revolt and falsehood abase a man in his religious as well as worldly matters and manifest his shortcomings before his critic. You know that you cannot catch what is destined to remain away from you. Many people had aims other than right (ones) and began to swear by Allah (that they will attain their goal) but He falsified them. Therefore, fear the Day when happy is he who made his end happy (by good actions) while repentant is he who allowed Satan to lead him and did not resist him. You called us to a settlement through the Qur'an although you were not a man of the Qur'an, and we responded to the Qur'an through its judgement, and not to you; and that is an end to the matter.

وَإِنَّ الْبَغْيَ وَالرُّوْرَ يُوتِعَانِ الْمَرْءَ فِي دِينِهِ وَدُنْيَاهُ، وَيُبْدِيَانِ خَلْلَهُ عِنْدَ مَنْ يَعْيبُهُ، وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُ
أَنَّكَ غَيْرُ مُدْرِكٍ مَا قُضِيَ فَوَائِهُ، وَقَدْ رَامَ أَقْوَامٌ أَمْرًا يَغْيِرُ الْحَقَّ، فَتَأَوَّلُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ فَأَكْذَبَهُمْ،
فَاخْذَرُ يَوْمًا يُعْتَبَطُ فِيهِ مِنْ أَحْمَدَ عَاقِبَةَ عَمَلِهِ، وَيَنْدُمُ مَنْ أَمَكَنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ مِنْ قِيَادِهِ فَلَمْ
يُجَاذِبْهُ. وَقَدْ دَعَوْتَنَا إِلَى حُكْمِ الْقُرْآنِ وَلَسْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِهِ، وَلَسْنَا إِيَّاكَ أَجْبَنًا، وَلَكِنَّا أَجْبَنَّا الْقُرْآنَ
إِلَى حُكْمِهِ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 49: To Mu`awiyah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إليه

So now, this world turns away from the next one. He who is devoted to it achieves nothing from it except that it increases his greed and coveting for it. He who is devoted to it is not satisfied with what he gets from it because of what he has not got. Eventually, there is separation from what has been amassed, and a breaking of what has been strengthened. If you take a lesson from the past you can be safe in the future; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا مَشْعَلَةٌ عَن غَيْرِهَا، وَمَ يُصِيبُ صَاحِبُهَا مِنْهَا شَيْئاً إِلَّا فَتَحَتْ لَهُ حِرْصاً عَلَيْهَا، وَهَجَاجاً بِهَا، وَلَنْ يَسْتَعِينِي صَاحِبُهَا بِمَا نَالَ فِيهَا عَمَّا لَمْ يَبْلُغْهُ مِنْهَا، وَمِنْ وَرَاءِ ذَلِكَ فِرَاقٌ مَا جَمَعَ، وَنَقْضٌ مَا أُبْرِمَ! لَوْ اعْتَبَرْتَ بِمَا مَضَى حَفِظْتَ مَا بَقِيَ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 50: To the officers of his army

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى أمراءه على الجيوش

From the servant of Allah, `Ali, Amir al-mu'minin to the Officer-in-charge of garrisons:

مِنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلِيِّ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى أَصْحَابِ الْمَسَالِحِ

Now, it is obligatory on an officer that the distinction he achieves, or the wealth with which he has been exclusively endowed, should not make him change his behaviour towards those under him, and that the riches Allah has bestowed on him should increase him in nearness to his people and kindness over his brethren.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ حَقًّا عَلَى الْوَالِي أَلَّا يُعَيِّرَهُ عَلَى رَعِيَّتِهِ فَضْلًا نَالَهُ، وَلَا طَوْلٌ خُصَّ بِهِ، وَأَنْ يَزِيدَهُ مَا قَسَمَ اللَّهُ لَهُ مِنْ نِعْمِهِ دُنُوًّا مِنْ عِبَادِهِ، وَعَطْفًا عَلَى إِخْوَانِهِ.

Beware, that it is obligatory for you on me that I should not keep anything secret from you except during war, nor should I decide any matter without consulting you except the commands of religion, nor should I ignore the fulfilment of any of your rights nor desist till I discharge it fully, and that for me all of you should be equal in rights. When I have done all this, it becomes obligatory on you to thank Allah for this bounty and to obey me, and you should not hold back when called, nor shirk good acts, and you should face hardships for the sake of right.

If you do not remain steadfast in this, there will be no one more humiliated in my view than the one among you who has deviated, and then I will increase the punishment for him, wherein no one will get any concession from me. Take this (pledge) from your (subordinate) officers and accord to them such behaviour from your side by which Allah may improve your matters; and that is an end to the matter.

أَلَّا وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي أَلَّا أَحْتَجِرَ دُونَكُمْ سِرًّا إِلَّا فِي حَرْبٍ، وَلَا أَطْوِي دُونَكُمْ أَمْرًا إِلَّا فِي حُكْمٍ، وَلَا أُؤَجِّرَ لَكُمْ حَقًّا عَنْ مَحَلِّهِ، وَلَا أَقِفَ بِهِ دُونَ مَقْطَعِهِ، وَأَنْ تُكُونُوا عِنْدِي فِي الْحَقِّ سَوَاءً، فَإِذَا فَعَلْتُ ذَلِكَ وَجَبَتْ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ التَّعَمُّةُ، وَإِلَى عَلَيْكُمْ الطَّاعَةُ، وَأَلَّا تَنْكُصُوا عَنْ دَعْوَةٍ، وَلَا تُفَرِّطُوا فِي صَلَاحٍ، وَأَنْ تَخُوضُوا الْعَمْرَاتِ إِلَى الْحَقِّ، فَإِنْ أَنْتُمْ لَمْ تَسْتَقِيمُوا لِي عَلَى ذَلِكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَحَدٌ أَهْوَنَ عَلَيَّ مِنْ اعْوَجَّ مِنْكُمْ، ثُمَّ أُعْظِمُ لَهُ الْعُقُوبَةَ، وَلَا يَجِدُ عِنْدِي فِيهَا رُحْمَةً، فَخُذُوا هَذَا مِنْ أَمْرَائِكُمْ، وَأَعْطُوهُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ مَا يُصْلِحُ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَمْرَكُمْ. وَ السَّلَامُ .

Letter 51: To his collectors of (land) tax

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى عماله على الخراج

From the servant of Allah `Ali, Amir al-mu'minin to the tax collectors:

مِنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلِيِّ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى أَصْحَابِ الْخُرَاجِ:

So now, he who does not fear where he is going, does not send forward for himself that which could protect him. You should know that the obligations laid on you are few, while their reward is much. Even if there had been no fear of punishment for revolt and disobedience, which Allah has prohibited, the reward in keeping aloof from it would be enough (incentive) to abstain from going after it. Behave yourselves justly with the people and act with endurance with regard to their needs, because you are the treasurers of the people, representatives of the community and the ambassadors of the Imams.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ مَنْ لَمْ يَخْذَرْ مَا هُوَ صَائِرٌ إِلَيْهِ لَمْ يُقَدِّمْ لِنَفْسِهِ مَا يُحْرِزُهَا. وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ مَا كَلَّفْتُمْ يَسِيرٌ، وَأَنَّ ثَوَابَهُ كَثِيرٌ، وَلَوْ لَمْ يَكُنْ فِيمَا نَهَى اللَّهُ عَنْهُ مِنَ الْبُعْيِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ عِقَابٌ يُخَافُ لَكَانَ فِي ثَوَابِ اجْتِنَابِهِ مَا لَا عُدْرَ فِي تَرْكِ طَلْبِهِ. فَأَنْصِفُوا النَّاسَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَاصْبِرُوا لِحَوَائِجِهِمْ، فَإِنَّكُمْ حُرَّانُ الرَّعِيَّةِ، وَوَكَلَاءُ الْأُمَّةِ، وَسُقْرَاءُ الْأَيْمَةِ.

Do not deprive anyone of his needs and do not prevent him from (securing) his requirements. For the collection of tax (kharaj) from the people do not sell their winter or summer clothes, nor cattle with which they work, nor slaves. Do not whip anyone for the sake of one Dirham. Do not touch the property of any person whether he be one who prays (a Muslim) or a protected unbeliever, unless you find a horse or weapons used for attack against Muslims, because it is not proper for the Muslims to leave these things in the hands of the enemies of Islam to enable them to have power over Islam.

وَلَا تَحْسِمُوا أَحَدًا عَنْ حَاجَتِهِ، وَلَا تَحْبِسُوهُ عَنْ طَلِبَتِهِ، وَلَا تَبِيعَنَّ لِلنَّاسِ فِي الْخُرَاجِ كِسْوَةَ شِتَاءٍ وَلَا صَيْفٍ، وَلَا دَابَّةً يِعْتَمِلُونَ عَلَيْهَا، وَلَا عَبْدًا، وَلَا تَضْرِبَنَّ أَحَدًا سَوْطًا لِمَكَانِ دِرْهَمٍ، وَلَا تَمَسُّنَّ مَالَ أَحَدٍ مِنَ النَّاسِ، مُصَلٍِّ وَلَا مُعَاهِدٍ، إِلَّا أَنْ يَجِدُوا فِرْسًا أَوْ سِلَاحًا يُعْدَى بِهِ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْأِسْلَامِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَنْبَغِي لِلْمُسْلِمِ أَنْ يَدَعَ ذَلِكَ فِي أَيْدِي أَعْدَاءِ الْأِسْلَامِ، فَيَكُونُ شَوْكَةً عَلَيْهِ.

Do not deny good counsel to yourself, good behaviour to the army, succour to the subjects and strength to the religion of Allah. Strive in the way of Allah as is obligatory on you, because Allah the Glorified, desires us and you to be thankful to Him as best as we can and that we should help Him to the best of our power. And there is no power save with Allah, the All-high, the All-glorious.

وَلَا تَدْخِرُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ نَصِيحَةً، وَلَا الْجُنْدَ حُسْنَ سِيرَةٍ، وَلَا الرَّعِيَّةَ مَعُونَةً، وَلَا دِينَ اللَّهِ قُوَّةً،
وَأَبْلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مَا اسْتَوْجَبَ عَلَيْكُمْ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ قَدِ اصْطَنَعَ عِنْدَنَا وَعِنْدَكُمْ أَنْ
نَشْكُرَهُ بِجَهْدِنَا، وَأَنْ نَنْصُرَهُ بِمَا بَلَغَتْ قُوَّتُنَا، وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ.

Letter 52: To the Governors of various places concerning prayers

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى أمراء البلاد في معنى الصلاة

Now, say the zuhr (noon) prayers with the people when the shade of the wall of the goats' pen is equal to the wall. Say the `asr (afternoon) prayers with them when the sun is still shining in a portion of the day enough for covering the distance of two farsakhs (about six miles). Say the maghrib (sunset) prayers when he who is fasting ends the fast and the pilgrim rushes (from `Arafat) to Mina. Say the `isha' (night) prayers with them when twilight disappears and upto one third of the night. Say the (early) morning prayers with them when a man can recognize the face of his companion. Say the prayers with the people as the weakest of them would do and do not be a source of trouble to them.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَصَلُّوا بِالنَّاسِ الظُّهْرَ حَتَّى تَفِيءَ الشَّمْسُ مِنْ مَرْبُوضِ الْعَنْزِ. وَصَلُّوا بِهِمُ الْعَصْرَ وَالشَّمْسُ بَيضاءَ حَيَّةً فِي عُضْوٍ مِنَ النَّهَارِ حِينَ يُسَارُ فِيهَا فَرَسَحَانِ. وَصَلُّوا بِهِمُ الْمَغْرِبَ حِينَ يُفْطِرُ الصَّائِمُ، وَيَدْفَعُ الْحَاجُّ. وَصَلُّوا بِهِمُ الْعِشَاءَ حِينَ يَتَوَارَى الشَّقَقُ إِلَى ثُلْثِ اللَّيْلِ. وَصَلُّوا بِهِمُ الْعِدَاةَ وَالرَّجُلَ يَعْرِفُ وَجَهَ صَاحِبِهِ. وَصَلُّوا بِهِمُ صَلَاةَ أضعفِهِمْ، وَلَا تَكُونُوا فَتَانِينَ.

Letter 53: An order to Malik al-Ashtar

Written¹ for (Malik) al-Ashtar an-Nakha'i, when the position of Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr had become precarious, and Amir al-mu'minin had appointed al-Ashtar as the Governor of Egypt and the surrounding areas; it is the longest document and contains the greatest number of beautiful sayings.

ومن عهد له (عليه السلام)
كتبه للاشتر النخعي رحمه الله
لما ولاه على مصر وأعمالها حين اضطرب أمر محمد بن أبي بكر رحمه الله، وهو أطول
عهد كتبه وأجمعه للمحاسن

In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

This is what Allah's servant `Ali, Amir al-mu'minin, has ordered Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar in his instrument (of appointment) for him when he made him Governor of Egypt for the collection of its revenues, fighting against its enemies, seeking the good of its people and making its cities prosperous.

هَذَا مَا أَمَرَ بِهِ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ عَلِيُّ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، مَالِكُ بْنُ الْحَارِثِ الْأَشْطَرِ فِي عَهْدِهِ إِلَيْهِ، حِينَ
وَلَّاهُ مِصْرَ: جِبُوتَ خِرَاجِهَا، وَجِهَادَ عَدُوِّهَا، وَاسْتِصْلَاحَ أَهْلِهَا، وَعِمَارَةَ بِلَادِهَا.

He has ordered him to fear Allah, to prefer obedience to Him, and to follow what He has commanded in His Book (Qur'an) out of His obligatory and elective commands, without following which one cannot achieve virtue, nor (can one) be evil save by opposing them and ignoring them, and to help Allah the Glorified, with his heart, hand and tongue, because Allah whose name is Sublime takes the responsibility for helping him who helps Him, and for protecting him who gives Him support. He also orders him to break his heart off from passions, and to restrain it at the time of their increase, because the heart leads towards evil unless Allah has mercy.

أَمَرَهُ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، وَإِيتَارِ طَاعَتِهِ، وَاتِّبَاعِ مَا أَمَرَ بِهِ فِي كِتَابِهِ: مِنْ فَرَائِضِهِ وَسُنَنِهِ، الَّتِي لَا
يَسْعُدُ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا بِاتِّبَاعِهَا، وَلَا يَشْقَى إِلَّا مَعَ جُحُودِهَا وَإِضَاعَتِهَا، وَأَنْ يَنْصُرَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ بِيَدِهِ
وَقَلْبِهِ وَلِسَانِهِ، فَإِنَّهُ، جَلَّ اسْمُهُ، قَدْ تَكْفَّلَ بِنَصْرِ مَنْ نَصَرَهُ، وَإِعْزَازِ مَنْ أَعَزَّهُ. وَأَمَرَهُ أَنْ يَكْسِرَ
نَفْسَهُ عِنْدَ الشَّهَوَاتِ، وَيَرْعَهَا عِنْدَ الْجَمَحَاتِ، فَإِنَّ النَّفْسَ أَمَارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ، إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ اللَّهُ.

The qualifications of a governor and his responsibilities

Then, know, O Malik, that I have sent you to an area where there have been governments before you, both just as well as oppressive. People will now watch your dealings as you used to watch the dealings of the rulers before you, and they (people) will criticise you as you criticised them (rulers). Surely, the virtuous are known by the reputation that Allah circulates for them through the tongues of His creatures. Therefore, the best

collection with you should be the collection of good deeds. So, control your passions and check your heart from doing what is not lawful for you, because checking the heart means detaining it just half way between what it likes and dislikes.

ثُمَّ اعْلَمْ يَا مَالِكُ، أَيَّ قَدِّ وَجَّهْتُمْكَ إِلَى بِلَادِ قَدِّ جَرَتْ عَلَيْهَا دُؤْلُ قَبْلِكَ، مِنْ عَدَلٍ وَجُورٍ، وَأَنَّ النَّاسَ يَنْظُرُونَ مِنْ أُمُورِكَ فِي مِثْلِ مَا كُنْتَ تَنْظُرُ فِيهِ مِنْ أُمُورِ الْوَلَاةِ قَبْلَكَ، وَيَقُولُونَ فِيكَ مَا كُنْتَ تَقُولُ فِيهِمْ، إِنَّمَا يُسْتَدَلُّ عَلَى الصَّالِحِينَ بِمَا يُجْرِي اللَّهُ لَهُمْ عَلَى أَلْسِنِ عِبَادِهِ. فَلْيَكُنْ أَحَبَّ الدَّخَائِرِ إِلَيْكَ ذَخِيرَةُ الْعَمَلِ الصَّالِحِ، فَاْمَلِكْ هَوَاكَ، وَشَحَّ بِنَفْسِكَ عَمَّا لَا يَحِلُّ لَكَ، فَإِنَّ الشَّحَّ بِالنَّفْسِ الْأَنْصَافِ مِنْهَا فَيَمَّا أَحَبَبْتَ وَكَرِهْتَ.

Habituate your heart to mercy for the subjects and to affection and kindness for them. Do not stand over them like greedy beasts who feel it is enough to devour them, since they are of two kinds, either your brother in religion or one like you in creation. They will commit slips and encounter mistakes. They may act wrongly, wilfully or by neglect. So, extend to them your forgiveness and pardon, in the same way as you would like Allah to extend His forgiveness and pardon to you, because you are over them and your responsible Commander (Imam) is over you while Allah is over him who has appointed you. He (Allah) has sought you to manage their affairs and has tried you through them.

وَأَشْعِرْ قَلْبَكَ الرَّحْمَةَ لِلرَّعِيَّةِ، وَالْمَحَبَّةَ لَهُمْ، وَاللُّطْفَ بِهِمْ، وَلَا تَكُونَنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ سَبْعًا ضَارِيًا تَعْتَبِمُ أَكْلَهُمْ، فَإِنَّهُمْ صِنْفَانِ: إِمَّا أَحَقُّ لَكَ فِي الدِّينِ، وَإِمَّا نَظِيرٌ لَكَ فِي الْخَلْقِ، يَفْرُطُ مِنْهُمْ الرِّزْلُ، وَتَعْرِضُ لَهُمُ الْعِلَلُ، يُؤْتَى عَلَى أَيْدِيهِمْ فِي الْعَمْدِ وَالْخَطَا، فَأَعْطِهِمْ مِنْ عَفْوِكَ وَصَفْحِكَ مِثْلَ الَّذِي تُحِبُّ أَنْ يُعْطِيَكَ اللَّهُ مِنْ عَفْوِهِ وَصَفْحِهِ، فَإِنَّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ، وَوَالِي الْأَمْرِ عَلَيْكَ فَوْقَكَ، وَاللَّهُ فَوْقَ مَنْ وَلَاكَ! وَقَدْ اسْتَكْفَاكَ أَمْرُهُمْ، وَابْتَلَاكَ بِهِمْ.

Do not set yourself to fight Allah because you have no power before His power and you cannot do without His pardon and mercy. Do not repent of forgiving or be merciful in punishing. Do not act hastily during anger if you can find way out of it. Do not say: "I have been given authority, I should be obeyed when I order," because it engenders confusion in the heart, weakens the religion and takes one near ruin. If the authority in which you are placed produces pride or vanity in you then look at the greatness of the realm of Allah over you and His might the like of which might you do not even possess over yourself. This will curb your haughtiness, cure you of your high temper and bring back to you your wisdom which had gone away from you.

وَلَا تَنْصَبَنَّ نَفْسَكَ لِحَرْبِ اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَدِي لَكَ بِنِقْمَتِهِ، وَلَا غِيَى بِكَ عَنْ عَفْوِهِ وَرَحْمَتِهِ. وَلَا تَتَدَمَّنْ عَلَى عَفْوِ، وَلَا تَبْجَحَنَّ بِعُفُوبَةٍ، وَلَا تُسْرِعَنَّ إِلَى بَادِرَةٍ وَجَدْتَ مِنْهَا مَنُودِحَةً، وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ: إِنِّي مُؤَمَّرٌ أَمْرٌ فَأَطَاعُ، فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ إِدْغَالٌ فِي الْقَلْبِ، وَمَنْهَكَةٌ لِلدِّينِ، وَتَقَرُّبٌ مِنَ الْغِيَرِ.

وَإِذَا أَحَدَتْ لَكَ مَا أَنْتَ فِيهِ مِنْ سُلْطَانِكَ أَتْبَهَةً أَوْ مَخِيلَةً، فَانظُرْ إِلَى عِظَمِ مُلْكِ اللَّهِ فَوْقَكَ،
وَقُدْرَتِهِ مِنْكَ عَلَى مَا لَا تَقْدِرُ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ، فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ يُطَامِنُ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ طِمَاحِكَ،
وَيَكْفُ عَنكَ مِنْ غَرَبِكَ، يَفِيءُ إِلَيْكَ بِمَا عَزَبَ عَنكَ مِنْ عَقْلِكَ!

Beware of comparing yourself to Allah in His greatness or likening yourself to Him in His power, for Allah humiliates every claimant of power and disgraces every one who is haughty.

إِيَّاكَ وَمُسَامَاةَ اللَّهِ فِي عَظَمَتِهِ، وَالتَّشْبُهَ بِهِ فِي جَبْرُوتِهِ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ يُذِلُّ كُلَّ جَبَّارٍ، وَيُهِينُ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ.

Do justice for Allah and do justice towards the people, as against yourself, your near ones and those of your subjects for whom you have a liking because if you do not do so you will be oppressive, and when a person oppresses the creatures of Allah then, instead of His creatures, Allah becomes his opponent, and when Allah is the opponent of a person He tramples his plea; and he will remain in the position of being at war with Allah until he gives it up and repents. Nothing is more inducive of the reversal of Allah's bounty or for the hastening of His retribution than continuance in oppression, because Allah hears the prayer of the oppressed and is on the look out for the oppressors.

أَنْصِفِ اللَّهَ وَأَنْصِفِ النَّاسَ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ، وَمِنْ خَاصَّةِ أَهْلِكَ، وَمَنْ لَكَ فِيهِ هَوًى مِنْ رَعِيَّتِكَ، فَإِنَّكَ إِلَّا تَفْعَلْ تَظْلِمُ، وَمَنْ ظَلَمَ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ كَانَ اللَّهُ حَصْمَهُ دُونَ عِبَادِهِ، وَمَنْ خَاصَمَهُ اللَّهُ أَذْخَصَ حُجَّتَهُ، وَكَانَ اللَّهُ حَرْبًا حَتَّى يَنْزِعَ وَيُتُوبَ.

وَلَيْسَ شَيْءٌ أَدْعَى إِلَى تَغْيِيرِ نِعْمَةِ اللَّهِ وَتَعْجِيلِ نِقْمَتِهِ مِنْ إِقَامَةِ عَلَى ظُلْمٍ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ دَعْوَةَ الْمَظْلُومِينَ، وَهُوَ لِلظَّالِمِينَ بِالْمِرْصَادِ.

Ruling should be in favour of the people as a whole

The way most coveted by you should be that which is the most equitable for the right, the most universal by way of justice, and the most comprehensive with regard to the agreement among those under you, because the disagreement of the common people sweeps away the arguments of the chiefs while the disagreement of the chiefs can be disregarded when compared with the agreement of the common people.

No one among those under you is more burdensome to the ruler in times of ease, less helpful in distress, more disliking of equitable treatment, more importunate in asking favours, less thankful when given (anything), less appreciative of reasons at the time of refusal, and weaker in endurance at the time of the discomforts of life than the chiefs. It is the common people of the community who are the pillars of the religion, the power of the Muslims and the defence against the enemies. Your leanings should therefore be towards them and your inclination with them.

كُنْ أَحَبَّ الْأُمُورِ إِلَيْكَ أَوْسَطُهَا فِي الْحَقِّ، وَأَعْمَمُهَا فِي الْعَدْلِ، وَأَجْمَعُهَا لِرِضَى الرَّعِيَّةِ، فَإِنَّ سُخْطَ الْعَامَّةِ يُجْحِفُ بِرِضَى الْخَاصَّةِ، وَإِنَّ سُخْطَ الْخَاصَّةِ يُعْتَفَرُ مَعَ رِضَى الْعَامَّةِ. وَلَيْسَ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الرَّعِيَّةِ، أَثْقَلَ عَلَى الْوَالِيِّ مَوْوَنَةً فِي الرَّحَاءِ، وَأَقْلَ مَوْوَنَةً لَهُ فِي الْبَلَاءِ، وَأَكْرَهَ لِلْأَنْصَافِ، وَأَسْأَلَ بِالْأَلْحَافِ، وَأَقْلَ شُكْرًا عِنْدَ الْأَعْطَاءِ، وَأَبْطَأَ عُذْرًا عِنْدَ الْمَنْعِ، وَأَضْعَفَ صَبْرًا عِنْدَ مُلِمَّاتِ الدَّهْرِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْخَاصَّةِ، وَإِنَّمَا عَمُودُ الدِّينِ، وَجَمَاعُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَالْعُدَّةُ لِلْأَعْدَاءِ، الْعَامَّةُ مِنَ الْأُمَّةِ، فَلْيَكُنْ صِعُوكَ لَهُمْ، وَمِثْلَكَ مَعَهُمْ.

The one among the people under you who is furthest from you and the worst of them in your view should be he who is the most inquisitive of the shortcomings of the people, because people do have shortcomings and the ruler is the most appropriate person to cover them. Do not disclose whatever of it is hidden from you because your obligation is to correct what is manifest to you, while Allah will deal with whatever is hidden from you. Therefore, cover shortcomings so far as you can; Allah would cover those of your shortcomings which you would like to remain under cover from your subjects. Unfasten every knot of hatred in the people and cut away from yourself the cause of every enmity. Feign ignorance from what is not clear to you. Do not hasten to second a backbiter, because a backbiter is a cheat although he looks like those who wish well.

وَلْيَكُنْ أَبْعَدَ رَعِيَّتِكَ مِنْكَ، وَأَشْنَأَهُمْ عِنْدَكَ، أَطْلُبُهُمْ لِمَعَائِبِ النَّاسِ، فَإِنَّ فِي النَّاسِ عُيُوبًا، الْوَالِيُّ أَحَقُّ مَنْ سَتَرَهَا، فَلَا تَكْشِفَنَّ عَمَّا غَابَ عَنْكَ مِنْهَا، فَإِنَّمَا عَلَيْكَ تَطْهِيرُ مَا ظَهَرَ لَكَ، وَاللَّهُ يَحْكُمُ عَلَى مَا غَابَ عَنْكَ، فَاسْتُرِ الْعَوْرَةَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتَ يَسْتُرِ اللَّهُ مِنْكَ مَا تُحِبُّ سِتْرَهُ مِنْ رَعِيَّتِكَ. أَطْلِقْ عَنِ النَّاسِ عُقْدَةَ كُلِّ حِقْدٍ، وَأَقْطَعْ عَنْكَ سَبَبَ كُلِّ وَثْرٍ، وَتَعَابَ عَنْ كُلِّ مَا لَا يَضِيحُ لَكَ، وَلَا تَعْجَلَنَّ إِلَى تَصْدِيقِ سَاعٍ، فَإِنَّ السَّاعِيَّ غَاشٌّ، وَإِنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِالنَّاصِحِينَ.

About counsellors

Do not include among those you consult a miser who would keep you back from being generous and caution you against destitution, nor a coward who would make you feel too weak for your affairs, nor a greedy person who would make beautiful to you the collection of wealth by evil ways. This is because miserliness, cowardice and greed are different qualities that an unfavourable opinion of Allah brings together.

وَلَا تُدْخَلَنَّ فِي مَشُورَتِكَ بِخِيَلًا يَعْدِلُ بِكَ عَنِ الْفَضْلِ، وَيَعِدُّكَ الْفَقْرَ، وَلَا جَبَانًا يُضْعِفُكَ عَنِ الْأُمُورِ، وَلَا حَرِيصًا يُزَيِّنُ لَكَ الشَّرَّ بِالْجُورِ، فَإِنَّ الْبُحْلَ وَالْجُبْنَ وَالْحِرْصَ عَرَائِزُ شَيْءٍ يَجْمَعُهَا سُوءُ الظَّنِّ بِاللَّهِ.

The worst minister for you is he who has been a minister for mischievous persons before you, and who joined them in sins. Therefore, he should not be your chief man, because they are abettors of sinners and brothers of the oppressors. You can find good substitutes for them who will be like them in

their views and influence, while not being like them in sins and vices. They have never assisted an oppressor in his oppression or a sinner in his sin. They will give you the least trouble and the best support. They will be most considerate towards you and the least inclined towards others. Therefore, make them your chief companions in privacy as well as in public.

شَرُّ وُزَرَائِكَ مَنْ كَانَ لِإِشْرَارِ قَبْلِكَ وَزِيَرًا، وَمَنْ شَرِكُهُمْ فِي الْإِنْتَامِ، فَلَا يَكُونَنَّ لَكَ بِطَانَةً، فَإِنَّهُمْ أَعْوَانُ الْاِثْمَةِ، وَإِخْوَانُ الظُّلْمَةِ، وَأَنْتَ وَاجِدٌ مِنْهُمْ خَيْرَ الْخَلْفِ مِمَّنْ لَهُ مِثْلُ آرَائِهِمْ وَنَعَاذِهِمْ، وَلَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ مِثْلُ آصَارِهِمْ وَأَوْزَارِهِمْ وَآتَامِهِمْ، مِمَّنْ لَمْ يُعَاوَنِ ظَالِمًا عَلَى ظُلْمِهِ، وَلَا اتَّمَا عَلَى إِثْمِهِ، أَوْلِيكَ أَحْفُ عَلَيْكَ مُؤَوَّنَةٌ، وَأَحْسَنُ لَكَ مَعُونَةٌ، وَأَحْسَى عَلَيْكَ عَطْفًا، وَأَقْلُ لِعَيْرِكَ إِفَاءً، فَاتَّخِذْ أَوْلِيكَ حَاصَّةً لِحَلَوَاتِكَ وَحَقْلَاتِكَ،

Then, more preferable among them for you should be those who openly speak better truths before you and who support you least in those of your actions which Allah does not approve in His friends, even though they may be according to your wishes. Associate yourself with God-fearing and truthful people; then educate them, so that they should not praise you or please you by reason of an action you did not perform, because an excess of praise produces pride and drives you near haughtiness.

ثُمَّ لِيَكُنْ أَثَرُهُمْ عِنْدَكَ أَقْوَاهُمْ بِمُرِّ الْحَقِّ لَكَ، وَأَقْلَهُمْ مُسَاعَدَةً فِيمَا يَكُونُ مِنْكَ بِمَا كَرِهَ اللَّهُ لِأَوْلِيَائِهِ، وَاقِعًا ذَلِكَ مِنْ هَوَاكَ حَيْثُ وَقَعَ. وَالصَّقُّ بِأَهْلِ الْوَرَعِ وَالصِّدْقِ، ثُمَّ رِضْنُهُمْ عَلَى الْإِلَّا يُطْرُوكَ وَلَا يُبَجِّحُوكَ بِبَاطِلٍ لَمْ تَفْعَلْهُ، فَإِنَّ كَثْرَةَ الْأَطْرَاءِ تُحْدِثُ الرَّهْوَ، وَتُذْنِبِي مِنَ الْعِزَّةِ.

The virtuous and the vicious should not be in equal position before you because this means dissuasion of the virtuous from virtue and persuasion of the vicious to vice. Keep everyone in the position which is his. You should know that the most conducive thing for the good impression of the ruler on his subjects is that he should extend good behaviour towards them, lighten their hardships, and avoid putting them to unbearable troubles.

You should therefore, in this way follow a course by which you will leave a good impression with your subjects, because such good ideas will relieve you of great worries. Certainly, the one most entitled to have a favourable impression of you is he whom whom you have treated well, and the one most entitled to have a bad opinion of you is he whom you have treated badly.

وَلَا يَكُونَنَّ الْمُحْسِنُ وَالْمُسِيءُ عِنْدَكَ بِمَنْزِلَةِ سَوَاءٍ، فَإِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ تَرْهِيْدًا لِأَهْلِ الْإِحْسَانِ فِي الْإِحْسَانِ، تَدْرِيْبًا لِأَهْلِ الْأَسَاءَةِ عَلَى الْأَسَاءَةِ، وَالزِّمُّ كُلًّا مِنْهُمْ مَا أَلَزَمَ نَفْسَهُ. وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ بِأَدْعَى إِلَى حُسْنِ ظَنِّ وَالْبِرِّ مِنْ إِحْسَانِهِ إِلَيْهِمْ، وَتَحْفِيفِهِ الْمَوْنَاتِ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَتَرْكِ اسْتِكْرَاهِهِ إِيَّاهُمْ عَلَى مَا لَيْسَ لَهُ قَبْلَهُمْ، فَلْيَكُنْ مِنْكَ فِي ذَلِكَ أَمْرٌ يَجْتَمِعُ لَكَ بِهِ حُسْنُ الظَّنِّ بِرِعِيَّتِكَ، فَإِنَّ حُسْنَ الظَّنِّ يَطْعُ عَنْكَ نَصَبًا طَوِيلًا، وَإِنَّ أَحَقَّ مَنْ حَسَنَ ظَنُّكَ بِهِ لَمَنْ حَسَنَ بِلَاؤُكَ عِنْدَهُ، وَإِنَّ أَحَقَّ مَنْ سَاءَ ظَنُّكَ بِهِ لَمَنْ سَاءَ بِلَاؤُكَ عِنْدَهُ.

Do not discontinue the good practices which the earlier people of this community had acted upon, by virtue of which there was general unity and through which the subjects prospered. Do not innovate any line of action which injures these earlier practices because (in that case) the reward for those who had established those practices will continue, but the burden for discontinuing them will be on you. Keep on increasing your conversations with the scholars and discussions with the wise to stabilize the prosperity of the areas under you, and to continue with that in which your predecessors had established.

وَلَا تَنْفُضْ سُنَّةَ صَالِحَةٍ عَمِلَ بِهَا صُدُورُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ، وَاجْتَمَعَتْ بِهَا الْأَلْفَةُ، وَصَلَحَتْ عَلَيْهَا الرَّعِيَّةُ، لَا تُحَدِّثَنَّ سُنَّةً تَضُرُّ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ مَاضِي تِلْكَ السَّنَنِ، فَيَكُونَ الْأَجْرُ بِمَنْ سَنَّهَا، وَالْوَرُزُّ عَلَيْكَ بِمَا نَقَضْتَ مِنْهَا. وَأَكْثِرْ مُدَارَسَةَ الْعُلَمَاءِ، وَمُنَافَتَةَ الْحُكَمَاءِ، فِي تَثْبِيَتِ مَا صَلَحَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرٌ بِبِلَادِكَ، وَإِقَامَةِ مَا اسْتَقَامَ بِهِ النَّاسُ قَبْلَكَ.

The different classes of people

Know that the people consist of classes who prosper only with the help of one another, and they are not independent of one another. Among them are the army of Allah, then the secretarial workers of the common people and the chiefs, then the dispensers of justice, then those engaged in law and order, then the payers of head tax (jizyah) and land tax (kharaj) from the protected unbelievers and the common Muslims, then there are the traders and the men of industry and then the lowest class of the needy and the destitute. Allah has fixed the share of every one of them and laid down His precepts about the limits of each in His Book (Qur'an) and the sunnah of His Prophet by way of of a settlement which is preserved with us.

وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ الرَّعِيَّةَ طَبَقَاتٌ لَا يَصْلُحُ بَعْضُهَا إِلَّا بِبَعْضٍ، وَلَا غَنَى بِبَعْضِهَا عَنْ بَعْضٍ: فَمِنْهَا جُنُودُ اللَّهِ، مِنْهَا كُتَّابُ الْعَامَّةِ وَالْخَاصَّةِ، وَمِنْهَا قُضَاةُ الْعَدْلِ، وَمِنْهَا عُمَّالُ الْأَنْصَافِ وَالرِّفْقِ، وَمِنْهَا أَهْلُ الْجَزْيَةِ وَالْحَرَاجِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الدِّمَّةِ وَمُسْلِمَةِ النَّاسِ، وَمِنْهَا التُّجَّارُ وَأَهْلُ الصَّنَاعَاتِ، وَمِنْهَا الطَّبَقَةُ السُّفْلَى مِنْ ذَوِي الْحَاجَةِ وَالْمَسْكِينَةِ، وَكُلٌّ قَدْ سَمَّى اللَّهُ سَهْمَهُ، وَوَضَعَ عَلَى حَدِّهِ وَفَرِيضَتِهِ فِي كِتَابِهِ أَوْ سُنَّةِ نَبِيِّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) عَهْدًا مِنْهُ عِنْدَنَا مَحْفُوظًا.

Now the army is, by the will of Allah, the fortress of the subjects, the ornament of the ruler, the strength of the religion and the means of peace. The subjects cannot exist without them while the army can be maintained only by the funds fixed by Allah in the revenues, through which they acquire the strength to fight the enemies, on which they depend for their prosperity, and with which they meet their needs. These two classes cannot exist without the third class namely the judges, the executives and the secretaries who pass judgements about contracts, collect revenues and are depended upon in special and general matters.

فَالْجُنُودُ، بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ، حُصُونُ الرَّعِيَّةِ، وَرَبِيضُ الْوَلَاةِ، وَعِزُّ الدِّينِ، وَسُبُلُ الْأَمْنِ، وَلَيْسَ تَقْوَمُ الرَّعِيَّةُ إِلَّا بِهِمْ. ثُمَّ لَا قِوَامَ لِلْجُنُودِ إِلَّا بِمَا يُخْرِجُ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مِنَ الْحَرَاجِ الَّذِي يَقْوَمُونَ بِهِ فِي جِهَادِ

عَدُوهُمْ، وَيَعْتَمِدُونَ عَلَيْهِ فِيمَا أَصْلَحَهُمْ، وَيَكُونُ مِنْ وَرَاءِ حَاجَتِهِمْ. ثُمَّ لَا قِيَامَ لَهُذَيْنِ الصِّنْفَيْنِ إِلَّا بِالصِّنْفِ الثَّلَاثِ مِنَ الْفُضَاةِ وَالْعَمَالِ وَالْكَتَّابِ، لِمَا يُحْكِمُونَ مِنَ الْمَعَاقِدِ، وَيَجْمَعُونَ مِنَ الْمَنَافِعِ، وَيُؤْتَمِنُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ حَوَاصِّ الْأُمُورِ وَعَوَائِمِهَا.

And these classes cannot exist except with the traders and men of industry, who provide necessities for them, establish markets and make it possible for others not to do all this with their own hands. Then is the lowest class of the needy and the destitute support of and help for whom is an obligation, and everyone of them has (a share in) livelihood in the name of Allah. Everyone of them has a right on the ruler according to what is needed for his prosperity. The ruler cannot acquit himself of the obligations laid on him by Allah in this matter except by striving and seeking help from Allah and by training himself to adhere to the right and by enduring on that account all that is light or hard.

وَلَا قِيَامَ لَهُمْ جَمِيعاً إِلَّا بِالتُّجَّارِ وَذَوِي الصِّنَاعَاتِ، فِيمَا يَجْتَمِعُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ مَرَافِقِهِمْ، وَيُقِيمُونَهُ مِنْ أَسْوَاقِهِمْ، وَيَكْفُونَهُمْ مِنَ التَّرْفِقِ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ مِمَّا لَا يَبْلُغُهُ رَفْقٌ غَيْرِهِمْ. ثُمَّ الطَّبَقَةُ السُّفْلَى مِنْ أَهْلِ الْحَاجَةِ وَالْمَسْكِنَةِ الَّذِينَ يَحِقُّ رَفْدُهُمْ وَمَعُونَتُهُمْ. وَفِي اللَّهِ لِكُلِّ سَعَةٍ، وَلِكُلِّ عَلَى الْوَالِي حَقٌّ بِقَدْرِ مَا يُصْلِحُهُ. وَلَيْسَ يُخْرِجُ الْوَالِي مِنْ حَقِيقَةِ مَا أَلَزَمَهُ اللَّهُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ إِلَّا بِالْأَهْتِمَامِ وَالِاسْتِعَانَةِ بِاللَّهِ، وَتَوَطُّبِنِ نَفْسِهِ عَلَى لُزُومِ الْحَقِّ، وَالصَّبْرِ عَلَيْهِ فِيمَا حَفَّ عَلَيْهِ أَوْ ثَقُلَ.

1. The Army

Put in command of your forces the man who in your view is the best well - wisher of Allah, His Prophet and your Imam. The chastest of them in heart and the highest of them in endurance is he who is slow in getting enraged, accepts excuses, is kind to the weak and is strict with the strong; violence should not raise his temper and weakness should not keep him sitting.

قَوْلٍ مِنْ جُنُودِكَ أَنْصَحَهُمْ فِي نَفْسِكَ لِلَّهِ وَلِرَسُولِهِ وَلَا مَمْلِكَ، وَأَنْقَاهُمْ جَبِيئاً، وَأَفْضَلَهُمْ حِلْمًا مِمَّنْ يُبْطِئُ عَنِ الْعَضْبِ، وَيَسْتَرِيحُ إِلَى الْعُدْرِ، وَيَرَأْفُ بِالضُّعْفَاءِ، وَيَتَّبِعُ عَلَى الْأَقْوِيَاءِ، وَمِمَّنْ لَا يُبِيرُهُ الْعُنْفُ، وَلَا يَفْعُدُ بِهِ الضُّعْفُ.

Also associate with considerate people from high families, virtuous houses and decent traditions, then people of courage, valour, generosity and benevolence, because they are repositories of honour and springs of virtues. Strive for their matters as the parents strive for their child. Do not regard anything that you do to strengthen them as big nor consider anything that you have agreed to do for them as little (so as to give it up), even though it may be small, because this will make them your well-wishers and create a good impression of you. Do not neglect to attend to their small matters, confining yourself to their important matters, because your small favours will also be of benefit to them while the important ones are such that they cannot ignore them.

ثُمَّ الصَّقِ بَدْوِي الْمُرُوءَاتِ وَالْأَحْسَابِ، وَأَهْلِي الْأَبْيُوتَاتِ الصَّالِحَةِ، وَالسَّوَابِقِ الْحَسَنَةِ، ثُمَّ أَهْلَ
التَّجْدَةِ وَالشَّجَاعَةِ، وَالسَّخَاءِ وَالسَّمَاخَةِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ جَمَاعٌ مِنَ الْكَرَمِ، وَشُعَبٌ مِنَ الْعُرْفِ. ثُمَّ تَقْفُدْ
مِنْ أُمُورِهِمْ مَا يَتَفَقَّهُهُ الْوَالِدَانِ مِنْ وَلَدِهِمَا، وَلَا يَتَفَاقَمَنَّ فِي نَفْسِكَ شَيْءٌ قَوَّيْتَهُمْ بِهِ، وَلَا
تَحْقِرَنَّ لُطْفًا تَعَاهَدْتَهُمْ بِهِ وَإِنْ قَلَّ، فَإِنَّهُ دَاعِيَةٌ لَهُمْ إِلَىٰ بَدْلِ النَّصِيحَةِ لَكَ، وَحُسْنِ الظَّنِّ بِكَ.
وَلَا تَدَعُ تَقْفُدَ لَطِيفِ أُمُورِهِمْ اتِّكَالًا عَلَىٰ جَسِيمِهَا، فَإِنَّ لِلْيَسِيرِ مِنْ لُطْفِكَ مَوْضِعًا يَنْتَفِعُونَ
بِهِ، وَلِلْجَسِيمِ مَوْضِعًا لَا يَسْتَعْنُونَ عَنْهُ.

That commander of the army should have such a position before you that he renders help to them equitably and spends from his money on them and on those of their families who remain behind so that all their worries converge on the one worry for fighting the enemy. Your kindness to them will turn their hearts to you. The most pleasant thing for the rulers is the establishment of justice in their areas and the manifestation of the love of their subjects, but the subjects' love manifests itself only when their hearts are clean. Their good wishes prove correct only when they surround their commanders (to protect them). Do not regard their positions to be a burden over them and do not keep watching for the end of their tenure. Therefore, be broad-minded in regard to their desires, continue praising them and recounting the good deeds of those who have shown such deeds, because the mention of good actions shakes the brave and rouses the weak, if Allah so wills.

وَلْيَكُنْ آثَرُ رُؤُوسِ جُنْدِكَ عِنْدَكَ مَنْ وَاسَاهُمْ فِي مَعُونَتِهِ، وَأَفْضَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ جِدَّتِهِ بِمَا
يَسْعُهُمْ يَسَعُ مَنْ وَرَاءَهُمْ مِنْ حُلُوفِ أَهْلِيهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَكُونَ هُمُومًا وَاحِدًا فِي جِهَادِ الْعَدُوِّ، فَإِنَّ
عَطْفَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ يَعْطِفُ قُلُوبَهُمْ عَلَيْكَ. وَإِنَّ أَفْضَلَ قُرَّةِ عَيْنِ الْوُلَاةِ اسْتِقَامَةُ الْعَدْلِ فِي الْبِلَادِ،
وِظُهُورُ مَوَدَّةِ الرَّعِيَّةِ، وَإِنَّهُ لَا تَظْهَرُ مَوَدَّتُهُمْ إِلَّا بِسَلَامَةِ صُدُورِهِمْ، وَلَا تَصِحُّ نَصِيحَتُهُمْ إِلَّا
بِحَيْطَنِهِمْ عَلَىٰ وِلَاةِ أُمُورِهِمْ، وَقَلَّةِ اسْتِثْقَالِ دُورِهِمْ، وَتَرْكِ اسْتِنْبَاءِ انْقِطَاعِ مُدَّتِهِمْ. فَافْسَحْ فِي
أَمَالِهِمْ، وَوَاصِلِ فِي حُسْنِ الثَّنَاءِ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَتَعْدِيدِ مَا أَبْلَىٰ دُورَ الْبَلَاءِ مِنْهُمْ، فَإِنَّ كَثْرَةَ الذِّكْرِ
لِحُسْنِ أَعْمَالِهِمْ تَهْزُ الشُّجَاعَ، وَتُحْرِضُ النَّاكِلَ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ.

Appreciate the performance of every one of them, do not attribute the performance of one to the other, and do not minimize the reward below the level of the performance. The high position of a man should not lead you to regard his small deeds as big, nor should the low position of a man make you regard his big deeds as small.

ثُمَّ اعْرِفْ لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ مِنْهُمْ مَا أَبْلَىٰ، وَلَا تَضْمَنَّ بِلَاءَ امْرِئٍ إِلَىٰ غَيْرِهِ، وَلَا تُقْصِرَنَّ بِهِ دُونَ
غَايَةِ بِلَائِهِ، وَلَا يَدْعُونَكَ شَرَفُ امْرِئٍ إِلَىٰ أَنْ تُعْظِمَ مِنْ بِلَائِهِ مَا كَانَ صَغِيرًا، وَلَا ضَعْفُ امْرِئٍ
إِلَىٰ أَنْ تَسْتَضْعِرَ مِنْ بِلَائِهِ مَا كَانَ عَظِيمًا.

Refer to Allah and His Prophet the affairs which worry you and matters which appear confusing to you, because, addressing the people whom Allah the Sublime, wishes to guide, He said:

O you who believe! Obey Allah and obey the Prophet and those vested with authority from among you: and then if you quarrel about anything refer it to Allah and the Prophet if you believe in Allah and in the Last Day (of Judgement). . . (Qur'an, 4:59)

Referring to Allah means to act according to what is clear in His Book and referring to the Prophet means to follow his unanimously agreed Sunnah in regard to which there are no differences.

وَأَرْذُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ مَا يُبْلَغُكَ مِنَ الْخُطُوبِ، وَيَسْتَبِيهِ عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْأُمُورِ، فَقَدْ قَالَ اللَّهُ سَبْحَانَهُ لِقَوْمٍ أَحَبَّ إِشَادَهُمْ: (يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَطِيعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ وَأُولِي الْأَمْرِ مِنْكُمْ فَإِن تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ)، فَالرُّدُّ إِلَى اللَّهِ: الْأَخْذُ بِمُحْكَمِ كِتَابِهِ، وَالرُّدُّ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ: الْأَخْذُ بِسُنَّتِهِ الْجَامِعَةِ غَيْرِ الْمُفْرَقَةِ.

2. The Chief Judge

For the settlement of disputes among people select him who is the most distinguished of your subjects in your view. The cases (coming before him) should not vex him, disputation should not enrage him, he should not insist on any wrong point, and should not grudge accepting the truth when he perceives it; he should not lean towards greed and should not content himself with a cursory understanding (of a matter) without going thoroughly into it.

He should be most ready to stop (to ponder) on doubtful points, most regardful of arguments, least disgusted at the quarrel of litigants, most patient at probing into matters and most fearless at the time of passing judgement. Praise should not make him vain and elation should not make him lean (to any side). Such people are very few.

ثُمَّ اخْتَرِ لِلْحُكْمِ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَفْضَلَ رَعِيَّتِكَ فِي نَفْسِكَ، مِمَّنْ لَا تَضِيقُ بِهِ الْأُمُورَ، وَلَا تُمَحِّكُهُ الْخُصُومُ، وَلَا يَتِمَادَى فِي الرِّلَّةِ، وَلَا يَخْصِرُ مِنَ الْفِيءِ إِلَى الْحَقِّ إِذَا عَرَفَهُ، وَلَا تُشْرِفُ نَفْسُهُ عَلَى طَمَعٍ، وَلَا يَكْتَفِي بِأَدْنَى فَهْمٍ دُونَ أَفْصَاهُ، أَوْ قَفَّهِمْ فِي الشُّبُهَاتِ، وَأَخَذَهُمْ بِالْحُجَجِ، وَأَقْلَبَهُمْ تَبَرُّمًا بِمِرْجَاعَةِ الْخُصْمِ، وَأَصْبَرَهُمْ عَلَى تَكْشُفِ الْأُمُورِ، وَأَصْرَمَهُمْ عِنْدَ اتِّضَاحِ الْحُكْمِ، مِمَّنْ لَا يَزِدُّهُ إِيَّاهُ إِطْرَاءً، وَلَا يَسْتَمِيلُهُ إِغْرَاءً، أُولَئِكَ قَلِيلٌ.

Then, very often check his decisions and allow him so much money (as remuneration) that he has no excuse worth hearing (for not being honest) and there remains no occasion for him to go to others for his needs. Give him that rank in your audience for which no one else among your chiefs aspires, so that he remains safe from the harm of those around you. You should have a piercing eye in this matter because this religion has formerly been a prisoner in the hands of vicious persons when action was taken according to passion, and worldly wealth was sought.

ثُمَّ أَكْثَرَ تَعَاهِدَ قَضَائِهِ، وَأَفْسَحَ لَهُ فِي الْبَدْلِ مَا يُزِيلُ عِلَّتَهُ، وَتَقَلُّ مَعَهُ حَاجَتُهُ إِلَى النَّاسِ، وَأَعْطَاهِ مِنَ الْمَنْزِلَةِ لَدَيْكَ مَا لَا يَطْمَعُ فِيهِ غَيْرُهُ مِنْ خَاصَّتِكَ، لِيَأْمَنَ بِذَلِكَ اغْتِيَالَ الرِّجَالِ لَهُ عِنْدَكَ. فَانظُرْ فِي ذَلِكَ نَظْرًا بَلِيغًا، فَإِنَّ هَذَا الدِّينَ قَدْ كَانَ أَسِيرًا فِي أَيْدِي الْأَشْرَارِ، يُعْمَلُ فِيهِ بِالْهُوَى، وَتُطَلَّبُ بِهِ الدُّنْيَا.

3. Executive Officers

Thereafter, look into the affairs of your executives. Give them appointment after tests and do not appoint them according to partiality or favouritism, because these two things constitute sources of injustice and unfairness. Select from among them those who are people of experience and modesty, hailing from virtuous houses, having been previously in Islam, because such persons possess high manners and untarnished honour. They are the least inclined towards greed and always have their eyes on the ends of matters.

ثُمَّ انظُرْ فِي أُمُورِ عُمَّالِكَ، فَاسْتَعْمِلْهُمْ اخْتِبَارًا، وَلَا تُؤَلِّمْهُمْ مُحَابَاةً وَأَثَرَةً، فَإِنَّهُمَا جَمَاعٌ مِنْ شُعْبِ الْجَوْرِ وَالْحِيَانَةِ. وَتَوَخَّ مِنْهُمْ أَهْلَ التَّجَرِبَةِ وَالْحِيَاءِ، مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبَيْوَاتِ الصَّالِحَةِ، وَالْقَدَمِ فِي الْأَسْلَامِ الْمُتَقَدِّمَةِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ أَكْرَمُ أَخْلَاقًا، وَأَصْحُ أَعْرَاضًا، وَأَقْلُ فِي الْمَطَامِعِ إِشْرَافًا، وَأَبْلَغُ فِي عَوَاقِبِ الْأُمُورِ نَظْرًا.

Give them an abundant livelihood (by way of salary) because this gives them the strength to maintain themselves in order and not to have an eye upon the funds in their custody, and it would be an argument against them if they disobeyed your orders or misappropriated your trust. You should also check their activities and have people who report on them who should be truthful and faithful, because your watching their actions secretly will urge them to preserve trust with and to be kind to the people. Be careful of assistants. If any one of them extends his hands towards misappropriation and the reports of your reporters reaching you confirm it, that should be regarded enough evidence. You should then inflict corporal punishment on him and recover what he has misappropriated. You should put him in a place of disgrace, blacklist him with (the charge of) misappropriation and make him wear the necklace of shame for his offence.

ثُمَّ أَسْبَغْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَرْزَاقَ، فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ قُوَّةٌ لَهُمْ عَلَى اسْتِصْلَاحِ أَنْفُسِهِمْ، وَغِنَى لَهُمْ عَنْ تَنَاوُلِ مَا تَحْتَ أَيْدِيهِمْ، وَحُجَّةٌ عَلَيْهِمْ إِنْ خَالَفُوا أَمْرَكَ أَوْ تَلَمَّعُوا أَمَانَتَكَ. ثُمَّ تَفَقَّدْ أَعْمَالَهُمْ، وَابْعَثِ الْعُيُونَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الصِّدْقِ وَالْوَفَاءِ عَلَيْهِمْ، فَإِنَّ تَعَاهُدَكَ فِي السِّرِّ لِأُمُورِهِمْ حَدْوَةٌ لَهُمْ عَلَى اسْتِعْمَالِ الْأَمَانَةِ، وَالرِّفْقِ بِالرَّعِيَّةِ. وَتَحَفُّظُ مِنَ الْأَعْوَانِ، فَإِنَّ أَحَدًا مِنْهُمْ بَسَطَ يَدَهُ إِلَى خِيَانَةِ اجْتِمَعَتْ بِهَا عَلَيْهِ عِنْدَكَ أَخْبَارُ عُيُونِكَ، اكْتَفَيْتَ بِذَلِكَ شَاهِدًا، فَبَسَطْتَ عَلَيْهِ الْعُقُوبَةَ فِي بَدَنِهِ، وَأَخَذْتَهُ بِمَا أَصَابَ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ، ثُمَّ نَصَبْتَهُ بِمَقَامِ الْمَدَلَّةِ، وَ وَسَمْتَهُ بِالْحِيَانَةِ، وَقَلَّدْتَهُ عَارِ التُّهْمَةِ.

4. The Administration of Revenues

Look after the revenue (kharaj or land tax) affairs in such a way that those engaged in it remain prosperous because in their prosperity lies the prosperity of all others. The others cannot prosper without them, because all people are dependent on revenue and its payers. You should also keep an eye on the cultivation of the land more than on the collection of revenue because revenue cannot be had without cultivation and whoever asks for revenue without cultivation, ruins the area and brings death to the people. His rule will not last only a moment.

وَتَفَقَّدَ أَمْرَ الْخَرَاجِ بِمَا يُصْلِحُ أَهْلَهُ، فَإِنَّ فِي صَلَاحِهِ وَصَلَاحِهِمْ صَلَاحًا لِمَنْ سِوَاهُمْ، وَلَا صَلَاحَ لِمَنْ سِوَاهُمْ إِلَّا بِهِمْ، لِأَنَّ النَّاسَ كُلَّهُمْ عِيَالٌ عَلَى الْخَرَاجِ وَأَهْلِهِ. وَلْيَكُنْ نَظْرُكَ فِي عِمَارَةِ الْأَرْضِ أَبْلَغَ مِنْ نَظْرِكَ فِي اسْتِجْلَابِ الْخَرَاجِ، لِأَنَّ ذَلِكَ لَا يُدْرِكُ إِلَّا بِالْعِمَارَةِ، وَمَنْ طَلَبَ الْخَرَاجَ بِغَيْرِ عِمَارَةِ أَحْرَبَ الْبِلَادَ، وَأَهْلَكَ الْعِبَادَ، وَلَمْ يَسْتَقِمِ أَمْرُهُ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا.

If they complain of the heaviness (of the revenue) or of diseases, or dearth of water, or excess of water or of a change in the condition of the land either due to flood or to drought, you should remit the revenue to the extent that you hope will improve their position. The remission granted by you for the removal of distress from them should not be grudged by you, because it is an investment which they will return to you in the shape of the prosperity of your country and the progress of your domain in addition to earning their praise and happiness for meeting out justice to them.

You can depend upon their strength because of the investment made by you in them through catering to their convenience, and can have confidence in them because of the justice extended to them by being kind to them. After that, circumstances may so turn that you may have to ask for their assistance, when they will bear it happily, for prosperity is capable of hearing whatever you load on it. The ruin of the land is caused by the poverty of the cultivators, while the cultivators become poor when the officers concentrate on the collection (of money), having little hope for continuance (in their posts) and deriving no benefit from objects of warning.

فَإِنْ شَكُوا ثِقَلًا أَوْ عِلَّةً، أَوْ انْقِطَاعَ شَرِبٍ أَوْ بَالَةٍ، أَوْ إِحَالَةَ أَرْضٍ اعْتَمَرَهَا عَرَقٌ، أَوْ أَجْحَفَ بِهَا عَطَشٌ، حَفَّتْ عَنْهُمْ بِمَا تَرَجُّو أَنْ يُصْلِحَ بِهِ أَمْرَهُمْ، وَلَا يَتَّقُلَنَّ عَلَيْكَ شَيْءٌ حَفَّتْ بِهِ الْمُؤُونَةُ عَنْهُمْ، فَإِنَّهُ دُخْرٌ يَعُودُونَ بِهِ عَلَيْكَ فِي عِمَارَةِ بِلَادِكَ، وَتَزْيِينِ وَلَايَتِكَ، مَعَ اسْتِجْلَابِكَ حُسْنِ ثَنَائِهِمْ، وَتَبَجُّحِكَ بِاسْتِيفَاةِ الْعَدْلِ فِيهِمْ، مُعْتَمِدًا فَضْلَ قُوَّتِهِمْ، بِمَا دَخَرْتَ عِنْدَهُمْ مِنْ إِجْمَامِكَ لَهُمْ، وَالثِّقَةَ مِنْهُمْ بِمَا عَوَّدْتَهُمْ مِنْ عَدْلِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي رَفْعِكَ بِهِمْ، فَزَيْمًا حَدَثَ مِنَ الْأُمُورِ مَا إِذَا عَوَّلْتَ فِيهِ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ احْتِمَالُوهُ طَيِّبَةً أَنْفُسُهُمْ بِهِ، فَإِنَّ الْعُمَرَانَ مُحْتَمِلٌ مَا حَمَلْتَهُ، وَإِنَّمَا يُؤْتَى خَرَابُ الْأَرْضِ مِنْ إِعْوَازِ أَهْلِهَا، إِنَّمَا يُعَوِّزُ أَهْلُهَا لِإِشْرَافِ أَنْفُسِ الْوُلَاةِ عَلَى الْجَمْعِ، وَسُوءِ ظَنِّهِمْ بِالْبَقَاءِ، وَقِلَّةِ انْتِفَاعِهِمْ بِالْعَبْرِ.

5. The Clerical Establishment

Then you should take care of your secretarial workers. Put the best of them in charge of your affairs. Entrust those of your letters which contain your policies and secrets to him who possesses the best character, who is not elated by honours, lest he dares speak against you in common audiences. He should also not be negligent in presenting the communications of your officers before you and issuing correct replies to them on your behalf and in matters of your receipts and payments. He should not make any damaging argreement on your behalf and should not fail in repudiating an argreement against you. He should not be ignorant of the extent of his own position in matters because he who is ignorant of his own position is (even) more ignorant of the position of others.

ثُمَّ انظُرْ فِي حَالِ كُتَّابِكَ، فَوَلِّ عَلَى أُمُورِكَ خَيْرَهُمْ، وَاحْضُنْ رَسَائِلَكَ الَّتِي تُدْخِلُ فِيهَا مَكَائِدَكَ وَأَسْرَارَكَ بِأَجْمَعِهِمْ لَوْجُودِ صَالِحِ الْأَخْلَاقِ مِمَّنْ لَا تُبْطِرُهُ الْكِرَامَةُ، فَيَجْتَرِيءَ بِهَا عَلَيْكَ فِي خِلَافِ لَكَ بِحَضْرَةِ مَلَا وَلَا تُقَصِّرُ بِهِ الْعُقْلَةُ عَنْ إِيرَادِ مُكَاتَّبَاتِ عُمَّالِكَ عَلَيْكَ، وَإِصْدَارِ جَوَابَاتِهَا عَلَى الصَّوَابِ عِنْدَكَ، وَفِيمَا يَأْخُذُ لَكَ وَيُعْطِي مِنْكَ، وَلَا يُضْعِفُ عَقْدًا اعْتَقَدَهُ لَكَ، وَلَا يَعْجِزُ عَنْ إِطْلَاقِ مَا عَقِدَ عَلَيْكَ، وَلَا يَجْهَلُ مَبْلَغَ قَدْرِ نَفْسِهِ فِي الْأُمُورِ، فَإِنَّ الْجَاهِلَ يَقْدِرُ نَفْسِهِ يَكُونُ يَقْدِرُ غَيْرَهُ أَجْهَلًا.

Your selection of these people should not be on the basis of your understanding (of them), confidence and your good impression, because people catch the ideas of the officers through affectation and personal service and there is nothing in it which is like well-wishing or trustfulness. You should rather test them by what they did under the virtuous people before you. Take a decision in favour of one who has a good name among the common people and is the most renowned in trustworthiness, because this will be a proof of your regard for Allah and for him on whose behalf you have been appointed to this position (namely your Imam). Establish one chief for every department of work. He should not be incapable of big matters, and a rush of work should not perplex him. Whenever there is a defect in your secretaries which you overlook, then you will be held responsible for it.

ثُمَّ لَا يَكُنِ اخْتِيَارُكَ إِيَّاهُمْ عَلَى فِرَاسَتِكَ وَاسْتِنَامَتِكَ وَحُسْنِ الظَّنِّ مِنْكَ، فَإِنَّ الرِّجَالَ يَتَعَرَّفُونَ لِفِرَاسَاتِ الْوُلَاةِ بِتَصْنُوعِهِمْ وَحُسْنِ خِدْمَتِهِمْ، لَيْسَ وَرَاءَ ذَلِكَ مِنَ النَّصِيحَةِ وَالْأَمَانَةِ شَيْءٌ، وَلَكِنْ اخْتِبِرْهُمْ بِمَا وُلُوا لِلصَّالِحِينَ قَبْلَكَ، فَاعْمِدْ لِاحْسَنِهِمْ كَانَ فِي الْعَامَّةِ أَثَرًا، وَأَعْرِفْهُمْ بِالْأَمَانَةِ وَجْهًا، فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ دَلِيلٌ عَلَى نَصِيحَتِكَ لِلَّهِ وَلِمَنْ وُلِيَتْ أَمْرُهُ. وَاجْعَلْ لِرَأْسِ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ مِنْ أُمُورِكَ رَأْسًا مِنْهُمْ، لَا يَقْهَرُهُ كِبَرُهَا، وَلَا يَتَشَتَّتْ عَلَيْهِ كَثِيرُهَا، وَمَهْمَا كَانَ فِي كُتَّابِكَ مِنْ عَيْبٍ فَتَعَابَيْتَ عَنْهُ الرِّمْتَهُ.

6. Traders and Industrialists

Now take some advice about traders and industrialists. Give them good counsel whether they be settled (shop-keepers) or traders or physical

labourers because they are sources of profit and the means of the provision of useful articles. They bring them from distant and far-flung areas throughout the land and sea, plains or mountains, from where people cannot come and to where they do not dare to go, for they are peaceful and there is no fear of revolt from them, and they are quite without fear of treason.

ثُمَّ اسْتَوْصِ بِالتَّجَارِ وَذَوِي الصَّنَاعَاتِ، وَأَوْصِ بِهِنَّ خَيْرًا: الْمُتَقِيمِ مِنْهُنَّ، وَالْمُضْطَرِّبِ بِمَالِهِ، وَالْمُتَرَفِّقِ بِبَدَنِهِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ مَوَادُّ الْمَنَافِعِ، وَأَسْبَابُ الْمَرَافِقِ، وَجَلَابِئِهَا مِنَ الْمَبَاعِدِ وَالْمَطَارِحِ، فِي بَرِّكَ وَبَحْرِكَ، وَسَهْلِكَ وَجَبَلِكَ، وَحَيْثُ لَا يَلْتَمِئُ النَّاسُ لِمَوَاضِعِهَا، وَلَا يَجْتَرِثُونَ عَلَيْهَا، فَإِنَّهُمْ سِلْمٌ لَا تُخَافُ بَاتِقَتُهُ، وَصُلْحٌ لَا تُخْشَى غَائِلَتُهُ،

Look after their affairs before yourself or wherever they may be in your area. Know, along with this, that most of them are very narrow-minded, and awfully avaricious. They hoard goods for profiteering and fix high prices for goods. This is a source of harm to the people and a blot on the officers in charge. Stop people from hoarding, because the Messenger of Allah (S) has prohibited it. The sale should be smooth, with correct weights and prices, not harmful to either party, the seller or the purchaser; whoever commits hoarding after you prohibit it, give him exemplary but not excessive punishment.

وَنَفَقَدَ أُمُورَهُمْ بِحَضْرَتِكَ وَفِي حَوَاشِي بِلَادِكَ. وَعَلِمَ . مَعَ ذَلِكَ . أَنَّ فِي كَثِيرٍ مِنْهُمْ ضَيْقًا فَاحْشَا، وَشَحًّا قَيْحًا، وَاحْتِكَارًا لِلْمَنَافِعِ، وَتَحَكُّمًا فِي الْبَيْعَاتِ، وَذَلِكَ بَابٌ مَضْرُوبٌ لِلْعَامَّةِ، وَعَيْبٌ عَلَى الْوُلَاةِ، فَاْمَنْعَ مِنَ الْأَحْتِكَارِ، فَإِنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) مَنَعَ مِنْهُ. وَلْيَكُنِ الْبَيْعُ بَيْعًا سَمْحًا: بِمَوَازِينِ عَدْلٍ، وَأَسْعَارٍ لَا تُجْحَفُ بِالْفَرِيقَيْنِ مِنَ الْبَائِعِ وَالْمُبْتَاعِ، فَمَنْ قَارَفَ حُكْرَةً بَعْدَ نَهْيِكَ إِيَّاهُ فَتَكَلَّ وَعَاقِبْ فِي غَيْرِ إِسْرَافٍ.

7. The Lowest Class

(Fear) Allah and keep Allah in view in respect of the lowest class, consisting of those who have few means: the poor, the destitute, the penniless and the disabled; because in this class are both the self-contained needy and those who beg. Take care for the sake of Allah of His obligations towards them for which He has made you responsible. Fix for them a share from the public funds and a share from the crops of lands taken over as booty for Islam in every area, because in it the remote ones have the same shares as the near ones. All these people are those whose rights have been placed in your charge. Therefore, a luxurious life should not keep you away from them You cannot be excused for ignoring small matters because you were deciding big problems. Consequently, do not be unmindful of them, nor turn your face from them out of vanity.

ثُمَّ اللَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي الطَّبَقَةِ السُّفْلَى مِنَ الَّذِينَ لَا حِيلَةَ لَهُمْ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْمُحْتَاجِينَ وَأَهْلِ الْبُؤْسَى وَالرِّمَى، فَإِنَّ فِي هَذِهِ الطَّبَقَةِ قَانِعًا وَمُعْتَرًّا، وَاحْفَظْ لِلَّهِ مَا اسْتَحْفَظَكَ مِنْ حَقِّهِ فِيهِمْ، وَاجْعَلْ لَهُمْ قِسْمًا مِنْ بَيْتِ مَالِكَ، وَقِسْمًا مِنْ غَلَاتِ صَوَافِي الْأَسْلَامِ فِي كُلِّ بَلَدٍ، فَإِنَّ

لِلأَفْصَى مِنْهُمْ مِثْلَ الَّذِي لِلْأَدْنَى، وَكُلُّ قَدِ اسْتُرْعِيَتْ حَقُّهُ، فَلَا يَشْعَلَنَّكَ عَنْهُمْ بَطْرًا، فَإِنَّكَ لَا تُعْذِرُ بِتَضْيِيعِ التَّأْفِيفِ لِأَحْكَامِكَ الْكَثِيرِ الْمُهِمِّ. فَلَا تُشْخِصْ هَمَّكَ عَنْهُمْ، وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ هُمْ

Take care of the affairs of those of them who do not approach you among those who are looked at with contempt and whom people regard as low. Appoint for them some trusted people who are God-fearing and humble. They should inform you of these people's conditions. Then deal with them with a sense of responsibility to Allah on the day you will meet Him, because of all the subjects these people are the most deserving of equitable treatment, while for others also you should fulfil their rights so as to render account to Allah.

وَتَقَعَّدُ أُمُورَ مَنْ لَا يَصِلُ إِلَيْكَ مِنْهُمْ مِمَّنْ تَقْتَحِمُهُ الْعُيُونُ، وَتَحْفَرُهُ الرِّجَالُ، فَفَرِّغْ لِإَوْلِيكَ ثِقَّتَكَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْحَشِيَّةِ وَالتَّوَاضِعِ، فَلْيَرْفَعْ إِلَيْكَ أُمُورَهُمْ، ثُمَّ اعْمَلْ فِيهِمْ بِالْأَعْدَارِ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى يَوْمَ تَلْقَاهُ، فَإِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ مِنْ بَيْنِ الرَّعِيَّةِ أَخْوَجُ إِلَى الْأَنْصَافِ مِنْ غَيْرِهِمْ، وَكُلُّ فَاغْذِرْ إِلَى اللَّهِ تَعَالَى فِي تَأْدِيَةِ حَقِّهِ إِلَيْهِ.

Take care of the orphans and the aged who have no means (for livelihood) nor are they ready for begging. This is heavy on the officers; in fact, every right is heavy. Allah lightens it for those who seek the next world and so they endure (hardships) upon themselves and trust on the truthfulness of Allah's promise to them. And fix a time for complainants wherein you make yourself free for them, and sit for them in common audience and feel humble therein for the sake of Allah who created you. (On that occasion) you should keep away your army and your assistants such as the guards and the police so that anyone who like to speak may speak to you without fear, because I have heard the Messenger of Allah (S) say in more than one place, "The people among whom the right of the weak is not secured from the strong without fear will never achieve purity." Tolerate their awkwardness and inability to speak. Keep away from you narrowness and haughtiness; Allah would, on this account, spread over you the skirts of His mercy and assign the reward of His obedience for you. Whatever you give, give it joyfully, but when you refuse, do it handsomely and with excuses.

وَتَعَهَّدْ أَهْلَ الْيَتِيمِ وَذَوِي الرَّفَّةِ فِي السِّتْرِ مِمَّنْ لَا حِيلَةَ لَهُ، وَلَا يَنْصِبْ لِلْمَسْأَلَةِ نَفْسَهُ، وَذَلِكَ عَلَى الْوَلَاةِ ثَقِيلٌ، وَالْحَقُّ كُلُّهُ ثَقِيلٌ، وَقَدْ يُخَفِّفُهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى أَقْوَامٍ طَلَبُوا الْعَاقِبَةَ فَصَبَرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ، وَوَثِقُوا بِصِدْقِ مَوْعُودِ اللَّهِ هُمْ. وَاجْعَلْ لِذَوِي الْحَاجَاتِ مِنْكَ قِسْمًا تُفَرِّغْ فِيهِ شَخْصَكَ، وَتَجْلِسْ لَهُمْ مَجْلِسًا عَامًّا، فَتَتَوَاضَعُ فِيهِ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ، وَتُقَعَّدُ عَنْهُمْ جُنْدَكَ وَأَعْوَانَكَ مِنْ أَحْرَاسِكَ وَشُرَطِكَ، حَتَّى يُكَلِّمَكَ مُتَكَلِّمُهُمْ غَيْرَ مُتَمَتِّعٍ، فَإِنِّي سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (عليه السلام) يَقُولُ فِي غَيْرِ مَوْطِنٍ: "لَنْ تُقَدَّسَ أُمَّةٌ لَا يُؤْخَذُ لِلضَّعِيفِ فِيهَا حَقُّهُ مِنَ الْقَوِيِّ غَيْرَ مُتَمَتِّعٍ". ثُمَّ احْتَمَلَ الْحَرْقَ مِنْهُمْ وَالْعَيْ، وَنَحَّ عَنْكَ الضِّيْقَ وَالْأَنْفَ، يَبْسُطِ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ بِذَلِكَ أَكْتِفَافَ رَحْمَتِهِ، وَيُوجِبُ لَكَ ثَوَابَ طَاعَتِهِ، وَأَعْطَى مَا أَعْطَيْتَ هَنِيئًا، وَامْتَنَعَ فِي إِجْمَالِ وَإِعْدَارِ .

Then there are certain matters which you cannot avoid performing yourself. For example, replying to your officers when your secretaries are unable to do so, or disposing of the complaints of the people when your assistants shirk them. Finish every day the work meant for it, because every day has its own work. Keep for yourself the better and greater portion of these periods for the worship of Allah, although all these items are for Allah provided the intention is pure and the subjects prosper thereby.

ثُمَّ أُمُورٌ مِنْ أُمُورِكَ لَا بُدَّ لَكَ مِنْ مُبَاشَرَتِهَا: مِنْهَا إِجَابَةُ عُمَّالِكَ بِمَا يَعْنِي عَنْهُ كُتَابُكَ، وَمِنْهَا إِصْدَارُ حَاجَاتِ النَّاسِ عِنْدَ وَرُودِهَا عَلَيْكَ بِمَا تَخْرُجُ بِهِ صُدُورُ أَعْوَانِكَ. وَأَمْضِ لِكُلِّ يَوْمٍ عَمَلَهُ، فَإِنَّ لِكُلِّ يَوْمٍ مَا فِيهِ، وَاجْعَلْ لِنَفْسِكَ فِيمَا بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى أَفْضَلَ تِلْكَ الْمَوْاقِيتِ، وَأَجْزَلَ تِلْكَ الْأَقْسَامِ، وَإِنْ كَانَتْ كُلُّهَا لِلَّهِ إِذَا صَلَّحْتَ فِيهَا النَّبِيَّةَ، وَسَلِمْتَ مِنْهَا الرَّعِيَّةَ.

Communion with Allah

The particular thing by which you should purify your religion for Allah should be the fulfilment of those obligations which are especially for Him. Therefore, devote to Allah some of your physical activity during the night and the day, and whatever (worship) you perform for seeking nearness to Allah should be complete, without defect or deficiency, whatsoever physical exertion it may involve. When you lead the prayers for the people, then do not scare them away from it (by prolonging it) nor waste it (by making it too short), because among the people there are the sick as well as those who have needs of their own. When the Messenger of Allah (S) sent me to Yemen I enquired how I should offer prayers with them and he replied, "Say the prayers as the weakest of them would say, and be compassionate to the believers."

وَلْيَكُنْ فِي حَاصَّةِ مَا تُخْلِصُ لِلَّهِ بِهِ دِينَكَ: إِقَامَةُ فَرَائِضِهِ الَّتِي هِيَ لَهُ حَاصَّةٌ، فَأَعْطِ اللَّهَ مِنْ بَدَنِكَ فِي لَيْلِكَ وَنَهَارِكَ، وَوَفِّ مَا تَقَرَّرْتَ بِهِ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ ذَلِكَ كَامِلًا غَيْرَ مَثْلُومٍ وَلَا مَنْقُوصٍ، بَالِغًا مِنْ بَدَنِكَ مَا بَلَغَ.

وَإِذَا قُمْتَ فِي صَلَاتِكَ لِلنَّاسِ، فَلَا تُكُونَنَّ مُنْفَرًّا وَلَا مُضَيِّعًا، فَإِنَّ فِي النَّاسِ مَنْ بِهِ الْعِلَّةُ وَلَهُ الْحَاجَةُ. وَقَدْ سَأَلْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) حِينَ وَجَّهَنِي إِلَى الْيَمَنِ كَيْفَ أُصَلِّي بِهِمْ؟ فَقَالَ: "صَلِّ بِهِمْ كَصَلَاةِ أَوْعَفِهِمْ، وَكُنْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَحِيمًا."

On the behaviour and action of a Ruler

Then, do not keep yourself secluded from the people for a long time, because the seclusion of those in authority from the subjects is a kind of narrow-sightedness and causes ignorance about their affairs. Seclusion from them also prevents them from the knowledge of those things which they do not know and as a result they begin to regard big matters as small and small matters as big, good matters as bad and bad matters as good, while the truth

becomes confused with falsehood. After all, a governor is a human being and cannot have knowledge of things which people keep hidden from him.

وَأَمَّا بَعْدَ هَذَا، فَلَا تُطَوَّلَنَّ اخْتِجَابَكَ عَنْ رَعِيَّتِكَ، فَإِنَّ اخْتِجَابَ الْوَلَاةِ عَنِ الرَّعِيَّةِ شُعْبَةٌ مِنَ الصِّبْقِ، وَقَلَّةُ عِلْمٍ بِالْأُمُورِ، وَالْاِخْتِجَابُ مِنْهُمْ يَقْطَعُ عَنْهُمْ عِلْمَ مَا اخْتَجَبُوا دُونَهُ فَيَصْغُرُ عِنْدَهُمُ الْكَبِيرُ، وَيَعْظُمُ الصَّغِيرُ، وَيَتَّبِعُ الْحَسَنُ، وَيَحْسُنُ الْقَبِيحُ، وَيُشَابُ الْحَقُّ بِالْبَاطِلِ، وَإِنَّمَا الْوَالِي بَشَرٌ لَا يَعْرِفُ مَا تَوَارَى عَنْهُ النَّاسُ بِهِ مِنَ الْأُمُورِ،

There are no marks on the face of truth to differentiate its various expressions from falsehood. Then you can be one of two kinds of men. Either you may be generous in granting rights - and then why this hiding in spite of (your) discharging the obligations and good acts that you perform? Or you are a victim of stinginess; in that case people will soon give up asking you since they will lose hope of generous treatment from you. In spite of that there are many needs of the people towards you which do not involve any hardship on you, such as the complaint against oppression or the request for justice in a matter.

وَلَيْسَتْ عَلَى الْحَقِّ سِمَاتٌ تُعْرَفُ بِهَا ضُرُوبُ الصِّدْقِ مِنَ الْكَذِبِ، وَإِنَّمَا أَنْتَ أَحَدُ رَجُلَيْنِ: إِمَّا امْرُؤٌ سَحَّتْ نَفْسُكَ بِالْبَدْلِ فِي الْحَقِّ، فَفِيمَ اخْتِجَابِكَ مِنْ وَاجِبِ حَقِّ تَعْطِيهِ، أَوْ فِعْلٌ كَرِيمٌ تُسَدِّدِيهِ، أَوْ مُبْتَلَى بِالْمَنْعِ، فَمَا أَسْرَعَ كَفَّ النَّاسِ عَن مَسْأَلَتِكَ إِذَا أَيَسُّوا مِنْ بَدْلِكَ! مَعَ أَنَّ أَكْثَرَ حَاجَاتِ النَّاسِ إِلَيْكَ [م] مَا لَا مَوْوَنَةَ فِيهِ عَلَيْكَ، مِنْ شِكَاةٍ مَظْلَمَةٍ، أَوْ طَلَبِ إِنْصَافٍ فِي مُعَامَلَةٍ .

Further, a governor has favourites and people of easy access to him. They misappropriate things, are high-handed and do not observe justice in matters. You should destroy the root of evil in the people by cutting away the causes of these defects. Do not make any land grants to your hangers on or supporters. They should not expect from you the possession of land which may cause harm to adjoining people over the question of irrigation or common services whose burden the grantees place on others. In this way, the benefit will be rather theirs than yours, and the blame will lie on you in this world and the next.

ثُمَّ إِنَّ لِلْوَالِي حَاصَّةً وَبِطَانَةً، فِيهِمْ اسْتِثْنَاءٌ وَتَطَاوُلٌ، وَقَلَّةُ إِنْصَافٍ فِي مُعَامَلَةٍ، فَاحْسِسْ مَا دَرَّةَ أَوْلِيكَ بِقَطْعِ أَسْبَابِ تِلْكَ الْأَحْوَالِ، وَلَا تُقْطِعَنَّ لِأَحَدٍ مِنْ حَاشِيَتِكَ وَحَامَتِكَ قَطِيعَةً، وَلَا يَطْمَعَنَّ مِنْكَ فِي اعْتِقَادِ عُقْدَةٍ، تَضُرُّ بِمَنْ يَلِيهَا مِنَ النَّاسِ، فِي شَرْبِ أَوْ عَمَلِ مُشْتَرَكٍ، يَحْمِلُونَ مَوْوَنَتَهُ عَلَى غَيْرِهِمْ، فَيَكُونُ مَهْنَأُ ذَلِكَ لَهُمْ دُونَكَ، وَعَيْبُهُ عَلَيْكَ فِي الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ .

Allow rights to whomsoever it is due, whether near you or far from you. In this matter, you should be enduring and watchful even though it may involve your relations and favourites, and keep in view the reward of that which appears burdensome on you because its reward is handsome.

وَأَلْزِمِ الْحَقَّ مَنْ لَزِمَهُ مِنَ الْقَرِيبِ وَالْبَعِيدِ، وَكُنْ فِي ذَلِكَ صَابِرًا مُخْتَسِبًا، وَإِقْعًا ذَلِكَ مِنْ قَرَابَتِكَ خَاصَّتِكَ حَيْثُ وَقَعَ، وَابْتِغِ عَاقِبَتَهُ بِمَا يَنْفُلُ عَلَيْكَ مِنْهُ، فَإِنَّ مَعَبَّةَ ذَلِكَ تَحْمُودَةٌ.

If the subjects suspect you of high-handedness, explain to them your position openly and remove their suspicion with your explanation, because this would mean exercise for your soul and consideration to the subjects while this explanation will secure your aim of keeping them firm in truth.

وَإِنْ ظَنَنْتَ الرَّعِيَّةَ بِكَ حَيْفًا، فَأَصْحِرْ لَهُمْ بِعُدْرِكَ، وَاعْدِلْ عَنْكَ طُنُونَهُمْ بِإِصْحَارِكَ، فَإِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ رِيَاضَةً مِنْكَ لِنَفْسِكَ، وَرَفْقًا بِرَعِيَّتِكَ، وَإِعْدَارًا تَبْلُغُ فِيهِ حَاجَتَكَ مِنْ تَقْوِيهِمْ عَلَى الْحَقِّ.

Do not reject peace to which your enemy may call you and wherein there is the pleasure of Allah, because peace brings rest to your army and relief from your worries and safety for your country. But after peace there is great apprehension from the enemy because often the enemy offers peace to benefit by your negligence. Therefore, be cautious and do not act by wishfulness in this matter.

وَلَا تَدْفَعَنَّ صَلْحًا دَعَاكَ إِلَيْهِ عَدُوُّكَ لِيهِ رِضَى، فَإِنَّ فِي الصُّلْحِ دَعَاةَ لِمُؤَدِّكَ، وَرَاحَةً مِنْ هُمُومِكَ، وَأَمْنًا لِبِلَادِكَ، وَلَكِنَّ الْحَدَرَ كُلَّ الْحَدَرَ مِنْ عَدُوِّكَ بَعْدَ صَلْحِهِ، فَإِنَّ الْعَدُوَّ زُبْمًا قَارِبَ لِيَتَعَقَّلَ، فَخُذْ بِالْحَزْمِ، وَأَهْمُ فِي ذَلِكَ حُسْنَ الظَّنِّ.

If you conclude an agreement between yourself and your enemy or enter into a pledge with him then fulfil your agreement and discharge your pledge faithfully. Place yourself as a shield against whatever you have pledged because among the obligations of Allah there is nothing on which people are more strongly united despite the difference of their ideas and variation of their views than respect for fulfilling pledges.

Besides Muslims, even unbelievers have abided by agreements because they realized the dangers which would come in the wake of violation (thereof). Therefore, do not deceive your enemy, because no one can offend Allah save the ignorant and the wicked. Allah made His agreement and pledged the sign of security which He has spread over His creatures through His mercy and an asylum in which they stay in His protection and seek the benefit of nearness to Him. Therefore, there should be no deceit, cunning or duplicity in it.

وَإِنْ عَقَدْتَ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ عَدُوِّكَ لَكَ عُقْدَةً، أَوْ أَلْبَسْتَهُ مِنْكَ ذِمَّةً، فَحُطَّ عَهْدُكَ بِالْوَفَاءِ، وَارِعْ ذِمَّتَكَ بِالْأَمَانَةِ، وَاجْعَلْ نَفْسَكَ جُنَّةً دُونَ مَا عَطَيْتَ، فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ مِنْ فَرَائِضِ اللَّهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ شَيْءٌ النَّاسُ أَشَدُّ عَلَيْهِ اجْتِمَاعًا، مَعَ تَفْرِيقِ أَهْوَائِهِمْ، وَتَشْتِيبِ آرَائِهِمْ، مِنْ تَعْظِيمِ الْوَفَاءِ بِالْعُهُودِ، وَقَدْ لَزِمَ ذَلِكَ الْمُشْرِكُونَ فِيمَا بَيْنَهُمْ دُونَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ لِمَا اسْتَوْبَلُوا مِنْ عَوَاقِبِ الْعُدْرِ، فَلَا تُعَدِرَنَّ بِذِمَّتِكَ، وَلَا تُخَيِّسَنَّ بَعْدَكَ، وَلَا تُخَيِّلَنَّ عَدُوَّكَ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا يَجْتَرِءُ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِلَّا جَاهِلٌ

شَقِيًّا. وَقَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ عَهْدَهُ وَذِمَّتَهُ أَمْنًا أَفْضَاهُ بَيْنَ الْعِبَادِ بِرَحْمَتِهِ، وَحَرِيماً يَسْكُنُونَ إِلَى مَنَعَتِهِ، يَسْتَفِيضُونَ إِلَى جِوَارِهِ، فَلَا إِدْعَالَ وَلَا مُدَالَسَةَ، وَلَا خِدَاعَ فِيهِ،

Do not enter into an agreement which may admit of different interpretations and do not change the interpretation of vague words after the conclusion and confirmation (of the agreement). If an agreement of Allah involves you in hardship do not seek its repudiation without justification, because the bearing of hardships through which you expect relief and a handsome result is better than a violation whose consequence you fear, and that you fear that you will be called upon by Allah to account for it and you will not be able to seek forgiveness for it in this world or the next.

وَلَا تَعْقِدْ عَقْداً يَجُوزُ فِيهِ الْعِلَالُ، وَلَا تُعَوِّلَنَّ عَلَى لِحْنِ الْقَوْلِ بَعْدَ التَّأْكِيدِ وَالتَّوَثُّقَةِ، وَلَا يَدْعُونَكَ ضَيْقُ أَمْرٍ لَزِمَكَ فِيهِ عَهْدُ اللَّهِ، إِلَى طَلَبِ انْفِسَاخِهِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ، فَإِنَّ صَبْرَكَ عَلَى ضَيْقِ تَرْجُو انْفِرَاجَهُ وَفَضْلَ عَاقِبَتِهِ، خَيْرٌ مِنْ عَدْرِ تَخَافُ تَبَعْتَهُ، وَأَنْ تُحِيْطَ بِكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ فِيهِ طَلِبَةٌ، لَأَسْتَقِيلُ فِيهَا دُنْيَاكَ وَلَا آخِرَتَكَ.

You should avoid shedding blood without justification, because nothing is more inviting of Divine retribution, greater in (evil) consequence, and more effective in the decline of prosperity and cutting short of life than the shedding of blood without justification. On the Day of Judgement Allah the Glorified, would commence giving His judgement among the people with the cases of bloodshed committed by them.

Therefore, do not strengthen your authority by shedding prohibited blood because this will weaken and lower the authority, moreover destroy it and shift it. You cannot offer any excuse before Allah or before me for wilful killing because there must be the question or revenge in it. If you are involved in it by error and you exceed in the use of your whip or sword or hand in inflicting punishment, as sometimes even a blow by the fist or a smaller stroke causes death, then the haughtiness of your authority should not prevent you from paying the blood price to the successors of the killed person.

إِيَّاكَ وَالِدَّمَاءَ وَسَفْكَهَا بِغَيْرِ حِلِّهَا، فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ أَدْعَى لِلِقَمَةِ، وَلَا أَعْظَمَ لِتَبِعَةٍ، وَلَا أُخْرَى بِزُوالِ نِعْمَةٍ، وَانْقِطَاعِ مُدَّةٍ، مِنْ سَفْكِ الدِّمَاءِ بِغَيْرِ حَقِّهَا، وَاللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ مُبْتَدِئُ بِالْحُكْمِ بَيْنَ الْعِبَادِ، فِيمَا تَسَافَكُوا مِنَ الدِّمَاءِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، فَلَا تُقْوِيَنَّ سُلْطَانَكَ بِسَفْكِ دَمٍ حَرَامٍ، فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِمَّا يُضْعِفُهُ وَيُوهِنُهُ، بَلْ يُزِيلُهُ وَيَنْقُلُهُ، وَلَا عُذْرَ لَكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَلَا عِنْدِي فِي قَتْلِ الْعَمْدِ، لِأَنَّ فِيهِ قَوْدَ الْبَدَنِ، وَإِنْ ابْتُلَيْتَ بِحَطَاٍ وَأَفْرَطَ عَلَيْكَ سَوْطُكَ أَوْ سَيْفُكَ أَوْ يَدُكَ بِعُقُوبَةٍ، فَإِنَّ فِي الْوَكْرَةِ فَمَا فَوْقَهَا مَقْتَلَةٌ، فَلَا تَطْمَحَنَّ بِكَ نَحْوُهُ سُلْطَانِكَ عَنْ أَنْ تُؤَدِّيَ إِلَى أَوْلِيَاءِ الْمَقْتُولِ حَقَّهُمْ.

You should avoid self-admiration, having reliance in what appears good in yourself and love of exaggerated praise because this is one of the most reliable opportunities for Satan to obliterate the good deeds of the virtuous.

وَإِيَّاكَ وَالْأَعْجَابَ بِنَفْسِكَ، وَالثَّقَّةَ بِمَا يُعْجِبُكَ مِنْهَا، وَحُبَّ الْأَطْرَاءِ، فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَوْثَقِ
فُرْصِ الشَّيْطَانِ فِي نَفْسِهِ، لِيَمْحَقَ مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ إِحْسَانِ الْمُحْسِنِينَ.

Avoid showing (the existence of) obligation on your subjects for having done good to them or praising your own actions or making promises and then breaking them, because showing (the existence of) obligation destroys good, self-praise takes away the light of truth, and breaking promises earns the hatred of Allah and of the people. Allah, the Glorified, says:

Most hateful is it unto Allah that you say what you (yourselves) do (it) not. (Qur'an, 61:3)

وَإِيَّاكَ وَالْمَنْ عَلَى رَعِيَّتِكَ بِإِحْسَانِكَ، أَوْ التَّزَيُّدَ فِيمَا كَانَ مِنْ فِعْلِكَ، أَوْ أَنْ تَعِدَهُمْ فَتُنْبِعَ
مَوْعِدَكَ بِخُلْفِكَ، فَإِنَّ الْمَنْ يُبْطِلُ الْإِحْسَانَ، وَالتَّزَيُّدَ يَذْهَبُ بِنُورِ الْحَقِّ، وَالْخُلْفَ يُوجِبُ
الْمَقْتَّ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ وَالنَّاسِ، قَالَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ: (كَبُرَ مَقْتًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَقُولُوا مَا لَا تَفْعَلُونَ).

Avoid haste in matters before their time, slowness at their proper time, insistence on them when the propriety of action is not known or weakens when it becomes clear. Assign every matter its proper place and do every job at the appropriate time.

و إِيَّاكَ وَالْعَجَلَةَ بِالْأُمُورِ قَبْلَ أَوَانِهَا، أَوْ التَّسَاقُطَ فِيهَا عِنْدَ إِمكَانِهَا، أَوْ اللَّجَاجَةَ فِيهَا إِذَا
تَنَكَّرْتَ، أَوْ الْوَهْنَ عَنْهَا إِذَا اسْتَوْضَحَتْ، فَضَعْ كُلَّ أَمْرٍ مَوْضِعَهُ، وَأَوْقِعْ كُلَّ عَمَلٍ مَوْقِعَهُ.

Do not appropriate to yourself that in which the people have an equal share, nor be regardless of matters which have come to light with the excuse that you are accountable for others. Shortly, the curtains of all matters will be raised from your view and you will be required to render redress to the oppressed. Have control over (your) sense of prestige, any outburst of anger, the might of your arm and the sharpness of your tongue. Guard against all this by avoiding haste and by delaying severe action till your anger subsides and you regain your self-control. You cannot withhold yourself from this unless you bear in mind that you have to return to Allah.

وَإِيَّاكَ وَالْأَسْتِثْنَاءَ بِمَا النَّاسُ فِيهِ أَسْوَةٌ، وَالتَّعَالِيَّ عَمَّا تُعْنَى بِهِ بِمَّا قَدْ وَضَحَ لِلْعُيُونِ، فَإِنَّهُ
مَأْخُودٌ مِنْكَ لِغَيْرِكَ، وَعَمَّا قَلِيلٍ تَنْكَشِفُ عَنْكَ أَعْطِيَةُ الْأُمُورِ، وَبَيْنَتَصَفَتْ مِنْكَ لِلْمَظْلُومِ،
أَمْلِكُ حِمِيَّةَ أَنْفِكَ، وَسُورَةَ حَدِّكَ، وَسَطْوَةَ يَدِكَ، وَعُزْبَ لِسَانِكَ، وَاحْتِرْسَ مِنْ كُلِّ ذَلِكَ بِكَفِّ
الْبَادِرَةِ، وَتَأْخِيرِ السَّطْوَةِ، حَتَّى يَسْكُنَ غَضَبُكَ فَتَمْلِكَ الْأَحْتِيَارَ، وَلَنْ تَحْكُمَ ذَلِكَ مِنْ نَفْسِكَ
حَتَّى تُكْثِرَ هُمُومَكَ بِذِكْرِ الْمَعَادِ إِلَى رَبِّكَ.

It is necessary for you to recall how matters went with those who preceded you, be it a government or a great tradition or a precedent of our Prophet (may Allah bless him and his descendants) or the obligatory commands contained in the Book of Allah. Then you should follow them as you have seen us acting upon them and should exert yourself in following that I have enjoined upon you in this document in which I have exhausted

my pleas on you, so that if your heart advances towards its passions you may have no plea in its support.

None will protect from evil or grant success for good but Allah, the Exalted. Among the matters that Messenger of Allah, peace be on him, enjoined on me in his testament were the exhortation to prayer and zakat and (taking care of) the slaves. With that I end my document to you, and there is no strength or power but with Allah, the All-mighty.

وَالْوَاجِبُ عَلَيْكَ أَنْ تَتَذَكَّرَ مَا مَضَى لِمَنْ تَقَدَّمَكَ: مِنْ حُكُومَةٍ عَادِلَةٍ، أَوْ سُنَّةٍ فَاصِلَةٍ، أَوْ
أَثَرٍ عَنْ نَبِيِّنَا (صلى الله عليه وآله) أَوْ فَرِيضَةٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ، فَتَقْتَدِيَ بِمَا شَاهَدْتَ بِمَا عَمَلْنَا بِهِ
فِيهَا، وَتَحْتَهْدَ لِنَفْسِكَ فِي اتِّبَاعِ مَا عَهَدْتَ إِلَيْكَ فِي عَهْدِي هَذَا، وَاسْتَوْثَقْتُ بِهِ مِنَ الْحُجَّةِ
لِنَفْسِي عَلَيْكَ، لِكَيْلَا تَكُونَ لَكَ عِلَّةٌ عِنْدَ تَسْرُعِ نَفْسِكَ إِلَى هَوَاهَا، فَلَنْ يَعْصِمَ مِنَ السُّوءِ وَلَا
يُوفِّقَ لِلْخَيْرِ إِلَّا اللَّهُ تَعَالَى. وَقَدْ كَانَ فِيمَا عَهَدَ إِلَيَّ رَسُولُهُ (عليه السلام) فِي وَصَايَاهُ تَحْضِيضًا
عَلَى الصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ وَمَا مَلَكَتْ أَيْمَانُكُمْ، فَبَدَلِكِ أَحْبَبْتُ لَكَ مَا عَهَدَ، وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَظِيمِ.

I ask Allah through the vastness of His mercy and the greatness of His power of giving a good inclination that He may prompt me and you to advance a clear plea before Him and His creatures in a manner that may attract His pleasure along with handsome praise among the people, good effect in the country, an increase in prosperity and a hightening of honour; and that He may allow me and you to die a death of virtue and martyrdom. Surely, we have to return to Him. Peace be on the Messenger of Allah - may Allah shower His blessings and plentiful salutations on him and his pure and chaste descendants; and that is an end to the matter.

وَأَنَا أَسْأَلُ اللَّهَ بِسَعَةِ رَحْمَتِهِ، وَعَظِيمِ قُدْرَتِهِ عَلَى إِعْطَاءِ كُلِّ رَغْبَةٍ، أَنْ يُوفِّقَنِي وَإِيَّاكَ لِمَا فِيهِ
رِضَاهُ مِنَ الْأَقَامَةِ عَلَى الْعُدْرِ الْوَاضِحِ إِلَيْهِ وَإِلَى خَلْقِهِ، مَعَ حُسْنِ التَّنَاءِ فِي الْعِبَادِ، وَجَمِيلِ الْأَثَرِ
فِي الْبِلَادِ، وَتَمَامِ التَّعَمُّةِ، وَتَضْعِيفِ الْكِرَامَةِ، وَأَنْ يَخْتِمَ لِي وَلَكَ بِالسَّعَادَةِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ، إِنَّا إِلَيْهِ
رَاغِبُونَ، وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ. صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ الطَّيِّبِينَ الطَّاهِرِينَ وَ سَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا
كَثِيرًا. وَالسَّلَامُ.

Notes

1. This document, which deserves to be called the constitution of Islamic polity, was prepared by the person who was the greatest scholar of Divine law and acted upon it more than anyone else. From the study of Amir al-mu 'minin's way of governance in these pages it can be concluded that his aim was only the enforcement of Divine law and the improvement of social conditions, and not to disrupt public security or to fill treasures by plunder, or to strive to extend the country's boundaries by fair means or foul. Worldly governments generally adopt such constitutions which cater to their utmost benefit and try to change every law which is against that aim or is injurious for their objective. But every article of this constitution serves as a custodian of common interests and protector of collective organization. Its enforcement has no touch of selfishness or any iota of self-interest. It contains such basic principles of the fulfilment of Allah's obligations, the protection of human rights without distinction of religion or community, the care of the destitute and the poor and the provision of succour to the low and the down-trodden from

which full guidance can be had for the propagation of right and justice, the establishment of peace and security, and the prosperity and well-being of the people.

Amir al-mu'minin wrote this instrument for Malik ibn al-Harith al-Ashtar, when he was appointed the Governor of Egypt in 38 A. H. Malik al-Ashtar was one of the chief companions of Amir al-mu'minin. He had shown great endurance and steadfastness and perfect confidence and trust in Amir al-mu'minin. He had attained the utmost nearness and attachment to him by moulding his conduct and character after the conduct and character of Amir al-mu'minin. This can be gauged by Amir al-mu'minin's words: "Malik was to me as I was to the Messenger of Allah." (Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.15, p.98; al-A`lam, vol.6, p.131). Malik al-Ashtar too, actuated by self-less feelings of service, took a very active part in military encounters and proved himself to be Amir al-mu'minin's arm in all battles and encounters. He showed such feats of courage and daring that his bravery was acknowledged throughout Arabia. Along with this bravery he was also conspicuous in endurance and forbearing. In this connection, Warram ibn Abi Firas an-Nakha'i has written that once Malik was passing through the market of Kufah with the dress and turban made of gunny-cloth when a shopkeeper finding him in this condition and clothing, he threw some rotten leaves upon him, but he did not at all mind this dirty behaviour, nor did he even look at him. Rather, he quietly stepped forward. Then someone said to this shopkeeper, "Do you know to whom you have been so insolent?" He replied that he did not know who he was, whereupon he said that it was Malik al-Ashtar, the companion of Amir al-mu'minin. Hearing this, he lost his senses and at once ran behind him to seek pardon for this insolence and humiliating treatment. While in his search he reached a mosque where Malik was offering prayers. When he finished the prayers this man went forward and fell on his feet and begged pardon with great pertinacity and weeping. Malik raised the man's beard up and said, "By Allah, I have come to the mosque to pray to Allah to forgive you. I myself had pardoned you that very moment, and I hope Allah too will pardon you." (Tanbihu 'l-khawahir wa nuzhatu 'n-nawazir, vol.1, p.2; al-Bihar, vol.42, p.157). This is the forgiveness and tolerance of a warrior at whose name courage trembled, and whose swordsmanship was acknowledged by the brave men of Arabia. And this is the real sign of bravery that a man should exercise self-control during bitterness of anger and rage and endure hardships with patience and calmness. In this connection, Amir al-mu'minin's saying is that, "The bravest of men is he who over-powers his passions."

However, besides these characteristics and qualities, he had a perfect aptitude for organization and administration. Thus, when the `Uthmani (al-`Uthmaniyyah) party began to spread the germs of destruction in Egypt and tried to upset the law and order of the country by mischief and revolt then Amir al-mu'minin removed Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr from the govern-ship and decided to appoint Malik al-Ashtar in his place, although at that time he was posted as the Governor of Nasibin. However, Amir al-mu'minin sent him word that he should name someone as his deputy and come to Amir al-mu'minin. On receipt of this order Malik al-Ashtar appointed Shabib ibn `Amir al-Azdi in his place and himself came to Amir al-mu'minin. Amir al-mu'minin gave him a warrant of appointment and sent him off to Egypt, and also sent a written order to Egyptians to obey him. When Mu`awiyah got the news of Malik al-Ashtar's appointment through his spies he was perplexed because he had promised `Amr ibn al-`As that he would give him the govern-ship of Egypt in reward of his services and he had hoped that `Amr ibn al-`As would easily defeat Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr and wrest the power from him, but could not imagine conquering Egypt by defeating Malik al-Ashtar. He therefore decided to do away with him before he took over the charge. For this he arranged with a landlord of the city of al-`Arish (or al-Qulzum) that when Malik passed through al-`Arish on his way to Egypt he should kill him by some device or other and in reward for this the revenue of his estate would be written off. So, when Malik al-Ashtar reached al-`Arish with retinue and force the chief of al-`Arish gave him a good ovation and insisted on having Malik as his guest. Malik agreed and stayed at his place. When he finished the meal the host gave him some syrup of honey to drink in which he had mixed with poison. Soon after drinking it the poison began to show its effect and before the eyes of everyone this great warrior known for his swordsmanship and for putting the rows of the enemy to flight calmly went into the embrace of death.

When Mu`awiyah got news of his success of this device he was overjoyed and shouted in merriment, "Oh, honey is also an army of Allah", and then said during a speech:

`Ali ibn Abi Talib had two right hand men. One was chopped off on the day of Siffin and he was `Ammar ibn Yasir, and the second has been severed now and he is Malik al-Ashtar.

But when the news of Malik's assassination reached Amir al-mu'minin, he was highly grieved and sorrowful, then he said:

Malik! Who is Malik? If Malik was a stone, he was hard and solid; if he was a rock, he was a great rock which had no parallel. It seems his death has made me also lifeless. I swear by Allah that his death made the Syrians joyous and insulted the Iraqis.

Then he continued:

Women have become barren to give birth to such as Malik. (at-Tabari, vol.1, pp.3392-3395; Ibn al-Athir, vol.3, pp.352-353; al-Ya`qubi, vol.2, p.194; al-Isti`ab, vol.3, p.1366; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.6, pp. 74-77; Ibn Kathir, vol.7, pp.313-314; Abu'l-Fida', vol.1, p.179)

Letter 54: To Talhah and az-Zubayr

To Talhah and az-Zubayr (through `Imran ibn al-Husayn al-Khuza`i)¹
Abu Ja`far al-Iskafi has mentioned this in his "Kitab al-maqamat" on the excellent qualities (manaqib) of Amir al-mu'minin (peace be upon him).

ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام)

إلى طلحة والزبير، مع عمران بن الحصين الخزاعي

وقد ذكره أبو جعفر الاسكافي في كتاب المقامات في مناقب أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام

Now, both of you know, although you conceal it, that I did not approach the people till they approached me, and I did not ask them to swear allegiance to me till they themselves swore allegiance to me, and both of you were among those who approached me and swore me allegiance. Certainly, the common people did not swear me allegiance under any force put on them or for any money given to them.

If you two swore allegiance to me obediently, come back and offer repentance to Allah soon, but if you swore allegiance to me reluctantly, you have certainly given me cause for action, by showing your obedience and concealing your disobedience.² By my life, you were not more entitled than other Muhajirun to conceal and hide the matter. Your refusing allegiance before entering into it would have been easier than getting out of it after having accepted it.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمَا، وَإِنْ كَتُمْتُمَا، أَيَّ لَمْ أُرِدِ النَّاسَ حَتَّى أَرَادُونِي، وَمَنْ أَبَايَعُهُمْ حَتَّى بَايَعُونِي، وَإِن كُنْتُمَا مِمَّنْ أَرَادَنِي وَبَايَعَنِي، وَإِنَّ الْعَامَّةَ لَمْ تُبَايَعْنِي لِسُلْطَانِ عَاصِبٍ، وَلَا لِعَرَضِ حَاضِرٍ، فَإِنْ كُنْتُمَا بَايَعْتُمَا بِي طَائِعِينَ، فَارْجِعَا وَتُوبَا إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ قَرِيبٍ، وَإِنْ كُنْتُمَا بَايَعْتُمَا بِي كَارِهَيْنِ، فَقَدْ جَعَلْتُمَا لِي عَلَيْكُمَا السَّبِيلَ بِإِظْهَارِكُمَا الطَّاعَةَ، وَإِسْرَارِكُمَا الْمَعْصِيَةَ، وَالْعَمْرِي مَا كُنْتُمَا بِأَحَقَّ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ بِالتَّيَمِّينِ وَالْكِتْمَانِ، وَإِنَّ دَفْعَكُمَا هَذَا الْأَمْرَ مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ تَدْخُلَا فِيهِ، كَانَ أَوْسَعَ عَلَيْكُمَا مِنْ خُرُوجِكُمَا مِنْهُ، بَعْدَ إِقْرَارِكُمَا بِهِ.

You have indicated that I killed `Uthman; then let someone from among the people of Medina who supported neither me nor you decide the matter between me and you. Then one of us shall face (the command of law) according to (their) involvement. You should give up your way now, O you two elderly men, when the great question before you is only one of shame, before you face the question of shame coupled with the Hell-fire; and that is an end to the matter.

وَقَدْ زَعَمْتُمَا أَيَّ قَتَلْتُ عُثْمَانَ، فَبَيَّنِّي وَبَيَّنَّكُمَا مَنْ تَخَلَّفَ عَنِّي وَعَنَّكُمَا مِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ، ثُمَّ يَلِزُّكُمْ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ بِقَدْرِ مَا احْتَمَلَ. فَارْجِعَا أَيُّهَا الشَّيْخَانِ عَنِ رَأْيِكُمَا، فَإِنَّ الْأَنْ أَعْظَمَ أَمْرِكُمَا الْعَارُ، مِنْ قَبْلِ أَنْ يَجْتَمِعَ الْعَارُ وَالنَّارُ، السَّلَامُ.

Notes

1. `Imran ibn al-Husayn al-Khuza`i was a high ranking companion distinguished in learning and achievements and very cautious in relating traditions. He accepted Islam in the

year of Khaybar and participated in jihad with the Prophet. Was honoured with the judicial position at Kufah and died at Basrah in 52 A.H.

One of the genuine traditions related by `Imran ibn al-Husayn about Amir al-mu'minin is:

The Messenger of Allah raised and sent an army under the command of `Ali ibn Abi Talib. From the khums (one-fifth) received by him `Ali set aside a slave girl for himself. This was distasteful to some of his men and four of them decided to complain of this to the Prophet (S). On their return they approached the Prophet, and one of them stood up and said: "O' Messenger of Allah! Do you not see that `Ali did so and so?" The Prophet turned away his face from him. Another man stood up and made the same complaint and the Prophet turned away his face from him. Still another man stood up and repeated what his two colleagues had said and met the same reaction. Then the fourth man stood up and spoke like his predecessors. The Prophet (S) then turned to them with signs of anger on his face and said: "What do you want me to do to `Ali? (repeating thrice). Surely, `Ali is from me and I am from him, and after me he is the Master of all the believers." (al-Jami` as -sahih, at-Tirmidhi, vol.5, p.632; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.4, pp.437-438; al-Musnad, Abu Dawud at-Tayalisi, p.111; al-Mustadrak, al-Hakim, vol.3, pp.110-111; Hilyah al-awliya', Abu Nu`aym, vol.6, p.294; Tarikh al-Islam, adh- Dhahabi, vol.2, p.196; at-Tarikh, Ibn Kathir, vol.7, p.345; Usd al- ghabah, Ibn al-Athir, vol.4, p.27, al-Isabah, Ibn Hajar, vol.2, p.509)

2. That is you are men of riches and means having a large tribe and community. What is the need to you to do for this double dealing of concealing the real feelings of the heart, showing obedience and swearing allegiance loathsomely and unwillingly? Of course, if someone else, who was weak and helpless, said that he was obliged to swear allegiance, his point could be accepted to some extent. But when no one else has expressed his helplessness in the matter, why did this helplessness befall you so that you now regard your swearing of allegiance to be the result of your helplessness.

Letter 55: To Mu`awiyah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى معاوية

Now, Allah, the Glorified, has made this world for what is to come hereafter, and put its inhabitants to trial as to which of you is good in action, and we have not been created for this world, nor ordered to strive for it, but we have been made to stay in it to stand trial therein. So, Allah has tried me with you and tried you with me. He has therefore made either of us a plea for the other.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ قَدْ جَعَلَ الدُّنْيَا لِمَا بَعْدَهَا، وَابْتَلَى فِيهَا أَهْلَهَا، لِيَعْلَمَ أَيُّهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا، وَلَسْنَا لِلدُّنْيَا خُلُقْنَا، وَلَا بِالسَّعْيِ فِيهَا أُمْرُنَا، وَإِنَّمَا وَضَعْنَا فِيهَا لِنُبْتَلَى بِهَا، وَقَدْ ابْتَلَايَ اللَّهُ بِكَ وَابْتَلَاكَ بِي: فَجَعَلَ أَحَدَنَا حُجَّةً عَلَى الْآخَرَ،

Now, you have leapt on the world by a wrong interpretation of the Qur'an, and wanted me to account for what neither my hand nor tongue was responsible, but you and the Syrians put the blame on me, and your scholar incited against me the ignorant and one who is standing incited the one who is sitting. You should fear Allah about yourself and not allow Satan to lead you. Turn your face towards the next world because that is our path and your path, and fear that Allah may not entangle you in any sudden infliction which may destroy the root as well as cut away the branches. I swear to you by Allah an oath which will not be broken that if destiny brings me and you together I shall steadfastly hold before you

until Allah judges between us, and He is the Best of the judges.
(Qur'an, 7:87)

فَعَدَوْتَ عَلَى طَلَبِ الدُّنْيَا بِنَأْوِيلِ الْقُرْآنِ، فَطَلَبْتَنِي بِمَا لَمْ تَحْنِ يَدِي وَلَا لِسَانِي، وَعَصَيْتَهُ أَنْتَ وَأَهْلُ الشَّامِ بِي، وَاللَّبَّ عَالِمُكُمْ جَاهِلُكُمْ، وَقَائِمُكُمْ قَاعِدُكُمْ. فَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ فِي نَفْسِكَ، وَنَارِ الشَّيْطَانِ قِيَادَكَ، وَاصْرِفْ إِلَى الْآخِرَةِ وَجْهَكَ، فَهِيَ طَرِيقُنَا وَطَرِيقُكَ. وَاحْذَرْ أَنْ يُصِيبَكَ اللَّهُ مِنْهُ بِعَاجِلِ قَارِعَةٍ تَمَسُّ الْأَصْلَ، وَتَقْطَعُ الدَّابِرَ، فَإِنِّي أُؤَلِّي لَكَ بِاللَّهِ أَلِيَّةً غَيْرَ فَاجِرَةٍ، لَعِنَ جَمْعَتِي وَإِيَّاكَ جَوَامِعُ الْأَقْدَارِ لَا أَرَأَى بِبَاحْتِكَ (حَتَّى يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَنَا وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الْحَاكِمِينَ).

Letter 56: Instructions to Shuray bin Hani

Instructions to Shuray bin Hani when he was appointed as the commanding officer of the vanguard of his army, which was marching towards Syria.

When Amir al-mu'minin placed Shurayh ibn Hani (al-Madhhiji) at the head of the vanguard preceding towards Syria, he issued this document of instruction to him:

ومن كلام وصي به شريح بن هانيء

لما جعله على مقدمته إلى الشام

Fear Allah every morning and evening and remain apprehensive about yourself of this deceitful world and do not regard it safe in any case. Know that if for fear of some evil you do not refrain yourself from things which you love, then passions will fling you into a lot of harm. Therefore, be for yourself a refrainer and protector, and for your anger a suppressor and killer.

اتَّقِ اللَّهَ فِي كُلِّ صَبَاحٍ وَمَسَاءٍ، وَخَفْ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ الدُّنْيَا الْعُزُورَ، وَلَا تَأْمَنْهَا عَلَى حَالٍ،
وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّكَ إِنْ لَمْ تَرُدَّ عَنْ نَفْسِكَ عَنْ كَثِيرٍ مِمَّا تُحِبُّ، مَخَافَةَ مَكْرُوهِهِ، سَمَتْ بِكَ الْأَهْوَاءُ إِلَى كَثِيرٍ
مِنَ الضَّرْرِ. فَكُنْ لِنَفْسِكَ مَانِعاً زَادِعاً، وَلِنَفْسِكَ عِنْدَ الْحَفِظَةِ وَاقِماً قَامِعاً.

**Letter 57: To the people of Kufah at the time of his march
from Medina to Basrah**

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى أهل الكوفة

عند مسيره من المدينة إلى البصرة

Now, I have come out of my city either as an oppressor or as the oppressed, either as a rebel or one against whom rebellion has been committed. In any case, to whomsoever this letter of mine reaches, I appeal to him in the name of Allah that he should come to me and if I am in the right he should help me; but if I am in the wrong then he should try to get me to the right according to his view.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي خَرَجْتُ مِنْ حَيِّي هَذَا: إِمَّا ظَالِمًا، وَإِمَّا مَظْلُومًا، وَإِمَّا بَاغِيًا، وَإِمَّا مَبْعُوثًا
عَلَيْهِ. وَأَنَا أُذَكِّرُ اللَّهَ مَنْ بَلَغَهُ كِتَابِي هَذَا لَمَّا نَفَرَ إِلَيَّ، فَإِنْ كُنْتُ مُحْسِنًا أَعَانِي، وَإِنْ كُنْتُ
مُسِيئًا اسْتَعْتَبَنِي.

Letter 58: Written to the people of various localities describing what took place between him and the people of Siffin

ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام)

إلى أهل الامصار يقتصّ فيه ما جرى بينه وبين أهل صفين

The whole thing began thus that we and the Syrians met in an encounter although we believe in one and the same Allah and the same Prophet, and our message in Islam is the same. We did not want them to add anything in the belief in Allah or in acknowledging His Messenger (Allah bless him and his descendants) nor did they want us to add any such thing. In fact, there was complete unity except that we differed on the question of `Uthman's blood while we were free of responsibility for it. We suggested to them to appease the situation by calming the temporary irritation and pacifying the people till matters settled down and stabilized when we would gain strength to put matters right.

وَكَانَ بَدْءُ أَمْرِنَا أَنَّا التَّقِينَا وَالْقَوْمُ مِنْ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ، وَالظَّاهِرُ أَنَّ رَيْتَنَا وَاحِدًا، وَنَبِيَّنَا وَاحِدًا، وَدَعْوَتَنَا فِي الْأِسْلَامِ وَاحِدَةٌ، لَا نَسْتَرِيدُهُمْ فِي الْإِيمَانِ بِاللَّهِ وَالتَّصْدِيقِ بِرَسُولِهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، وَلَا يَسْتَرِيدُونَنَا، الْأَمْرُ وَاحِدٌ، إِلَّا مَا اخْتَلَفْنَا فِيهِ مِنْ دَمِ عُمَانَ، وَنَحْنُ مِنْهُ بَرَاءَةٌ! فَقُلْنَا: تَعَالَوْا نُدَاوِ مَا لَا يُدْرِكُ الْيَوْمَ بِإِطْفَاءِ النَّائِزَةِ، وَتَسْكِينِ الْعَامَّةِ، حَتَّى يَشْتَدَّ الْأَمْرُ وَيَسْتَجْمِعَ، فَتَقْوَى عَلَيَّ وَضَعِ الْحَقِّ مَوَاضِعَهُ.

They however said that they would settle it by war. Thus, they refused our offer and consequently war spread its wings and came to stay. Its flames rose and became strong. When the war had bitten us as well as them and pierced its talons into us as well as them, they accepted what we had proposed to them.

So, we agreed to what they suggested and hastened to meet their request. In this way, the plea became clear to them and no excuse was left to them. Now, whoever among them adheres to this will be saved by Allah from ruin, and whoever shows obstinacy and insistence (on wrong) is the reverser whose heart has been blinded by Allah and evils will encircle his head.

فَقَالُوا: بَلْ نُدَاوِيهِ بِالْمُكَابَرَةِ! فَأَبَوْا حَتَّى جَنَحَتِ الْحَرْبُ وَرَكَدَتْ، وَوَقَدَتْ نِيرَانَهَا وَحَمِشَتْ. فَلَمَّا ضَرَسْتَنَا وَإِيَّاهُمْ، وَوَضَعَتْ مَخَالِبَهَا فِينَا وَفِيهِمْ، أَجَابُوا عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ إِلَى الَّذِي دَعَوْنَاهُمْ إِلَيْهِ، فَأَجَبْنَاهُمْ إِلَى مَا دَعَوْا، وَسَارَعْنَاهُمْ إِلَى مَا طَلَبُوا، حَتَّى اسْتَبَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ الْحُجَّةُ، وَانْقَطَعَتْ مِنْهُمْ الْمَعْذِرَةُ. فَمَنْ تَمَّ عَلَى ذَلِكَ مِنْهُمْ فَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْقَذَهُ اللَّهُ مِنَ الْهَلَكَةِ، وَمَنْ لَجَّ وَتَمَادَى فَهُوَ الرَّكْسُ الَّذِي رَانَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قَلْبِهِ، وَصَارَتْ دَائِرَةُ السُّوءِ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ.

Letter 59: To al-Aswad ibn Qutbah, the Governor of Hulwan

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى الاسود بن قُطْبَةَ صاحب جند حُلوان

Now, if the actions of a governor follow the passions he will be greatly hampered in justice. All the people should be equal in right before you, because injustice cannot be a substitute for justice. Avoid that thing the like of which you would not like for yourself. Exert yourself in what Allah has made obligatory on you, hoping for His reward and fearing His chastisement.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ الْوَالِيَّ إِذَا اخْتَلَفَ هَوَاهُ مَنَعَهُ ذَلِكَ كَثِيرًا مِنَ الْعَدْلِ، فَلْيَكُنْ أَمْرُ النَّاسِ عِنْدَكَ فِي الْحَقِّ سَوَاءً، فَإِنَّهُ لَيْسَ فِي الْجُورِ عِوَضٌ مِنَ الْعَدْلِ، فَاجْتَنِبْ مَا تُنْكِرُ أَمْثَالَهُ، وَابْتَدِلْ نَفْسَكَ فِيمَا افْتَرَضَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ، رَاجِعًا ثَوَابَهُ، وَتَتَحَوَّفًا عِقَابَهُ.

Know that this world is the place of trial. Whoever here wastes any hour of his time will repent it on the Day of Judgement, and nothing can ever make you free of need of what is right. One of the rights on you is that you should protect yourself (from sins) and look after the subjects to your best. The benefit that will come to you from this will be greater than that which will accrue (to people) through you; and that is an end to the matter.

وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ الدُّنْيَا دَارُ بَلِيَّةٍ لَمْ يَفْرُغْ صَاحِبُهَا قَطُّ فِيهَا سَاعَةً إِلَّا كَانَتْ فَرَعَتْهُ عَلَيْهِ حَسْرَةً يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، أَنَّهُ لَنْ يُعِينَكَ عَنِ الْحَقِّ شَيْءٌ أَبَدًا، وَمَنْ الْحَقُّ عَلَيْكَ حِفْظُ نَفْسِكَ، وَالْأَحْتِسَابُ عَلَى الرَّعِيَّةِ بِجُهْدِكَ، فَإِنَّ الَّذِي يَصِلُ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ أَفْضَلُ مِنَ الَّذِي يَصِلُ بِكَ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 60: To the officers through whose jurisdiction the army passed

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى العمال الذين يطأ عملهم الجيش

From the servant of Allah `Ali, Amir al-mu'minin, to all the collectors of revenue and officers of the realm through whose area the army passes.

مِنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلِيِّ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى مَنْ مَرَّ بِهِ الْجَيْشُ مِنْ جُبَاةِ الْحَرَاكِ وَعُمَّالِ الْبِلَادِ.

Now, I have sent an army that will pass by you, if Allah wills. I have instructed them about what Allah has made obligatory on them, namely that they should avoid molestation and avert harm. I hold myself clear before you and those (unbelievers) who are under your protection from any annoyance committed by the army except when one is compelled by hunger and there is no other way of satisfying it. If anyone of them takes anything through force you should punish him. None of you should be foolish enough to obstruct them or intervene in matters which we have allowed them by way of exception. I am myself within the army. So, refer to me their high-handedness and any hardship which is caused by them and which you cannot avert except through Allah and through me. I shall then avert it with the help of Allah, if He so wills.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي قَدْ سَيَّرْتُ جُنُوداً هِيَ مَارَةٌ بِكُمْ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ، وَقَدْ أَوْصَيْتُهُمْ بِمَا يَجِبُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِنْ كَفِّ الْأَذَى، وَصَرْفِ الشَّدَى، وَأَنَا أَبْرَأُ إِلَيْكُمْ وَإِلَى ذِمَّتِكُمْ مِنْ مَعْرَةِ الْجَيْشِ، إِلَّا مِنْ جَوْعَةِ الْمُضْطَرِّ، لَا يَجِدُ عَنْهَا مَدْهَباً إِلَى شَبَعِهِ. فَتَنَاوَلُوا مَنْ تَنَاوَلُوا مِنْهُمْ [شَيْئاً] ظُلماً عَنْ ظُلْمِهِمْ، وَكُفُّوا أَيْدِي سَفَهَائِكُمْ عَنْ مُضَادَّتِهِمْ، وَالتَّعَرُّضِ لَهُمْ فِيمَا اسْتَنْتَيْنَاهُ مِنْهُمْ، وَأَنَا بَيِّنٌ أَظْهَرَ الْجَيْشِ، فَارْفَعُوا إِلَيَّ مَظَالِمَكُمْ، وَمَا عَرَازِكُمْ مِمَّا يَغْلِبُكُمْ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ، وَلَا تُطِيقُونَ دَفْعَهُ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ وَبِي، أُعْيِرْتَهُ بِمَعُونَةِ اللَّهِ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ.

Letter 61: To Kumayl ibn Ziyad an-Nakha`i

To Kumayl ibn Ziyad an-Nakha`i, the Governor of Hit expressing displeasure on his inability to prevent the enemy forces that passed through his area from marauding

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى كميل بن زياد النخعي

وهو عامله على هيت، يُنكر عليه تركه دفع من يجتاز به من جيش العدو طالباً الغارة

Now, the neglecting by a man of what he has been made responsible for and doing what is to be done by others is a manifest weakness and a ruinous sight. Certainly, your advance on the people of Qarqisiya, and your leaving the arsenals over which we had set you, without anyone to protect them or to repulse the enemy force, savoured of shattered thinking. In this way, you served like a bridge for the enemy who came marauding on your allies while your arms were weak, you had no awe around you; you could not prevent the enemy from advancing; you could not break his might; you could not defend the people of your area and you could not discharge functions on behalf of your Imam.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ تَضْيِيعَ الْمَرْءِ مَا وُلِّيَ، وَتَكَلُّفَهُ مَا كُفِّيَ، لَعَجْزُ حَاضِرٍ، وَرَأْيُ مُتَبَرِّ، وَإِنَّ تَعَاطِيكَ الْغَارَةَ عَلَى أَهْلِ قَرْقِيسِيَا، وَتَعْطِيلِكَ مَسَاحِكَ الَّتِي وَلَّيْنَاكَ . لَيْسَ بِهَا مَنْ يَمْنَعُهَا، وَلَا يَرُدُّ الْجَيْشَ عَنْهَا . لَرَأْيٍ شَعَاعٍ . فَقَدْ صِرْتَ جِسْرًا لِمَنْ أَرَادَ الْغَارَةَ مِنْ أَعْدَائِكَ عَلَى أَوْلِيَائِكَ، غَيْرَ شَدِيدِ الْمَنْكِبِ، وَلَا مَهَيْبِ الْجَانِبِ، وَلَا سَادِّ نُعْرَةٍ، وَلَا كَاسِرِ لِعَدُوِّ شَوْكَةٍ، وَلَا مُعْنٍ عَنْ أَهْلِ مِصْرِهِ، وَلَا مُجْزٍ عَنْ أَمِيرِهِ.

Letter 62: To the people of Egypt sent through Malik al-Ashtar when he was made the Governor of that place

ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام)

إلى أهل مصر مع مالك الاشر ما ولاه إمارتها

Now, Allah the Glorified, deputed Muhammad (may Allah bless him and his descendants) as a warner for all the worlds and a witness for all the prophets. When the Prophet expired, the Muslims quarrelled about power after him. By Allah, it never occurred to me, and I never imagined, that after the Prophet the Arabs would snatch away the caliphate from his Ahlul Bayt (the members of his house), nor that they would take it away from me after him, but I suddenly noticed people surrounding the man to swear him allegiance. ¹

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ بَعَثَ مُحَمَّدًا (صلى الله عليه وآله) نَذِيرًا لِلْعَالَمِينَ، وَمُهَيِّمًا عَلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ. فَلَمَّا مَضَى (صلى الله عليه وآله) تَنَازَعَ الْمُسْلِمُونَ الْأَمْرَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ، فَوَاللَّهِ مَا كَانَ يُلْقَى فِي رُوعِي، وَلَا يَخْطُرُ بِيَالِي، أَنَّ الْعَرَبَ تُزْعِجُ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ مِنْ بَعْدِهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) عَنِ أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ، وَلَا أَنَّهُمْ مُنْحَوُّهُ عَنِّي مِنْ بَعْدِهِ! فَمَا رَاعَنِي إِلَّا انْتِيَالُ النَّاسِ عَلَيَّ فَلَانَ يُبَايِعُونَهُ،

I therefore withheld my hand till I saw that many people were reverting from Islam and trying to destroy the religion of Muhammad (may Allah bless him and his descendants). I then feared that if I did not protect Islam and its people and there occurred in it a breach or destruction, it would mean a greater blow to me than the loss of power over you which was, in any case, to last for a few days of which everything would pass away as the mirage passes away, or as the cloud scuds away. Therefore, in these happenings I rose till wrong was destroyed and disappeared, and religion attained peace and safety.

فَأَمْسَكْتُ يَدِي حَتَّى رَأَيْتُ رَاجِعَةَ النَّاسِ قَدْ رَجَعَتْ عَنِ الْأِسْلَامِ، يَدْعُونَ إِلَى مَحْوِي دِينِ مُحَمَّدٍ (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَخَشِيتُ إِنْ لَمْ أَنْصُرِ الْأِسْلَامَ أَهْلَهُ أَنْ أَرَى فِيهِ تَلْمَأًا أَوْ هَدْمًا، تَكُونُ الْمُصِيبَةُ بِهِ عَلَيَّ أَعْظَمَ مِنْ قَوْتِ وَلَايَتِكُمْ الَّتِي إِنَّمَا هِيَ مَتَاعُ أَيَّامٍ قَلِيلٍ، يُزُولُ مِنْهَا مَا كَانَ، كَمَا يُزُولُ السَّرَابُ، أَوْ كَمَا يَتَّقَشُّ السَّحَابُ، فَتَهَضُّ فِي تِلْكَ الْأَخْدَاثِ حَتَّى زَاغَ الْبَاطِلُ وَزَهَقَ، وَاطْمَأَنَّ الدِّينُ وَتَنَهَّنَا.

A part of the same letter

ومن هذا الكتاب:

By Allah, if I had encountered them alone and they had been so numerous as to fill the earth to the brim, I would not have worried or become perplexed. I am clear in myself and possess conviction from Allah about their misguidance and my guidance. I am hopeful and expectant that I will meet Allah and get His good reward.

But I am worried that foolish and wicked people will control the affairs of the entire community, with the result that they will grab the funds of

Allah as their own property and make His people slaves,² fight with the virtuous, and ally with the sinful. Indeed, there is among them he who drank (wine) unlawfully³ and was whipped by way of punishment fixed by Islam, and there is he who did not accept Islam until he had secured financial gain through it.⁴

If this had not been so I would not have insisted on gathering you, reprehending you, mobilizing you and urging you (for jihad) but if you refuse and show weakness I will leave you.

إِنِّي وَاللَّهِ لَوْ لَقَيْتُهُمْ وَاحِدًا وَهُمْ طِلَاحُ الْأَرْضِ كُلِّهَا مَا بَالَيْتُ وَلَا اسْتَوْحِشْتُ، وَإِنِّي مِنْ ضَالِّهِمُ الَّذِي هُمْ فِيهِ وَالْهُدَى الَّذِي أَنَا عَلَيْهِ لَعَلَى بَصِيرَةٍ مِنْ نَفْسِي وَيَقِينٍ مِنْ رَبِّي. وَإِنِّي إِلَى لِقَاءِ اللَّهِ لَمُشْتَاقٌ، وَحُسْنِ ثَوَابِهِ لَمُنْتَظِرٌ رَاجٍ، وَلَكِنِّي آسَى أَنْ يَلِيَّ أَمْرَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ سَفَهَاؤُهَا وَفُجَارُهَا، فَيَتَّخِذُوا مَالَ اللَّهِ دُولًا، وَعِبَادَهُ حَوْلًا، وَالصَّالِحِينَ حَرْبًا، وَالْفَاسِقِينَ حَرْبًا، فَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ الَّذِي قَدْ شَرِبَ فِيكُمْ الْحَرَامَ، وَجُلِدَ حَدًّا فِي الْأَسْلَامِ، وَإِنَّ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ لَمْ يُسْلِمْ حَتَّى رُضِخَتْ لَهُ عَلَى الْأَسْلَامِ الرِّضَايُحُ، فَلَوْلَا ذَلِكَ مَا أَكْثَرْتُ تَأْلِيْبِكُمْ وَتَأْيِيْبِكُمْ، وَجَمْعَكُمْ وَتَحْرِيبَكُمْ، وَلَتَرْكَنَكُمْ إِذْ أَبِيئْتُمْ وَوَلَّيْتُمْ.

Do you not see that the boundaries of your cities have diminished, your populated areas have been conquered, your possessions have been snatched away and your cities and lands have been attacked? May Allah have mercy on you, get up to fight your enemy and do not remain confined to the earth, otherwise you will face oppression and suffer ignominy and your fate will be the worst. The warrior should be wakeful because if he sleeps the enemy does not sleep; and that is an end to the matter.

أَلَا تَرَوْنَ إِلَى أَطْرَافِكُمْ قَدْ انْتَفَصَتْ، وَإِلَى أَمْصَارِكُمْ قَدْ افْتَسِحَتْ، وَإِلَى مَمَالِكِكُمْ تُرْوَى، وَإِلَى بِلَادِكُمْ تُعْزَى! انْفِرُوا . رَحِمَكُمُ اللَّهُ . إِلَى قِتَالِ عَدُوِّكُمْ، وَلَا تَتَّاقِلُوا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ فَتُفْرُوا بِالْحُسْفِ، وَتَبْوُؤُوا بِالذُّلِّ، وَيَكُونُ نَصِيْبِكُمُ الْأَخْسَسُ، وَإِنَّ أَخَا الْحَرْبِ الْأَرْقُ، وَمَنْ نَامَ لَمْ يَنْمَ عَنْهُ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Notes

1. The Prophet's declarations about Amir al-mu'minin that "This is my brother, my vicegerent and my caliph among you", and while returning from his farewell hajj at Ghadir Khum that "For whosoever I am the master, `Ali is his master" had settled the issue of his own replacement and succession after which there was no need at all for any new election, nor could it be imagined that the people of Medina would feel the need for an election. But some power-thirsty individuals so ignored these clear injunctions as if their ears had never been acquainted with them, and considered the election so necessary, that, leaving the burial rites of the Prophet, they assembled in the Saqifah of Banu Sa'idah and elected Abu Bakr as Caliph with a show of democracy. This was a very critical moment for Amir al-mu'minin. On one side some interested persons declared that he should take up arms and on the other hand he noticed that those Arabs who had accepted Islam by dint of its military strength were leaving it and Musaylimah ibn Thumamah al-Hanafi the liar (al-Kadhdhab) and Tulayhah ibn Khuwaylid al-Asadi (the liar) were throwing tribe after tribe into misguidance. In these circumstances, if there had been a civil war and the Muslims had fought against the Muslims, the forces of heresy and hypocrisy would have joined together

and swept Islam off the surface of the globe. Therefore, Amir al-mu'minin preferred to keep quiet rather than to fight, and, with the purpose of maintaining the solidarity of Islam, confined himself to protesting peacefully rather than taking up arms. This was because formal power was not so dear to him as the good and prosperity of the community. For stopping the machinations of the hypocrites and defeating the aims of the mischief-mongers there was no other course but that he should not fan the flames of war by giving up his own claim. This was such a big act for the preservation of Islamic polity that it is acknowledged by all the sects of Islam.

2. This refers to the saying of the Holy Prophet about the children of Umayyah and the children of Abi al-`As ibn Umayyah (the grandfather of `Uthman ibn `Affan and the dynasty of Marwan's caliphs) as related by Abu Dharr al-Ghifari that the Holy Prophet said:

When the number of Banu (children of) Umayyah reaches forty men they will make Allah's people their slaves, grab Allah's funds as their own property and make the Book of Allah a cause of corruption. (al-Mustadrak, vol.4, p.479; Kanz al-`ummal, vol.11, p.149).

About the children of Abi al-`As it is related by Abu Dharr, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, Ibn `Abbas, Abu Hurayrah and others that the Holy Prophet said:

When the number of Banu (children of) Abi al-`As reaches thirty men, they will grab the funds of Allah as their own property, make Allah's people their slaves and make the religion of Allah a cause of corruption. (al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.3, p.80; al-Mustadrak, al-Hakim, vol.4, p.480; al-Matalib al-`aliyah, Ibn Hajar, vol.4, p.332; Majma' az-zawa'id, al-Haytami, vol.5, pp.241,243; Kanz al-`ummal, al-Muttaqi, vol.11, pp.148,149,351,354).

The history of Islam (after the death of the Holy Prophet) has enough evidence to prove this prophecy of the Holy Prophet; and the fear of Amir al-mu'minin for the Muslim community was based on this reason.

3. The man who drank wine was al-Walid ibn `Uqbah ibn Abi Mu`ayt. He was of the same mother as Caliph `Uthman and his Governor of Kufah. al-Walid on an occasion in a state of intoxication led the morning prayers in the Central mosque of Kufah with four units (raka`ah) instead of the usual two as prescribed by the Holy Prophet. The congregation, which consisted of several pious persons like Ibn Mas`ud, was much incensed and still more irritated when, finishing the four units, al-Walid said:

What a pleasant morning! I would like to extend the prayers further if you consent.

Repeated complaints had already been made to the Caliph against al-Walid on account of his debauchery, but as often dismissed. People now reproached `Uthman for not listening to their grievances, and favouring such a scoundrel. By chance they succeeded in taking off the signet ring from the hand of the Governor while he lay senseless from the effects of a debauch, and carried it off to Medina. Still the caliph was slow and hesitated to enforce punishment upon his Governor (of the same mother) ; giving cause to be himself reproachfully accused of ignoring the law; though at last he was persuaded to have al-Walid scourged with forty strokes. He was consequently deposed from his office. Sa'id ibn al-`As, a cousin of `Uthman was appointed to take his place, and this was a matter of great reproach against `Uthman. (Ansab al-ashraf, al-Baladhuri, vol.5, pp.33-35; al-Aghani; Abu'l-Faraj al-Isfahani, vol.4, pp.174- 187; al-Isti`ab, vol.4, pp.1554-1557; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, pp.91-92; at-Tabari, vol.1, pp.2843-2850; Ibn al-Athir, vol.3, pp.105-107; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.17, pp.227-245)

4. The man who accepted Islam after securing financial gain was Mu`awiyah who was adhering to Islam only for worldly benefits.

Letter 63: To Abu Musa al-Ash`ari, when Amir al-mu'minin learned that he was dissuading the people from joining in the battle of Jamal

To Abu Musa (Abdullah ibn Qays) al-Ash`ari, the Governor of Kufah when Amir al-mu'minin learned that he was dissuading the people of Kufah from joining in the battle of Jamal when Amir al-mu'minin had called them to fight along with him.

ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام)

إلى أبي موسى الأشعري

وهو عامله على الكوفة، وقد بلغه عنه تشييطه الناس عن الخروج إليه لما ندبهم لحرب

أصحاب الجمل

From the servant of Allah, Amir al-mu'minin to `Abdullah ibn Qays:

مِنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلِيِّ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ قَيْسٍ.

Now, I have come to know of words uttered by you which go in your favour as well as against you.¹ So, when my messenger reaches you prepare yourself and get ready, come out of your den and call those who are with you. Then, if you are convinced of the truth get up but if you feel cowardice go away. By Allah, you will be caught wherever you may be and you will not be spared till you are completely upset and everything about you is scattered and till you are shaken from your seat. Then, you will fear from your front as you do from the rear.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي عَنْكَ قَوْلٌ هُوَ لَكَ وَعَلَيْكَ، فَإِذَا قَدِمَ عَلَيْكَ رَسُولِي فَارْفَعْ ذَلِكَ، وَاشْدُدْ مِئْزَرَكَ، وَاخْرُجْ مِنْ جُحْرِكَ، وَأَنْدُبْ مَنْ مَعَكَ، فَإِنْ حَقَّقْتَ فَأَنْفُدْ، وَإِنْ تَفَشَّلْتَ فَابْعُدْ! وَإِيمَ اللَّهِ لَتُؤْتَبَرَنَّ حَيْثُ أَنْتَ، وَلَا تُتْرَكَ حَتَّى يُخْلَطَ رُئُودُكَ بِخَائِرِكَ، وَذَائِبُكَ بِجَامِدِكَ، وَحَتَّى تُعْجَلَ عَنْ فِعْدَتِكَ، وَتُحْدَرَ مِنْ أَمَامِكَ كَحَدْرِكَ مِنْ خَلْفِكَ،

What you hope is not a light matter, but it is serious calamity. We have to ride its camels, overcome its difficulties and level its mountains. Set your mind in order, take a grip on your affairs and acquire your (lot and your) share. If you do not like it then go away to where neither you are welcome nor can you escape from it. It is better that you be left alone and lie sleeping. Then no one will enquire where so-and-so is. By Allah, this is the case of right with the rightful person and we do not care what the heretics do; and that is an end to the matter.

وَمَا هِيَ بِالْهُوِيِّ الَّتِي تَرْجُو، وَلَكِنَّهَا الدَّاهِيَةُ الْكُبْرَى، يُرَكَّبُ جَمَلُهَا، وَيُدَلُّ صَعْبُهَا، وَيُسَهَّلُ جَبَلُهَا. فَاعْقِلْ عَقْلَكَ، وَأَمْلِكْ أَمْرَكَ، وَخُذْ نَصِيحَتَكَ وَحَظَّكَ، فَإِنْ كَرِهْتَ فَتَنَحَّ إِلَى عَيْرِ رَحْبٍ وَلَا فِي نَجَاةٍ، فَبِالْحَرِيِّ لَتُكْفَيْنَنَّ وَأَنْتَ نَائِمٌ، حَتَّى لَا يُقَالَ: أَيْنَ فُلَانٌ؟ وَاللَّهِ إِنَّهُ لَحَقٌّ مَعَ مُحَقِّقٍ، وَمَا أَبَالِي مَا صَنَعَ الْمُلْحِدُونَ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Notes

1. When Amir al-mu'minin had the idea of suppressing the revolt of the people of Basrah he sent this letter through Imam al-Hasan to Abu Musa (ʿAbdullah ibn Qays) al-Ashʿari, who had been appointed Governor of Kufah by ʿUthman, wherein he has scolded him for his duplicitous and contradictory behaviour and attempted to persuade him to jihad, because on one side he used to say that Amir al-mu'minin was the true Imam and allegiance to him was right and on the other he said that to support him in fighting against the Muslims was not right; but it was a mischief and it was necessary to keep off this mischief. Thus, Amir al-mu'minin has referred to this contradictory view by the words "huwa laka wa ʿalayka" (which go in your favour as well as against you). The intention is that when Amir al-mu'minin is the rightful Imam how can fighting his enemy with him be wrong? And if fighting on his side is wrong then what is the meaning of his being the rightful Imam.

In any case, in spite of his dissuading from fighting, the people of Kufah came out in large numbers to join Amir al-mu'minin's army and took full part in the battle, giving such a defeat to the people of Basrah that they never again dared to revolt.

Letter 64: In reply to Mu`awiyah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

كتبه إلى معاوية، جواباً عن كتاب منه

Now then, certainly, we and you were on amiable terms as you say but difference arose between us and you the other day, when we accepted belief (iman) and you rejected it. Today the position is that we are steadfast (in the belief) but you are creating mischief. Those of you who accepted Islam did so reluctantly and that too when all the chief men had accepted Islam and joined the Messenger of Allah- (may Allah bless him and his descendants).

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّا كُنَّا نَحْنُ وَأَنْتُمْ عَلَى مَا ذَكَرْتَ مِنَ الْأَلْفَةِ وَالْجَمَاعَةِ، فَفَرَّقَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَمْسِ
أَنَا أَمَنَّا وَكَفَرْتُمْ، وَالْيَوْمَ أَنَا اسْتَقَمْنَا وَفُتِنْتُمْ، وَمَا أَسْلَمَ مُسْلِمُكُمْ إِلَّا كَرَهَا، وَبَعْدَ أَنْ كَانَ أَنْفُ
الْإِسْلَامِ كُلُّهُ لِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) حرباً.

You have stated that I killed Talhah and az-Zubayr, forced `A'ishah out of her house and adopted residence between the two cities (Kufah and Basrah).¹ These are matters with which you have no concern nor do they involve anything against you. Therefore, no explanation about them is due to you. You also state that you are coming to me with a party of Muhajirun and Ansar, but hijrah came to an end on the day your brother was taken prisoner. If you are in a hurry, then wait a bit as I may come to meet you and that would be more befitting as that would mean that Allah has appointed me to punish you. But if you come to me it would be as the poet of Banu Asad said:

They are advancing against summer winds which are hurling stones on them in the highlands and lowlands.

وَذَكَرْتَ أَيُّ قَتَلْتَ طَلْحَةَ وَالزُّبَيْرَ، وَشَرَدْتَ بَعَائِشَةَ، وَنَزَلْتَ بَيْنَ الْمِصْرَيْنِ! وَذَلِكَ أَمْرٌ
غَبْتُ عَنْهُ، فَلَا عَلَيْكَ، وَلَا الْعُدْرُ فِيهِ إِلَيْكَ.

وَذَكَرْتَ أَنَّكَ زَائِرِي فِي الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ، وَقَدْ انْقَطَعَتِ الْهَجْرَةُ يَوْمَ أُسِرَ أَخُوكَ، فَإِنِ
كَانَ فِيكَ عَجَلٌ فَاسْتَرْفِهِ، فَإِنِّي إِذَا أُرْزِكَ فَدَلِيكَ جَدِيدٌ أَنْ يَكُونَ اللَّهُ إِيمًا بَعَثَنِي لِلنِّقْمَةِ مِنْكَ!
وَإِن تَزُرَّنِي فَكَمَا قَالَ أَخُو بَنِي أَسَد:

مُسْتَقْبِلِينَ رِيَاخَ الصَّيْفِ تَضْرِبُهُمْ * بِحَاصِبِيْنَ أَعْوَارِ وَجُلْمُودِ

(Remember) I have still the sword with which I dispatched your grandfather, your mother's brother and your brother to one and the same place. By Allah, I know what you are. Your heart is sheathed and your intelligence is weak. It is better to say that you have ascended to where you view a bad scene which is against you, not in your favour, because you are searching a thing lost by someone else, you are tending someone else's cattle and you are hankering after a thing which is not yours, nor have you any attachment with it.

How remote are your words from your actions, and how closely you resemble your paternal and maternal uncles who were led by their

wickedness and love for wrong to oppose Muhammad (may Allah bless him and his descendants) and in consequence they were killed as you know. They could not put up a defence against the calamity and could not protect their place of safety from the striking of swords which abound in the battle and which do not show weakness.

وَعِنْدِي السَّيْفُ الَّذِي أَعْصَمْتُهُ بِجِدِّكَ وَخَالِكَ وَأَخِيكَ فِي مَقَامٍ وَاحِدٍ، وَإِنَّكَ وَاللَّهِ مَا عَلِمْتُ الْأَعْلَفُ الْقَلْبِ، الْمُقَارِبُ الْعَقْلِ، وَالْأَوْلَى أَنْ يُقَالَ لَكَ: إِنَّكَ رَقِيتَ سُلْمًا أَطْلَعَكَ مَطْلَعِ سُوءِ عَلِيٍّ لَا لَكَ، لِإِنَّكَ نَشَدْتَ غَيْرَ ضَالَّتِكَ، وَرَعَيْتَ غَيْرَ سَائِمَتِكَ، وَطَلَبْتَ أَمْرًا لَسْتَ مِنْ أَهْلِهِ وَلَا فِي مَعَدِنِهِ، فَمَا أَبْعَدَ قَوْلِكَ مِنْ فِعْلِكَ!! وَقَرِيبٌ مَا أَشْبَهْتَ مِنْ أَعْمَامٍ وَأَحْوَالٍ! حَمَلْتَهُمُ الشَّقَاوَةَ، وَتَمَّيَّ الْبَاطِلِ، عَلَى الْجُحُودِ بِمُحَمَّدٍ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) فَصُرِّعُوا مَصَارِعَهُمْ حَيْثُ عَلِمْتُمْ، لَمْ يَدْفَعُوا عَظِيمًا، وَلَمْ يَمْنَعُوا حَرِيمًا، بِوَقْعِ سِيُوفٍ مَا خَلَا مِنْهَا الْوَعَى، وَلَمْ تُمَاشِهَا الْهُوَيَى

You have said a lot about killing of `Uthman. You first join what the people have joined (i.e., allegiance) then seek a verdict about (the accused people) from me and I shall settle the matter between you and them according to the Book of Allah, the Sublime. But what you are aiming at is just the fake nipple given to a child in the first days of stopping of nursing. Peace be on those who deserve it.

وَقَدْ أَكْثَرْتَ فِي قَتَلَةِ عُثْمَانَ، فَادْخُلْ فِيمَا دَخَلَ فِيهِ النَّاسُ، ثُمَّ حَاكِمِ الْقَوْمَ إِلَيَّ، أَحْمِلْكَ وَإِيَّاهُمْ عَلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ. وَأَمَّا تِلْكَ الَّتِي تُرِيدُ فَإِنَّهَا خُدَعَةُ الصَّيِّ عَنِ اللَّبَنِ فِي أَوَّلِ الْفِصَالِ، وَالسَّلَامُ لِأَهْلِهِ.

Notes

1. Mu`awiyah had written a letter to Amir al-mu'minin in which after recalling mutual unity and amicability he laid on him the blame of killing Talhah and az-Zubayr and ousting `A'ishah from her house and objected to his adopting Kufah as his seat of government in place of Medina. In the end, he gave a threat of war and said that he was about to come out with a force of muhajirun and ansar to fight. Amir al-mu'minin wrote this letter in reply to him, wherein commenting on Mu`awiyah's claim for unity he says that: "There might have been unity between you and us but with the advent of Islam such a gulf has developed between the two that it is not possible to bridge it, and such a separation has occurred which cannot be removed. This was because we responded to the call of the Prophet and hastened towards Islam but your position was that you were still in the state of unbelief and ignorance whereby we and you came to adopt separate ways. But when Islam secured stability and the chiefs of Arabs entered its fold you too were obliged to, and secured protection of your lives by putting the covering of Islam on your faces, but continued secretly to fan the mischief intended to shatter its foundations. Since we had accepted Islam of our own free will and pleasure we adhered to the right path and at no stage did any faltering occur in our steadfastness. Therefore, your acceptance of Islam too could not make us agree with your views."

As regards Nlu`awiyah's accusation that Amir al-mu'minin engineered the killing of Talhah and az-Zubayr; then even if this blame is admitted as true, is it not a fact that they had openly revolted against Amir al-mu'minin and had risen for war after breaking the allegiance. Therefore, if they were killed in connection with the revolt their blood would be wasted and no blame would lie on the killer, because the penalty for him who revolts

against the rightful Imam is death, and fighting against him is permissible, without doubt. The fact however, is that this accusation has no reality because Talhah was killed by a man of his own party. Thus, the historians write:

Marwan ibn al-Hakam shot Talhah with an arrow and turning to Aban ibn `Uthman said: "We have killed a killer of your father and relieved you of revenge." (Ibn Sa`d, vol.3, part 1, p.159; Ibn al-Athir, vol.3, p.244; al-Isti`ab, vol.2, pp.766-769; Usd al-ghabah, vol.3, pp.60,61; al-Isabah, vol.2, p.230; Tahdhib, at-tahdhib, vol.5, p.21).

As for az-Zubayr, he was killed by `Amr ibn Jurmuz on his way back from Basrah, and there was no prompting by Amir al-mu'minin in it. Similarly, `A'ishah herself came out of her house as the head of this rebellious group while Amir al-mu'minin counselled her several times to realize her position and not to step out of her bounds but these things had no effect on her.

Of the same type was his criticism that Amir al-mu'minin left Medina and adopted Kufah as the seat of his government because Medina turns out bad people from itself and throws away dirt. The reply to it is only this that Mu`awiyah himself too always retained Syria as his capital keeping away from Medina.

In this way, what right can he have to object to Amir al-mu'minin changing his seat. Amir al-mu'minin left Medina because of those rebellions which had cropped up from all sides. To suppress them only the selection of such a place as capital from where military assistance could be mobilized at any time could be useful. Thus, Amir al-mu'minin had seen on the occasion of the battle of Jamal that a great majority of the people of Kufah had supported him and that therefore by making it a base for the army, defence against the enemy could be easily managed, while Medina was not appropriate for military mobilization or for supplies.

Lastly, as for Mu'awiyah's threat that he would march with muhajirun and ansar, Amir al-mu'minin gave a reply to this point in a very subtle way, namely that, "How would you bring muhajirun now since the door for hijrah was closed the day when your brother Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan was taken prisoner." This man was taken prisoner on the day of the fall of Mecca and there is no question of hijrah after the fall of Mecca so as to enable any one to be called a muhajirun because of the Prophet's saying: "There is no hijrah after the victory over Mecca."

Letter 65: To Mu`awiyah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إليه أيضاً

Now, this is the time ¹ that you should derive benefit by observing a clear view of the main matters, because you have been treading in the path of your forefathers in making wrong claims, spreading false and untrue notions, claiming for yourself what is far above you and demanding what is not meant for you, because you want to run away from right and to revolt against what is more fastened to your flesh and blood namely what has been heard by the depth of your ears and has filled your chest. And after forsaking right there remains nothing except clear misguidance, and after disregarding a (clear) statement there is nothing except confusion. You should therefore guard (yourself) against doubts and its ill-effects of confusion, because for a long time mischief has spread its veils and its gloom has blinded your eyes.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ آَنَّ لَكَ أَنْ تَنْتَفِعَ بِاللَّمْحِ الْبَاصِرِ مِنْ عَيَانِ الْأُمُورِ، فَقَدْ سَلَكَتِ مَدَارِجَ
أَسْلَافِكَ بِإِدْعَائِكَ الْأَبَاطِيلِ، وَإِقْحَامِكَ غُرُورَ الْمَيْنِ وَالْكَاذِبِ، وَبِائْتِحَالِكَ مَا قَدْ عَلَا
عَنكَ، وَابْتِزَارِكَ لِمَا قَدِ احْتَرَنَ دُونَكَ، فِرَاراً مِنَ الْحَقِّ، وَجُحُوداً لِمَا هُوَ أَلْزَمُ لَكَ مِنْ لَحْمِكَ
وَدَمِكَ، مِمَّا قَدْ وَعَاهُ سَمْعُكَ، وَمُلِيَءَ بِهِ صَدْرُكَ، فَمَاذَا بَعْدَ الْحَقِّ إِلَّا الضَّلَالُ، وَبَعْدَ الْبَيَانِ إِلَّا
اللَّبْسُ؟ فَاحْذَرِ الشُّبُهَةَ وَاشْتِمَاهَا عَلَى لَبْسَتِهَا، فَإِنَّ الْفِتْنَةَ طَالَمَا أَعْدَفَتْ جَلَابِيْسَهَا، وَأَعَشَّتِ
الْأَبْصَارَ ظَلَمْتُهَا.

I have received your letter which is full of uncouth utterances which weaken the cause of peace and nonsensical expressions which have not been prepared with knowledge and forbearance. By reason of these things you have become like one who is sinking in a marsh or groping in a dark place. You have raised yourself to a position which is difficult to approach and devoid of any signs (to guide). Even the royal kite cannot reach it. It is parallel to the `Ayyuq (the star Capella), in height.

وَقَدْ أَتَانِي كِتَابٌ مِنْكَ دُوَ أَفَانِينَ مِنَ الْقَوْلِ ضَعُفَتْ قُوَاهَا عَنِ السَّلْمِ، وَأَسَاطِيرَ لَمْ يَحْكُهَا
مِنْكَ عِلْمٌ وَلَا حِلْمٌ، أَصْبَحْتَ مِنْهَا كَالْحَائِضِ فِي الدَّهَاسِ، وَالْحَائِطِ فِي الدِّيمَاسِ، وَتَرَقَّيْتِ إِلَى
مَرْقَبَةٍ بَعِيدَةِ الْمَرَامِ، نَازِحَةِ الْأَعْلَامِ، تَفْصُرُ دُونَهَا الْأُنُوقُ، وَيُجَادِي بِهَا الْعَيُوقُ.

May Allah forbid that you be in charge of people's affairs after my assuming authority as Caliph, or that I issue an edict or document granting you authority over any one of them. Therefore, from now onwards guard yourself and be watchful, because if you recalcitrate till the people of Allah (are forced to) rush upon you, then matters will be closed for you and whatever can be accepted from you today will not be accepted then; and that is an end to the matter.

وَحَاشَ لِلَّهِ أَنْ تَلِيَّ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ بَعْدِي صَدْرًا أَوْ وِرْدًا، أَوْ أُجْرِي لَكَ عَلَى أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ عَقْدًا
أَوْ عَهْدًا!! فَمِنَ الْآنَ فَتَدَارِكُ نَفْسَكَ، وَأَنْظُرْ هَهَا، فَإِنَّكَ إِذَا فَرَّطْتَ حَتَّى يَنْهَدَ إِلَيْكَ عِبَادُ اللَّهِ
أُرْتَبِحْتَ عَلَيْكَ الْأُمُورَ، مُبِعْتَ أَمْرًا هُوَ مِنْكَ الْيَوْمَ مَقْبُولٌ.

Notes

1. At the end of the battle of the Kharijites, Mu`awiyah wrote a letter to Amir al-mu'minin wherein, as usual, he indulged in mud-throwing. In reply, Amir al-mu'minin wrote this letter in which he has tried to draw Mu`awiyah's attention to the clear facts about this very battle of the Kharijites, because this battle took place in accordance with the prophecy of the Prophet while Amir al-mu'minin himself too had said before the battle that besides the people of Jamal and Siffin he had to fight against one more group and they were the "deviators" from the religion, namely the Kharijites. The occurrence of this battle and the killing of the man with breasts (Dhu'th- thudayyah) was a clear proof of Amir al-mu'minin being in the right. If Mu'awiyah had not been obsessed with self-advertisement and lust for conquests, and had not shut his eyes against the right like his forefathers Abu Sufyan and his brother `Utbah he would have seen right and come on its path. But compelled by his natural inclination he always evaded right and truth and kept himself blind to those sayings of the Prophet which threw light on Amir al-mu'minin's Imamate and vicegerency. Because of being with the Prophet in the farewell pilgrimage the Prophet's saying: "Of whomsoever I am the master, `Ali is his master" was not hidden from him, and neither was the Prophet's saying that: "O' `Ali you are to me as Harun was to Musa", because of his presence on the occasion of the battle of Tabuk. In spite of all this, he passed his life in concealing right and encouraging wrong. This was not due to any misunderstanding but it was his lust for power that kept prompting him to suppress and trample truth and justice.

Letter 66: To `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas

(This letter has already been included with a different version)

ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام)

إلى عبدالله بن العباس رحمه الله

وقد مضى هذا الكتاب فيما تقدّم بخلاف هذه الرواية

And then, sometimes a person feels joyful about a thing which he was not to miss in any case and feels grieved for a thing which was not to come to him at all. Therefore, you should not regard the attainment of pleasure and the satisfaction of the desire for revenge as the best favour of this world, but it should be the putting off of the (flame of) wrong and the revival of right. Your pleasure should be for what (good acts) you have sent forward; your grief should be for what you are leaving behind; and your worry should be about what is to befall after death.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ الْعَبْدَ لَيَفْرَحُ بِالشَّيْءِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَكُنْ لَيَقُوتُهُ، وَيَحْزَنُ عَلَى الشَّيْءِ الَّذِي لَمْ يَكُنْ لَيُصِيبُهُ، فَلَا يَكُنْ أَفْضَلَ مَا نَلْتِ فِي نَفْسِكَ مِنْ دُنْيَاكَ بُلُوعٌ لَدَّةً أَوْ شِفَاءً عَيْظًا، وَلَكِنْ إِطْفَاءً بَاطِلٍ أَوْ إِحْيَاءً حَقِّ. وَلْيَكُنْ سُرُورُكَ بِمَا قَدَّمْتَ، وَأَسْفُكَ عَلَى مَا خَلَّفْتَ، وَهَمُّكَ فِيَمَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ

Letter 67: To Qutham ibn al-`Abbas, his Governor of Mecca

ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام)

إلى قُتَيْمِ بْنِ الْعَبَّاسِ (رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ) وَهُوَ عَامِلُهُ عَلَى مَكَّةَ

Now, make arrangements for Hajj by the people, remind them of the days (to be devoted to) Allah. Sit for giving them audience morning and evening. Explain the law to the seeker, teach the ignorant and discuss with the learned. There should be no intermediary between you and the people except your tongue, and no guard save your own face. Do not prevent any needy person from meeting you, because if the needy is returned unsatisfied from your door in the first instance then even doing it thereafter will not bring you praise.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَأَقِمْ لِلنَّاسِ الْحُجَّ، وَذَكِّرْهُمْ بِأَيَّامِ اللَّهِ، وَاجْلِسْ لَهُمُ الْعَصْرَيْنِ، فَأَقِمْ الْمُسْتَفِيَّ، وَعَلِّمِ الْجَاهِلَ، وَذَكِّرِ الْعَالِمَ، وَلَا يَكُنْ لَكَ إِلَى النَّاسِ سَفِيرٌ إِلَّا لِسَانُكَ، وَلَا حَاجِبٌ إِلَّا وَجْهُكَ، وَلَا تَحْجُبَنَّ ذَا حَاجَةٍ عَن لِقَائِكَ بِهَا، فَإِنَّهَا إِن زِيدَتْ عَن أَبْوَابِكَ فِي أَوَّلِ وَرْدِهَا لَمْ تُحْمَدَ فِيهَا بَعْدُ عَلَى قَضَائِهَا.

See what has been collected with you of the funds of Allah (in the public treasury) and spend it over the persons with families, the distressed, the starving and the naked, at your end. Then, send the remaining to us for distribution to those who are on this side.

وَأَنْظُرْ إِلَى مَا اجْتَمَعَ عِنْدَكَ مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ فَاصْرِفْهُ إِلَى مَنْ قَبْلَكَ مِنْ ذَوِي الْعِيَالِ وَالْمَجَاعَةِ، مُصِيباً بِهِ مَوَاضِعَ الْمَقَابِرِ وَالْحَلَّاتِ، وَمَا فَضَلَ عَن ذَلِكَ فَاحْمِلْهُ إِلَيْنَا لِنُقْسِمَهُ فِيمَنْ قَبْلَنَا.

Ask the people of Mecca not to charge rent from lodgers, because Allah, the Glorified, says that:

"alike; for the dweller therein as well as the stranger" (Qur'an, 22:25).

"al-`akif" (the dweller) here means he who is living there while "al-badi" (the stranger) means he who is not among the people of Mecca, comes for Hajj from outside. May Allah grant us and you promptitude for seeking His love (by doing good acts); and that is an end to the matter.

وَمُرَّ أَهْلَ مَكَّةَ أَلَّا يَأْخُذُوا مِنْ سَاكِنِ أَجْرًا، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ يَقُولُ: (سَوَاءَ الْعَاكِفُ فِيهِ وَالْبَادِ) فَالْعَاكِفُ: الْمُتَمِيمُ بِهِ، وَالْبَادِي: الَّذِي يَحْجُجُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ غَيْرِ أَهْلِهِ. وَفَقْنَا اللَّهَ وَإِيَّاكُمْ لِمَحَابَّتِهِ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 68: To Salman al-Farisi before Amir al-mu'minin's caliphate

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى سلمان الفارسي (رحمه الله) قبل أيام خلافته

Now, the example of the world is like that of a snake which is soft in touch but whose poison is fatal. Therefore, keep yourself aloof from whatever appears good to you because of its short stay with you. Do not worry for it because of your conviction that it will leave you and that its circumstances are vicissitudes. When you feel most attracted towards it, shun it most, because whenever someone is assured of happiness in it, it throws him into danger; or when he feels secure in it, the world alters his security into fear; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّمَا مَثَلُ الدُّنْيَا مَثَلُ الْحَيَّةِ: لَيِّنٌ مَسُّهَا، قَاتِلٌ سُمُّهَا، فَأَعْرِضْ عَمَّا يُعْجِبُكَ فِيهَا، لِقَلَّةِ مَا يَصْحَبُكَ مِنْهَا، وَضَعْ عَنكَ هُمُومَهَا، لِمَا أَبْقَنْتَ بِهِ مِنْ فِرَاقِهَا، وَكُنْ آنَسَ مَا تَكُونُ بِهَا، أَخَذَرَ مَا تَكُونُ مِنْهَا، فَإِنَّ صَاحِبَهَا كُلَّمَا اطْمَأَنَّ فِيهَا إِلَى سُرُورِ أَشْخَصَتَهُ عَنْهُ إِلَى مَخْذُورٍ، أَوْ إِلَى إِبْنِاسٍ أَزَالَهُ عَنْهُ إِجْحَاشٌ!

Letter 69: To al-Harith (ibn `Abdillah, al-A`war) al-Hamdani

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى الحارث الهمداني

Adhere to the rope of the Qur'an and seek instructions from it. Regard its lawful as lawful and its unlawful as unlawful. Testify the right that has been in the past. Take lessons for the present condition of this world from the past (condition), because its one phase resembles the other, its end is to meet its beginning, and the whole of it is to change and depart. Regard the name of Allah as too great to mention Him, save in the matter of right. Remember death frequently and (what is to come) after death. Do not long for death except on a reliable condition.

وَمَسَّكَ بِجَبَلِ الْقُرْآنِ، وَأَنْتَصَحُهُ، وَأَجَلَ حَلَالَهُ، وَحَرَّمَ حَرَامَهُ، وَصَدَّقَ بِمَا سَلَفَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ،
وَاعْتَبَرَ بِمَا مَضَى مِنَ الدُّنْيَا لِ مَا بَقِيَ مِنْهَا، فَإِنَّ بَعْضَهَا يُشْبِهُ بَعْضًا، وَأَخْرَهَا لِاحِقِّ بِأَوْلَاهَا!
وَكُلُّهَا حَائِلٌ مُفَارِقٌ.

وَعَظَّمَ اسْمَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَذْكُرَهُ إِلَّا عَلَى حَقِّ . وَأَكْثَرَ ذِكْرَ الْمَوْتِ وَمَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ، وَلَا تَتَمَنَّ
الْمَوْتَ إِلَّا بِشَرْطٍ وَثِيقٍ.

Avoid every action which the doer likes for his own self but dislikes for the Muslims in general. Avoid every such action which is performed in secret and from which shame is felt in the open. Also avoid that action about which if the doer is questioned he himself regards it bad or offers excuses for it. Do not expose your honour to be treated as the subject of people's discussions. Do not relate to the people all that you hear, for that would amount to falsehood.

Do not contest all that the people relate to you for that would mean ignorance. Kill your anger and forgive when you have power (to punish). Show forbearance in the moment of rage, and pardon in spite of authority; the eventual end will then be in your favour. Seek good out of every favour that Allah has bestowed on you, and do not waste any favour of Allah over you. The effect of Allah's favours over you should be visible on you.

وَإِخَذَ كُلَّ عَمَلٍ يَرْضَاهُ صَاحِبُهُ لِنَفْسِهِ، وَيُكْرَهُ لِعَامَّةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَإِخَذَ كُلَّ عَمَلٍ يُعْمَلُ
بِهِ فِي السِّرِّ، وَيُسْتَحَى مِنْهُ فِي الْعَلَانِيَةِ، وَإِخَذَ كُلَّ عَمَلٍ إِذَا سُئِلَ عَنْهُ صَاحِبُهُ أَنْكَرَهُ أَوْ اعْتَدَرَ
مِنْهُ. وَلَا يَجْعَلْ عَرْضَكَ غَرَضًا لِنَيْالِ الْقَوْلِ، وَلَا تُحَدِّثِ النَّاسَ بِكُلِّ مَا سَمِعْتَ بِهِ، فَكَفَى بِذَلِكَ
كَذِبًا، وَلَا تَزِدْ عَلَى النَّاسِ كُلِّ مَا حَدَّثُوكَ بِهِ، فَكَفَى بِذَلِكَ جَهْلًا. وَأَكْظِمِ الْعَيْظَ، وَاخْلُمْ عِنْدَ
الْعَضَبِ، وَتَجَاوَزْ عِنْدَ الْمُقْدِرَةِ، وَأَصْفَحْ مَعَ الدَّوْلَةِ، تَكُنْ لَكَ الْعَاقِبَةُ. وَاسْتَصْلِحْ كُلَّ نِعْمَةٍ
أَنْعَمَهَا اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ، وَلَا تُضَيِّعَنَّ نِعْمَةً مِنْ نِعَمِ اللَّهِ عِنْدَكَ، وَلْيُرِ عَلَيْكَ أَنْتَرُ مَا أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ بِهِ عَلَيْكَ.

Know that the most distinguished among the believers is he who is the most forward of them in spending from himself, his family and his property, because whatever good you send forward Will remain in store for you and

the benefit of whatever you keep behind will be derived by others. Avoid the company of the person whose opinion is unsound and whose action is detestable, because a man is judged after his companion.

وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ أَفْضَلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَفْضَلُهُمْ تَقْدِيمَةً مِنْ نَفْسِهِ وَأَهْلِهِ وَمَالِهِ، فَإِنَّكَ مَا تَقْدِمُ مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَبْقَى لَكَ دُخْرُهُ، وَمَا تُؤَخِّرُهُ يَكُنْ لِعَيْرِكَ خَيْرُهُ. وَاحْدَرِ صَحَابَةَ مَنْ يَفِيلُ رَأْيَهُ، وَيُنْكِرُ عَمَلَهُ، فَإِنَّ الصَّاحِبَ عَتَبَرٌ صَاحِبِهِ.

Live in big cities because they are collective centres of the Muslims. Avoid places of neglectfulness and wickedness and places where there are paucity of supporters for the obedience of Allah. Confine your thinking to matters which are helpful to you. Do not sit in the marketing centres because they are the meeting-places of Satan, and targets of mischiefs. Frequently look at those over whom you enjoy superiority because this is a way of giving thanks.

وَاسْكُنِ الْأَمْصَارَ الْعِظَامَ فَإِنَّهَا جِمَاعُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَاحْدَرِ مَنَارِلَ الْعُقْلَةِ وَالْجَفَاءِ وَقَلَّةَ الْأَعْوَانِ عَلَى طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ، وَاقْصُرْ رَأْيَكَ عَلَى مَا يَغْنِيكَ، وَإِيَّاكَ وَمَقَاعِدَ الْأَسْوَاقِ، فَإِنَّهَا مَخَاضِرُ الشَّيْطَانِ وَمَعَارِيضُ الْفِتَنِ. وَأَكْثِرْ أَنْ تَنْظُرَ إِلَى مَنْ فَضِلْتَ عَلَيْهِ، فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الشُّكْرِ.

Do not undertake a journey on Friday until you have attended the prayers, except when you are going in the way of Allah, or in an excusable matter. Obey Allah in all your affairs because Allah's obedience has precedence over all other things. Deceive your heart into worshipping, persuade it and do not force it. Engage it (in worshipping) when it is free and merry, except as regards the obligations enjoined upon you, for they should not be neglected and must be performed at the five times. Be on guard lest death comes down upon you while you have fled away from your Lord in search of worldly pleasure. Avoid the company of the wicked because vice adjoins vice. Regard Allah as great, and love His lovers. Keep off anger because it is one large army from Satan's armies; and that is an end to the matter.

وَلَا تُسَافِرْ فِي يَوْمِ جُمُعَةٍ حَتَّى تَشْهَدَ الصَّلَاةَ إِلَّا فَاصِلًا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، أَوْ فِي أَمْرٍ تُعَذَّرُ بِهِ. وَأَطِعِ اللَّهَ فِي جَمَلِ أُمُورِكَ، فَإِنَّ طَاعَةَ اللَّهِ فَاضِلَةٌ عَلَى مَا سِوَاهَا. وَخَادِعْ نَفْسَكَ فِي الْعِبَادَةِ، وَارْتَفِقْ بِهَا وَلَا تَقَهَّرْهَا، وَحُدِّ عَفْوَهَا وَنَشَاطَتَهَا، إِلَّا مَا كَانَ مَكْتُوبًا عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْقَرِيضَةِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا بُدَّ مِنْ قَضَائِهَا وَتَعَاهُدِهَا عِنْدَ مَحَلِّهَا. وَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ يَنْزِلَ بِكَ الْمَوْتُ وَأَنْتَ آبِقٌ (1) مِنْ رَبِّكَ فِي طَلَبِ الدُّنْيَا، وَإِيَّاكَ وَمَصَاحِبَةَ الْفَسَاقِ، فَإِنَّ الشَّرَّ بِالشَّرِّ مُلْحَقٌ. وَوَقِّرِ اللَّهَ، وَأَحْبِبِ أَجْبَاءَهُ، وَاحْدَرِ الْعَضْبَ، فَإِنَّهُ جُنْدٌ عَظِيمٌ مِنْ جُنُودِ إِبْلِيسَ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 70: To Sahl ibn Hunayf al-Ansari

To Sahl ibn Hunayf al-Ansari, his Governor of Medina about certain persons in Medina who had gone over to Mu`awiyah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى سهل بن حنيف الانصاري

وهو عامله على المدينة، في معنى قوم من أهلها لحقوا بمعاوية

Now, I have come to know that certain persons from your side are stealthily going over to Mu`awiyah. Do not feel sorry for their numbers so lost to you or for their help of which you are deprived. It is enough that they have gone into misguidance and you have been relieved of them. They are running away from guidance and truth and advancing towards blindness and ignorance. They are seekers of this world and are proceeding to it and are leaping towards it. They have known justice, seen it, heard it and appreciated it. They have realized that here, to us, all men are equal in the matter of right. Therefore, they ran away to selfishness and partiality. Let them remain remote and far away.

أَمَا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ بَلَغَنِي أَنَّ رِجَالًا مِمَّنْ قَبْلَكَ يَتَسَلَّلُونَ إِلَى مُعَاوِيَةَ، فَلَا تَأْسَفْ عَلَى مَا يَفُوتُكَ مِنْ عَدَدِهِمْ، وَيَذْهَبُ عَنْكَ مِنْ مَدَدِهِمْ، فَكَفَى لَهُمْ عَيًّا، وَكَانَ مِنْهُمْ شَافِيًّا، فِرَارُهُمْ مِنَ الْهُدَى وَالْحَقِّ، وَإِيضًا عَنْهُمْ إِلَى الْعَمَى وَالْجَهْلِ، وَإِنَّمَا هُمْ أَهْلُ دُنْيَا مُقْبِلُونَ عَلَيْهَا، وَمُهْطِعُونَ إِلَيْهَا، قَدْ عَرَفُوا الْعَدْلَ وَرَأَوْهُ، وَسَمِعُوهُ وَوَعَوْهُ، وَعَلِمُوا أَنَّ النَّاسَ عِنْدَنَا فِي الْحَقِّ أُسْوَةٌ، فَهَرَبُوا إِلَى الْأَثَرِ، فَبُعْدًا لَهُمْ وَسُخْفًا!

By Allah, surely they have not gone away from oppression and joined justice. In this matter, we only desire Allah to resolve for us its hardships and to level for us its unevenness, if Allah wills; and that is an end to the matter.

إِنَّهُمْ . وَاللَّهِ . لَمْ يَنْفَرُوا مِنْ جَوْرٍ، وَلَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِعَدْلٍ، وَإِنَّا لَنْطَمَعُ فِي هَذَا الْأَمْرِ أَنْ يُذِلَّ اللَّهُ لَنَا صَعْبَهُ، يُسَهِّلَ لَنَا حَزَنَهُ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ، وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ.

Letter 71: To al-Mundhir ibn Jarud al-`Abdi

To al-Mundhir ibn Jarud al-`Abdi who had misappropriated certain things given into his administrative charge

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى المنذر بن الجارود العبدي

وقد خان في بعض ما ولّاه من أعماله

Now, the good behaviour of your father deceived me about you and I thought that you would follow his way and tread in his path. But according to what has reached me about you, you are not giving up following your passions and are not retaining any provision for the next world. You are making this world by ruining your next life, and doing good to your kinsmen by cutting yourself off from religion.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ صَلَاحَ أَبِيكَ عَرَّيَ مِنْكَ، وَظَنَنْتُ أَنَّكَ تَتَّبِعُ هَدْيَهُ، وَتَسْلُكُ سَبِيلَهُ، فَإِذَا أَنْتَ فِيمَا رُفِّيَ إِلَيَّ عَنْكَ لَا تَدَعُ لِهَوَاكَ انْقِيَادًا، وَلَا تُبْقِي لِأَخْرَجَتِكَ عِتَادًا، تَعْمُرُ دُنْيَاكَ بِخَرَابِ آخِرَتِكَ، وَتَصِلُ عَشِيرَتَكَ بِفَطِيحَةِ دِينِكَ.

If what has reached me about you is correct, then the camel of your family and the strap of your shoe is better than yourself. A man with qualities like yours is not fit to close a hole in the ground, nor for performing any deed, nor for increasing his position, nor for taking him as a partner in any trust, nor for trusting him against misappropriation. Therefore, proceed to me as soon as this letter of mine reaches you if Allah so wills.

وَلَيْنَ كَانَ مَا بَلَغَنِي عَنْكَ حَقًّا، لَجَمَلُ أَهْلِكَ وَشِسْعُ نَعْلِكَ خَيْرٌ مِنْكَ، وَمَنْ كَانَ بِصِفَتِكَ فَلَيْسَ بِأَهْلٍ أَنْ يُسَدَّ بِهِ ثَعْرٌ، أَوْ يُنْفَذَ بِهِ أَمْرٌ، أَوْ يُعْلَى لَهُ قَدْرٌ، أَوْ يُشْرَكَ فِي أَمَانَةٍ، أَوْ يُؤْمَنَ عَلَى خِيَانَتِهِ. فَأَقْبِلْ إِلَيَّ حِينَ يَصِلُ إِلَيْكَ كِتَابِي هَذَا إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: al-Mundhir ibn Jarud al-`Abdi is he about whom Amir al-mu'minin (peace be upon him) said that:

He looks very often at his shoulders, feels proud in his garments (appearance) and frequently blows away (dust) from his shoes.

قال السيد الرضي: والمنذر هذا هو الذي قال فيه أمير المؤمنين (عليه السلام): إنه لنظائر

في عطفه، محتال في برده، تقال في شراكه.

Letter 72: To `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى عبدالله بن العباس

Now, you cannot go farther than the limit of your life, nor can you be given a livelihood which is not for you. Remember that this life consists of two days - a day for you and a day against you, and that the world is a house (changing) authorities. Whatever in it is for you will come to you despite your weakness; and whatever in it turns against you cannot be brought back despite your strength.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّكَ لَسْتَ بِسَابِقِ أَجَلِكَ، وَلَا مَرْزُوقٍ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ. وَأَعْلَمُ بِأَنَّ الدَّهْرَ يَوْمَانِ:
يَوْمٌ لَكَ وَيَوْمٌ عَلَيْكَ، وَأَنَّ الدُّنْيَا دَارُ دُولٍ، فَمَا كَانَ مِنْهَا لَكَ أَتَاكَ عَلَى ضَعْفِكَ، وَمَا كَانَ
مِنْهَا عَلَيْكَ لَمْ تَدْفَعْهُ بِقُوَّتِكَ.

Letter 73: To Mu'awiyah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى معاوية

Now, (in) exchanging replies and listening to your letters my view has been weak and my perception has been mistaken. When you refer your demands to me and expect me to send you written replies, you are like one who is in deep slumber while his dreams contradict him, or one who stands perplexed and overwhelmed, not knowing whether whatever comes to him is for him or against him.

You are not such a man but he is (to some extent) like you (as you are worse than him). I swear by Allah that, had it not been for (my) giving you time, you would have faced from me catastrophe that would have crushed the bones and removed the flesh. Know that Satan has prevented you from turning to good actions and listening to the words of counsels. Peace be upon those who deserve it.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي عَلَى التَّرَدُّدِ فِي جَوَابِكَ، وَالاسْتِمَاعِ إِلَى كِتَابِكَ، لَمَوْهِنٌ رَأْيِي، وَمُخْطِئٌ
فِرَاسَتِي. وَإِنَّكَ إِذْ تُحَاوِلُنِي الْأُمُورَ وَتُرَاجِعُنِي السُّطُورَ، كَالْمُسْتَقِيلِ النَّائِمِ تَكَذِّبُهُ أَحْلَامُهُ،
وَالْمُتَحَيِّرِ الْقَائِمِ يَبْهَتُهُ مَقَامُهُ، لَا يَدْرِي أَلَهُ مَا يَأْتِي أَمْ عَلَيْهِ، وَلَسْتُ بِهِ، غَيْرَ أَنَّهُ بِكَ شَبِيهٌ.
وَأَقْسِمُ بِاللَّهِ لَوْ لَا بَعْضُ الْأَسْتِيفَاءِ لَوَصَلَتْ إِلَيْكَ مِنِّي قَوَارِعٌ، تَفْرَعُ الْعَظْمَ، وَتَهْلِسُ اللَّحْمَ!
وَأَعْلَمُ أَنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ نَبَّطَكَ عَنْ أَنْ تُرَاجِعَ أَحْسَنَ أُمُورِكَ، وَتَأْدَنَ لِمَقَالِ نَصِيحَتِكَ، وَالسَّلَامُ
لِأَهْلِهِ

Letter 74: A treaty which Imam Ali (a) has worded for the Bani Rabi'a tribe and the Yemenites to agree upon

Written by Amir al-mu'minin as a protocol between the tribes of Rabi'ah and the people of Yemen. Taken from the writing of Hisham ibn (Muhammad) al-Kalbi

وَمِنْ حَلْفِ كَتَبَهُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ)

بَيْنَ الْيَمَنِ وَرَبِيعَةَ

نُقِلَ مِنْ خَطِّ هِشَامِ بْنِ الْكَلْبِيِّ

This indenture contains what the people of Yemen, including the townsmen and nomads, and the tribes of Rabi'ah, including the townsmen and nomads, have agreed upon: that they will adhere to the Book of Allah, will call to it and order according to it and will respond to whoever calls to it and orders according to it. They will not sell it for any price nor accept any alternative for it. They will join hands against anyone who opposes it and abandons it. They will help one another. Their voice will be one. They will not break their pledge on account of the rebuke of a rebuker, the wrath of an angry person, the humiliating treatment of one group to the other, or the use of abusive terms by one party against the other.

هَذَا مَا اجْتَمَعَ عَلَيْهِ أَهْلُ الْيَمَنِ حَاضِرُهَا وَبَادِيهَا، وَرَبِيعَةُ حَاضِرُهَا وَبَادِيهَا: أَنَّهُمْ عَلَى كِتَابِ اللَّهِ يَدْعُونَ إِلَيْهِ، وَيَأْمُرُونَ بِهِ، وَيُجِيبُونَ مَنْ دَعَا إِلَيْهِ وَأَمَرَ بِهِ، لَا يَشْتَرُونَ بِهِ تَمَنًّا، وَلَا يَرْضَوْنَ بِهِ بَدَلًا، وَأَنَّ هُمْ يَدُّ وَاحِدَةً عَلَى مَنْ خَالَفَ ذَلِكَ وَتَرَكَهُ، أَنْصَارًا بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ، دَعْوَتُهُمْ وَاحِدَةٌ، لَا يَنْقُضُونَ عَهْدَهُمْ لِمَعْتَبَةٍ عَاتِبٍ، وَلَا لِعَضَبٍ غَاضِبٍ، وَلَا لِاسْتِدْلَالٍ قَوْمٍ قَوْمًا، وَلَا لِمَسَبَّةٍ قَوْمٍ قَوْمًا!

This pledge is binding on those of them who are present and those of them who are absent; those of them who are forbearing and those of them who are foolish; those of them who are learned and those of them who are ignorant. Along with this the pledge of Allah is also binding on them, and the pledge of Allah is to be accounted for.

عَلَى ذَلِكَ شَاهِدُهُمْ وَعَائِيهِمْ، وَسَفِيهِمْ وَعَالِمُهُمْ، وَحَلِيمُهُمْ وَجَاهِلُهُمْ. ثُمَّ إِنَّ عَلَيْهِمْ بِذَلِكَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ وَمِيثَاقَهُ، إِنَّ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ كَانَ مَسْئُولًا.

Written by: `Ali ibn Abi Talib.

وكتب: علي بن أبي طالب

Letter 75: To Mu`awiyah, soon after Amir al-mu'minin was sworn in

After the Muslims took oath of allegiance to Imam Ali (a), he wrote the following letter to Mu'awiya. (Muhammad ibn `Umar) al-Waqidi has mentioned this in his "Kitab al-Jamal"

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)
إلى معاوية في أول ما بويع له بالخلافه
ذكره الواقدي في كتاب الجمل

From the servant of Allah, `Ali Amir al-mu'minin to Mu`awiyah son of Abu Sufyan:

مِنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلِيِّ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ أَبِي سُفْيَانَ:

Now, you are aware of my excuses before you people and my shunning you till that happened which was inevitable and which could not be prevented. The story is long and much is to be said. What was to pass has passed and what was to come has come. Therefore, secure (my) allegiance from those who are with you and come in a deputation of your people to me; and that is an end to the matter.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ عَلِمْتَ إِعْدَارِي فِيكُمْ، وَإِعْرَاضِي عَنْكُمْ، حَتَّى كَانَ مَا لَا بُدَّ مِنْهُ وَلَا دَفْعَ لَهُ، وَالْحَدِيثُ طَوِيلٌ، وَالْكَلَامُ كَثِيرٌ، وَقَدْ أَدْبَرَ مَا أَدْبَرَ، وَأَقْبَلَ مَا أَقْبَلَ، فَبَايَعُ مَنْ قَبْلَكَ، وَأَقْبَلَ إِلَيَّ فِي وَفْدٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِكَ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

Letter 76: Instructions to Abdullah b. Abbas when he sent him as his representative to Basra

Given to `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas at the time of his appointment as his Governor of Basrah

ومن وصية له (عليه السلام)

لعبد الله بن العباس عند استخلافه إياه على البصرة

Meet people with a broad face, allow them free audience and pass generous orders. Avoid anger because it is a augury of Satan. Remember that whatever takes you near Allah takes you away from the Fire (of Hell), and whatever takes you away from Allah takes you near the Fire.

سَعِ النَّاسَ بِوَجْهِكَ وَمَجْلِسِكَ وَحُكْمِكَ، وَإِيَّاكَ وَالْعَضَبَ فَإِنَّهُ طَيْرَةٌ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ. وَاعْلَمْ

أَنَّ مَا قَرَّبَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ يُبَاعِدُكَ مِنَ النَّارِ، وَمَا بَاعَدَكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ يُقَرِّبُكَ مِنَ النَّارِ.

Letter 77: Instructions to Abdullah b. Abbas

Instructions given to `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas, at the time of his being deputed to confront the Kharijites

ومن وصيته (عليه السلام) لهُ

لما بعثه للاحتجاج على الخوارج

Do not argue with them by the Qur'an because the Qur'an has many faces. You would say your own and they would say their own; but argue with them by the sunnah, because they cannot find escape from it.

لَا تُخَاصِمُهُمْ بِالْقُرْآنِ، فَإِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ حَمَالٌ ذُو وُجُوهِ، تَقُولُ وَيَقُولُونَ، وَلَكِنْ حَاجَّهُمْ بِالسُّنَّةِ،

فَإِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يَجِدُوا عَنْهَا مَخِيصًا.

Letter 78: To Abu Musa al-Ash`ari

To Abu Musa al-Ash`ari in reply to his letter regarding the two arbitrators. Sa`id ibn Yahya al-Umawi has mentioned this in his "Kitab al-maghazi"

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى أبي موسى الأشعري جواباً في أمر الحكّمين

ذكره سعيد بن يحيى الأموي في كتاب المغازي

Certainly, many people have turned away from many a (lasting) benefit (of the next life), for they bent towards the world and spoke with passions. I have been struck with wonder in this matter, upon which people who are self-conceited have agreed. I am providing a cure for their wound but I fear lest it develops into a clot of blood (and becomes incurable). Remember that no person is more covetous than I for the unity of the ummah of Muhammad (may Allah bless him and his descendants) and their solidarity. I seek through it good reward and an honourable place to return to.

فَإِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ تَعَيَّرَ كَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ عَنْ كَثِيرٍ مِنْ حَظِّهِمْ، فَمَالُوا مَعَ الدُّنْيَا، وَنَطَقُوا بِالْهَوَى،
وَإِنِّي نَزَلْتُ مِنْ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ مَنْزِلاً مُعْجَباً، اجْتَمَعَ بِهِ أَقْوَامٌ أَعْجَبَتْهُمْ أَنْفُسُهُمْ، فَإِنِّي أَدَاوِي مِنْهُمْ
قَرُوحاً أَخَافُ أَنْ يَكُونَ عَاقِبَةً.

وَلَيْسَ رَجُلٌ - فَاعْلَمْ - أَحْرَصَ عَلَيَّ جَمَاعَةَ أُمَّةٍ مُحَمَّدٍ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ - وَأَلْفَتْهَا
مِثِّي، أَتَبَغِي بِذَلِكَ حُسْنَ الثَّوَابِ، وَكَرَمَ الْمَأْتِ.

I shall fulfil what I have pledged upon myself even though you may go back from the sound position that existed when you left me last, because wretched is he who is denied the benefit of wisdom and experience. I feel enraged if anyone speaks wrong, or if I should worsen a matter which Allah has kept sound. Therefore, leave out what you do not understand, because wicked people will be conveying to you vicious things; and that is an end to the matter.

وَسَأْفِي بِالذِّي وَأَيْتُ عَلَيَّ نَفْسِي، وَإِنْ تَعَيَّرْتَ عَنْ صَالِحٍ مَا فَارَقْتَنِي عَلَيْهِ، فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ مَنْ
حُرِمَ نَفْعَ مَا أُوتِيَ مِنَ الْعَقْلِ وَالتَّجْرِبَةِ، وَإِنِّي لِأَعْبُدُ أَنْ يَقُولَ قَائِلٌ بِبَاطِلٍ، أَنْ أُفْسِدَ أَمْرًا قَدْ
أَصْلَحَهُ اللَّهُ، فَدَعُ مَا لَا تَعْرِفُ، فَإِنَّ شِرَارَ النَّاسِ طَائِرُونَ إِلَيْكَ بِأَقَاوِيلِ الشُّؤْمِ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

**Letter 79: To the army officers when Amir al-mu'minin
became Caliph**

ومن كتاب كتبه (عليه السلام)

لما استُخلف

إلى أمراء الاجناد

Now, what ruined those before you was that they denied people their rights and then they had to purchase them (by bribes), and they led the people to wrong and they followed it.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّمَا أَهْلَكَ مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ أَنَّهُمْ مَنَعُوا النَّاسَ الْحَقَّ فَاشْتَرَوْهُ، وَأَخَذُوهُمْ بِالْبَاطِلِ
فَافْتَدَوْهُ.

تمّ الباب بحمدالله.

SAYINGS

Selections from The Sayings And Preaching Of Amir Al-Mu'minin 'Ali Ibn Abi Talib (Peace Be Upon Him) Including His Replies To Questions And Maxims Expressed For Various Purposes

حكم أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام
بَابُ الْمُخْتَارِ مِنْ حِكْمِ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ
وَمَوَاعِظِهِ وَبَدْحُلِّ فِي ذَلِكَ الْمُخْتَارِ مِنْ أَجْوِبَةِ مَسَائِلِهِ
وَالكَلَامِ الْقَصِيرِ الْخَارِجِ فِي سَائِرِ أَغْرَاضِهِ

Hadith n. 1

1. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: During civil disturbance be like an adolescent camel¹ who has neither a back strong enough for riding nor udders for milking.

1. قَالَ (عليه السلام): كُنْ فِي الْفِتْنَةِ كَابْنَ اللَّبُونِ، لَا ظَهْرٌ فَيَرْكَبُ، وَلَا ضَرْعٌ فَيُحْلَبُ.

Hadith n. 2

2. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who adopts greed as a habit devalues himself; he who discloses his hardship agrees to humiliation; and he who allows his tongue to overpower his soul debases the soul.

2. وَقَالَ (عليه السلام): أَرْزَى بِنَفْسِهِ مَنْ اسْتَشْعَرَ الطَّمَعِ وَ رَضِيَ بِالذُّلِّ مَنْ كَشَفَ عَنْ ضُرِّهِ وَ هَانَتْ عَلَيْهِ نَفْسُهُ مِنْ أَمْرٍ عَلَيَّهَا لِسَانُهُ.

Hadith n. 3

3. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Miserliness is shame; cowardice is a defect; poverty disables an intelligent man from arguing his case; and a destitute person is a stranger in his home town.

3. وَقَالَ (عليه السلام): الْبُخْلُ عَارٌ وَ الْجُبْنُ مَنْقَصَةٌ وَ الْفَقْرُ يُجْرِسُ الْفِطْنَ عَنْ حُجَّتِهِ وَ الْمُقِلُّ غَرِيبٌ فِي بَلَدَتِهِ

Hadith n. 4

4. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Incapability is a catastrophe; endurance is bravery; abstinence is riches; self-restraint is a shield (against sin); and the best companion is submission (to Allah's will).

4. وَقَالَ (عليه السلام): الْعَجْزُ آفَةٌ وَ الصَّبْرُ شَجَاعَةٌ وَ الرُّهْدُ نُرُوءٌ وَ الْوَرَعُ جَنَّةٌ وَ نَعَمَ الْقَرِينُ الرَّضَى

Hadith n. 5

5. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Knowledge is a venerable estate; good manners are new dresses; and thinking is clear mirror.

5. وَقَالَ (عليه السلام): الْعِلْمُ وَرَاثَةٌ كَرِيمَةٌ وَ الْأَدَابُ حُلَلٌ مُجَدَّدَةٌ وَ الْفِكْرُ مِرْآةٌ صَافِيَةٌ.

Hadith n. 6

6. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The bosom of the wise is the safe of his secrets; cheerfulness is the bond of friendship; effective forbearance is the grave of short-comings.

It is narrated that Amir al-mu'minin said in expressing this meaning that: Mutual reconciliation is the covering for shortcomings; and he who admires himself attracts many opponents against him.²

6. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: صَدْرُ الْعَاقِلِ صُنْدُوقُ سِرِّهِ وَ الْبَشَاشَةُ جِبَالَةُ الْمَوَدَّةِ وَ الْإِخْتِمَالُ

قَبْرُ الْعُيُوبِ

وَ رُوِيَ أَنَّهُ قَالَ فِي الْعِبَارَةِ عَنْ هَذَا الْمَعْنَى أَيْضًا:

الْمَسْأَلَةُ حِبَاءُ الْعُيُوبِ وَ مَنْ رَضِيَ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ كَثُرَ السَّخِطُ عَلَيْهِ

Hadith n. 7

7. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Charity is an effective cure, and the actions of people in their present life will be before their eyes in the next life.³

7. قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: الصَّدَقَةُ دَوَاءٌ مُنْجِحٌ، وَأَعْمَالُ الْعِبَادِ فِي عَاجِلِهِمْ، نُصَبُ أَعْيُنِهِمْ فِي

آجِلِهِمْ

Hadith n. 8

8. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: How wonderful is man that sees with fat, talks with a piece of flesh, hears with a bone and breathes through a hole.

8. قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: اعْجَبُوا لِهَذَا الْإِنْسَانِ يَنْظُرُ بِشَحْمٍ وَ يَتَكَلَّمُ بِلَحْمٍ وَ يَسْمَعُ بِعَظْمٍ،

وَ يَتَنَفَّسُ مِنْ حَرَمٍ

Hadith n. 9

9. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When this world advances towards anyone (with its favours) it attributes to him other's good; and when it turns away from him it deprives him of his own good.⁴

9. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِذَا أَقْبَلَتِ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى أَحَدٍ أَغَارَتْهُ مَحَاسِنُ غَيْرِهِ وَ إِذَا أَدْبَرَتْ عَنْهُ

سَلَبَتْهُ مَحَاسِنَ نَفْسِهِ.

Hadith n. 10

10. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Meet people in such a manner that if you die they should weep for you and if you live they should long for you.⁵

10. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: خَالَطُوا النَّاسَ مُحَالَطَةً إِنْ مِتُّمْ مَعَهَا بَكَوْا عَلَيْكُمْ وَ إِنْ عِشْتُمْ

حَنُّوا إِلَيْكُمْ.

Hadith n. 11

11. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When you gain power over your adversary pardon him by way of thanks for being able to overpower him.⁶

11. وَ قَالَ (عليه السلام): إِذَا قَدَرْتَ عَلَى عَدُوِّكَ فَاجْعَلِ الْعَفْوَ عَنْهُ شُكْرًا لِلْقُدْرَةِ عَلَيْهِ

Hadith n. 12

12. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The most helpless of all men is he who cannot find a few brothers during his life, but still more helpless. is he who finds such a brother but loses him.⁷

12. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: أَعْجَزُ النَّاسِ مَنْ عَجَزَ عَنِ اتِّسَابِ الْإِخْوَانِ وَ أَعْجَزُ مِنْهُ مَنْ

ضَيَّعَ مَنْ ظَفَرَ بِهِ مِنْهُمْ

Hadith n. 13

13. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When you get (only) small favours do not push them away through lack of gratefulness.

13. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: إِذَا وَصَلَتْ إِلَيْكُمْ أَطْرَافُ النِّعَمِ فَلَا تُنْفِرُوا أَفْصَاهَا بِقِلَّةِ الشُّكْرِ.

Hadith n. 14

14. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is abandoned by near ones is dear to remote ones.

14. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: مَنْ ضَيَّعَهُ الْأَقْرَبُ أُتِيحَ لَهُ الْأَبْعَدُ.

Hadith n. 15

15. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Every mischief monger cannot even be reproved.⁸

15. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: مَا كَلُّ مَفْتُونٍ يُعَاتَبُ

Hadith n. 16

16. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: All matters are subject to destiny, so much so that sometimes death results from effort.

16. وَ قَالَ عليه السلام: تَدِلُّ الْأُمُورُ لِلْمَقَادِيرِ حَتَّى يَكُونَ الْحُتْفُ فِي التَّدْبِيرِ.

Hadith n. 17

17. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked to explain the saying of the Messenger of Allah: Banish your old age (by hair-dye) and do not acquire resemblance to the Jews.

Amir al-mu'minin replied:

The Prophet (S) said this at a time when the religion was confined to a few, but now that its expanse has widened and it is firmly settled everyone is free in his action.⁹

17. وَ سُئِلَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَنْ قَوْلِ الرَّسُولِ (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم): عَيَّرُوا الشَّيْبَ وَ

لَا تَشَبَّهُوا بِالْيَهُودِ

فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِنَّمَا قَالَ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) ذَلِكَ وَ الدَّيْنُ قُلٌّ فَأَمَّا الْآنَ وَ قَدْ اتَّسَعَ نِطَاقُهُ وَ ضَرَبَ بِجِرَانِهِ فَأَمُرُوهُ وَ مَا اخْتَارَ.

Hadith n. 18

18. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said about those who avoided fighting on his side: They abandoned right but did not support wrong.¹⁰
18. وقال عليه السلام في الذين اعتزلوا القتال معه: حَذَلُوا الْحَقَّ، وَمَنْ يَنْصُرُوا الْبَاطِلَ.

Hadith n. 19

19. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who gallops with loose rein collides with death.
19. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ جَرَى فِي عِنَانٍ أَمَلِهِ عَثَرَ بِأَجَلِهِ.

Hadith n. 20

20. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Forgive the shortcomings of people of virtue and honor because when they fall into error Allah raises them up.
20. وقال عليه السلام: أَقْبِلُوا ذَوِي الْمُرُوءَاتِ عَثَرَاتِهِمْ فَمَا يَعْتَرُ مِنْهُمْ عَائِرٌ إِلَّا وَبَدَّ اللَّهُ يَرْفَعُهُ

Hadith n. 21

21. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The consequence of fear is disappointment and of bashfulness is frustration. Opportunity passes away like the cloud. Therefore, make use of good opportunities.¹¹
21. وقال عليه السلام: قُرْنَتِ الْهَيْبَةُ بِالْحَيْبَةِ وَالْحَيَاءُ بِالْحِرْمَانِ وَالْفُرْصَةُ تَمُرُّ مَرَّ السَّحَابِ، فَانْتَهَرُوا فُرْصَةَ الْخَيْرِ

Hadith n. 22

22. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said We have a right. If it is allowed to us well and good, otherwise, we will ride on the hind part of the camel (like lowly people) even though the night journey may be long.
22. وقال عليه السلام: لَنَا حَقٌّ، فَإِنْ أُعْطِينَا، وَإِلَّا رَكَبْنَا أَعْجَازَ الْأَيْلِ، وَإِنْ طَالَ السُّرَى.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is a very fine and eloquent expression. It means that if we are not allowed our right we will be regarded humble. This sense comes out from this expression because on the rear part of the camel only slaves, prisoners or other people of this type used to ride.¹²
قال الرضي: و هذا من لطيف الكلام و فصيح و معناه أنا إن لم نعط حقنا كنا أدلاء و ذلك أن الرديف يركب عجز البعير كالعبد و الأسير و من يجري مجراها.

Hadith n. 23

23. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He whose deeds accord (him) a back position cannot be given a front position because of his lineage.

23. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ أَبْطَأَ بِهِ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهِ حَسَبُهُ.

Hadith n. 24

24. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Rendering relief to the grief-stricken and providing comfort in hardship are among the means of atonement for great sins.

24. وقال عليه السلام: مِنْ كَفَّارَاتِ الذُّنُوبِ الْعِظَامِ إِعَانَةُ الْمَلْهُوفِ، وَالتَّنْفِيسُ عَنِ الْمَكْرُوبِ.

Hadith n. 25

25. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O son of Adam, when you see that your Lord, the Glorified, bestows His favours on you while you are disobeying Him, you should fear Him.¹³

25. وقال عليه السلام: يَا بَنَ آدَمَ، إِذَا رَأَيْتَ رَبَّكَ سُبْحَانَهُ يُتَابِعُ عَلَيْكَ نِعْمَهُ وَأَنْتَ تَعْصِيهِ فَاحْذَرُهُ.

Hadith n. 26

26. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whenever a person conceals a thing in his heart it manifests itself through unintentional words from his tongue and (in) the expressions of his face.¹⁴

26. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَا أَضْمَرَ أَحَدٌ شَيْئاً إِلَّا ظَهَرَ فِي فَلَكَاتِ لِسَانِهِ وَ صَفَحَاتِ وَجْهِهِ

Hadith n. 27

27. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Keep walking in your sickness as long as you can.¹⁵

27. وقال عليه السلام: امشِ بِدَائِكَ مَا مَشَى بِكَ

Hadith n. 28

28. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The best abstemiousness is to conceal it.

28. وقال عليه السلام: أَفْضَلُ الرُّهْدِ إِخْفَاءُ الرُّهْدِ.

Hadith n. 29

29. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When you are running away from the world and death is approaching, there is no question of delay in the encounter.

29. وقال عليه السلام: إِذَا كُنْتَ فِي إِدْبَارِ وَالْمَوْتِ فِي إِقْبَالٍ فَمَا أَسْرَعَ الْمُلتَمَى.

Hadith n. 30

30. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fear! Fear! By Allah, He has hidden your sins so much so as though He has forgiven.

30. وقال عليه السلام: الحَذَرُ الحَذَرُ! فَوَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ سَتَّرَ، حَتَّى كَأَنَّهُ قَدْ غَفَرَ.

Hadith n. 31: Faith, Unbelief, Doubt And Their Supports

31. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about faith. He said:

31. وَسُئِلَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَنِ الْإِيمَانِ، فَقَالَ:

Faith stands on four supports: on endurance, conviction, justice and jihad (fighting in the way of Allah).

الْإِيمَانُ عَلَى أَرْبَعِ دَعَائِمٍ: عَلَى الصَّبْرِ، وَالْيَقِينِ، وَالْعَدْلِ، وَالْجِهَادِ.

Endurance again has four aspects: eagerness, fear, abstention (from the world) and anticipation (of death). So, whoever is eager for Paradise will ignore the passions; whoever fears the Fire (of Hell) will refrain from prohibited acts; whoever abstains from the world takes hardships lightly; and whoever anticipates death will hasten towards good deeds.

فَالصَّبْرُ مِنْهَا عَلَى أَرْبَعِ شُعَبٍ: عَلَى الشُّوقِ، وَالشَّفَقِ وَالرُّهْدِ، وَالتَّرَقُّبِ: فَمَنْ اشْتَأَقَ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ سَلَا عَنِ الشَّهَوَاتِ، وَمَنْ أَشْفَقَ مِنَ النَّارِ اجْتَنَبَ الْمُحَرَّمَاتِ، وَمَنْ زَهَدَ فِي الدُّنْيَا اسْتَهَانَ بِالْمُصِيبَاتِ، وَمَنْ ارْتَقَبَ الْمَوْتَ سَارَعَ فِي الْحَيَاتِ.

Conviction also has four aspects: prudent perception, intelligence and understanding, drawing lessons from instructive things and following the precedents of past people. So, whoever perceives with prudence, wise knowledge will be manifest to him, and to whomsoever wise knowledge becomes manifest he appreciates instructive objects, and whoever appreciates instructive objects he is just like past people.

وَالْيَقِينُ مِنْهَا عَلَى أَرْبَعِ شُعَبٍ: عَلَى تَبْصِرَةِ الْفِطْنَةِ، وَتَأْوِيلِ الْحِكْمَةِ وَمَوْعِظَةِ الْعِبْرَةِ وَسُنَّةِ الْأَوَّلِينَ فَمَنْ تَبَصَّرَ فِي الْفِطْنَةِ تَبَيَّنَتْ لَهُ الْحِكْمَةُ، وَمَنْ تَبَيَّنَتْ لَهُ الْحِكْمَةُ عَرَفَ الْعِبْرَةَ، وَمَنْ عَرَفَ الْعِبْرَةَ فَكَأَنَّمَا كَانَ فِي الْأَوَّلِينَ.

Justice also has four aspects: keen understanding, deep knowledge, a good power of decision and firm forbearance. Therefore, whoever understands comes to acquire depth of knowledge; whoever acquires depth of knowledge drinks from the spring of judgement; and whoever exercises forbearance never commits evil actions in his affairs and leads a praiseworthy life among the people.

وَالْعَدْلُ مِنْهَا عَلَى أَرْبَعِ شُعَبٍ: عَلَى غَايِصِ الْفَهْمِ، وَعُورِ الْعِلْمِ وَزُهْرَةِ الْحُكْمِ، وَرَسَاخَةِ الْحِلْمِ: فَمَنْ فَهَمَ عِلْمَ عُورِ الْعِلْمِ، وَ مِنْ عِلْمِ عُورِ الْعِلْمِ صَدَرَ عَنْ شَرَائِعِ الْحُكْمِ وَمَنْ حَلِمَ لَمْ يُفْرِطْ فِي أَمْرِهِ وَعَاشَرَ فِي النَّاسِ حَمِيدًا.

Jihad also has four aspects: to ask others to do good, to keep away others from doing evil, to fight (in the way of Allah) sincerely and firmly on all

occasions, and to detest the vicious. So, whoever asks others to do good provides strength to the believers; whoever desists others from evil humiliates the unbelievers; whoever fights sincerely on all occasions discharges all his obligations; and whoever detests the vicious and becomes angry for the sake of Allah, then Allah will be angry in favour of him and will keep him and will keep him pleased on the Day of Judgement.

وَالْجِهَادُ مِنْهَا عَلَى أَرْبَعِ شُعَبٍ: عَلَى الْأَمْرِ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ، وَالنَّهْيِ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، وَالصِّدْقِ فِي الْمَوَاطِنِ وَشَتَانِ الْفَاسِقِينَ: فَمَنْ أَمَرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ شَدَّ ظُهُورَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَمَنْ نَهَى عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ أَرْغَمَ أَنْوْفَ الْكَافِرِينَ، مَنْ صَدَقَ فِي الْمَوَاطِنِ قَضَى مَا عَلَيْهِ، وَمَنْ شَنِءَ الْفَاسِقِينَ وَغَضِبَ لِلَّهِ غَضِبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ وَأَرْضَاهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ .

Unbelief stands on four supports: hankering after whims, mutual quarrelling, deviation from the truth, and dissension. So, whoever hankers after whims does not incline towards right: whoever quarrels much on account of ignorance remains permanently blinded from the right; whoever deviates from truth, for him good becomes evil and evil becomes good and he remains intoxicated with misguidance; and whoever makes a breach (with Allah and His Messenger), his path becomes difficult, his affairs become complicated and his way of escape becomes narrow.

وَالْكَفْرُ عَلَى أَرْبَعِ دَعَائِمٍ: عَلَى التَّعَمُّقِ وَالتَّنَازُعِ، وَالزَّيْعِ وَالشِّقَاقِ فَمَنْ تَعَمَّقَ لَمْ يُبَيِّنْ إِلَى الْحَقِّ، وَمَنْ كَثُرَ نَزَاعُهُ بِالْجَهْلِ دَامَ عَمَاهُ عَنِ الْحَقِّ، وَمَنْ زَاغَ سَاءَتْ عِنْدَهُ الْحُسْنَةُ وَحَسُنَتْ عِنْدَهُ السَّيِّئَةُ وَسَكَّرَ سُكْرَ الضَّلَالَةِ، وَمَنْ شَاقَّ وَعُرَّتْ عَلَيْهِ طُرُقُهُ وَأَعْضَلَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرُهُ وَضَاقَ عَلَيْهِ مَخْرَجُهُ.

Doubt has also four aspects: unreasonableness, fear, wavering and undue submission to every thing. So, he who adopts unreasonableness as his way, for him there is no dawn after the night; he who is afraid of what befalls him has to run on his heels; he who wavers in doubt Satans trample him under their feet and he who submits to the destruction of this and tile next world succumbs to it.

وَالشُّكُّ عَلَى أَرْبَعِ شُعَبٍ: عَلَى التَّمَارِي وَالْهَوْلِ وَالتَّرَدُّدِ وَالْأَسْتِسْلَامِ فَمَنْ جَعَلَ الْمِرَاءَ دَيْدِنًا لَمْ يُصْبِحْ لَيْلُهُ وَمَنْ هَالَهُ مَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ نَكَصَ عَلَى عَقْبِيهِ وَمَنْ تَرَدَّدَ فِي الرَّيْبِ وَطَقَّتْهُ يَدَيْهِ نَكَصَ عَلَى عَقْبِيهِ وَمَنْ تَرَدَّدَ فِي الرَّيْبِ وَطَقَّتْهُ سَنَابِكُ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَمَنْ اسْتَسْلَمَ هَلَكَةَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ هَلَكَ فِيهِمَا.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: We have left out the remaining portion of this saying for fear of length and for being outside the purpose of this chapter.

قال الرضي: و بعد هذا كلام تركنا ذكره خوف الإطالة و الخروج عن الغرض المقصود في هذا الكتاب.

Hadith n. 32

32. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The doer of good is better than the good itself, and the doer of evil is worse than the evil itself.

32. وقال عليه السلام: فَاعِلُ الْخَيْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ، وَفَاعِلُ الشَّرِّ شَرٌّ مِنْهُ.

Hadith n. 33

33. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Be generous but not extravagant; be thrifty but not miserly.

33. وقال عليه السلام: كُنْ سَمِحاً وَلَا تَكُنْ مُبَدِّراً، وَكُنْ مُقَدِّراً وَلَا تَكُنْ مُقْتَرّاً.

Hadith n. 34

34. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The best of riches is the abandonment of desires.

34. وقال عليه السلام: أَشْرَفُ الْغِنَى تَرْكُ الْمُنَى.

Hadith n. 35

35. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If someone is quick in saying about people what they dislike, they speak about him that about which they have no knowledge.

35. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ أَسْرَعَ إِلَى النَّاسِ بِمَا يَكْرَهُونَ، قَالُوا فِيهِ [ب] مَا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ.

Hadith n. 36

36. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever prolongs his desire ruins his actions.

36. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ أَطَالَ الْأَمَلَ أَسَاءَ الْعَمَلَ.

Hadith n. 37

37. Once Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was proceeding towards Syria when the countrymen of al-Anbar met him. Seeing him they began to walk on foot and then ran in front of him. He enquired why they were doing so and they replied that this was the way they respected their chiefs. Then he said:

37. وقال عليه السلام وقد لقيه عند مسيره إلى الشام دهاقين الأنبار فترجلوا له

واشتدوا بين يديه، فقال: مَا هَذَا الَّذِي صَنَعْتُمُوهُ؟ فقالوا: خُلِقَ مِنَّا نُعَظَّمُ بِهِ أُمَرَاءَنَا. فقال عليه السلام:

By Allah, this does not benefit your chiefs. You are belabouring yourself in this world and earning misery for the next world by it. How harmful is the labour in whose wake there is punishment and how profitable is the case with which there is deliverance from the Fire (of Hell).

وَاللَّهِ مَا يَنْتَفِعُ بِهَذَا أُمَرَاؤُكُمْ! وَإِنَّكُمْ لَتَشْفُونَ عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي دُنْيَاكُمْ، وَتَشْفُونَ بِهِ فِي

آخِرَتِكُمْ، وَمَا أَحْسَرَ الْمَشَقَّةَ وَرَاءَهَا الْعِقَابُ، وَأَرْبَحَ الدَّعَةَ مَعَهَا الْأَمَانُ مِنَ النَّارِ.

Hadith n. 38

38. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to his son al- Hasan:

38. وقال عليه السلام: لابنه الحسن عليه السلام:

O my son, learn four things and (a further) four things from me. Nothing will harm you if you practise them. That the richest of riches is intelligence; the biggest destitution is foolishness; the wildest wildness is vanity and the best achievement is goodness of the moral character.

يَا بُنَيَّ، احْفَظْ عَنِّي أَرْبَعًا وَأَرْبَعًا، لَا يَضُرُّكَ مَا عَمِلْتَ مَعَهُنَّ: إِنَّ أَعْيَى الْعَقْلِ، وَأَكْبَرَ الْفَقْرِ الْحُمُقُ، وَأَوْحَشَ الْوَحْشَةَ الْعُجْبُ وَأَكْرَمَ الْحَسَبِ حُسْنُ الْخُلُقِ.

O my son, you should avoid making friends with a fool because he may intend to benefit you but may harm you; you should avoid making friends with a miser because he will run away from you when you need him most; you should avoid making friends with a sinful person because he will sell you for nought; and you should avoid making friends with a liar because he is like a mirage, making you feel far things near and near things far.

يَا بُنَيَّ، إِيَّاكَ وَمُصَادَقَةَ الْأَحْمَقِ، فَإِنَّهُ يُرِيدُ أَنْ يَنْفَعَكَ فَيَضُرُّكَ. وَإِيَّاكَ وَمُصَادَقَةَ الْبَخِيلِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَقْعُدُ عَنكَ أَحْوَجَ مَا تَكُونُ إِلَيْهِ. وَإِيَّاكَ وَمُصَادَقَةَ الْفَاجِرِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَبِيعُكَ بِالتَّافِهِ وَإِيَّاكَ وَمُصَادَقَةَ الْكَذَّابِ، فَإِنَّهُ كَالسَّرَابِ يُقْرَبُ عَلَيْكَ الْبَعِيدَ، وَيُبْعَدُ عَلَيْكَ الْقَرِيبَ.

Hadith n. 39

39. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Supererogatory worship cannot bring about nearness to Allah if it hampers the obligatory.

39. وقال عليه السلام: لَا قُرْبَةَ بِالتَّوَاتُلِ إِذَا أَضْرَّتْ بِالفَرَائِضِ

Hadith n. 40

40. Amir a'-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The tongue of the wise man is behind his heart, and the heart of the fool is behind his tongue.

40. وقال عليه السلام: لِسَانُ الْعَاقِلِ وَرَاءَ قَلْبِهِ، وَقَلْبُ الْأَحْمَقِ وَرَاءَ لِسَانِهِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This sentence has a strange and beautiful meaning. It means that the wise man does not speak with his tongue except after consulting his mind and exercising his imagination, but the fool quickly utters whatever comes to his tongue without thinking. In this way, the tongue of the wise man follows his heart while the heart of the fool follows his tongue.

قال الرضي: و هذا من المعاني العجيبة الشريفة، والمراد به أنّ العاقل لا يطلق لسانه إلاّ بعد مشاورة الرّويّة ومؤامرة الفكرة، والاحمق تسبق خذفات لسانه وفتلات كلامه مراجعة فكره ومماخضة رأيه، فكأن لسان العاقل تابع لقلبه، وكأن قلب الاحمق تابع للسانه.

Hadith n. 41

41. This very sense has been related from Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, in a different version as follows:

The heart of a fool is in his mouth while the tongue of the wise man is in his heart.

The meaning of both the sayings (40 and 41) is the same.

41. وقد روي عنه عليه السلام هذا المعنى بلفظ آخر، وهو قوله: قَلْبُ الْأَحْمَقِ فِي فِيهِ،
وَلِسَانُ الْعَاقِلِ فِي قَلْبِهِ.
ومعناها واحد.

Hadith n. 42

42. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to one of his companions during his sickness:

May Allah make your illness a means for writing off your sins, because there is no reward for sickness but that it erases sins and makes them fall like (dried) leaves. Reward lies in saying by the tongue and doing something with the hands and feet. Certainly, Allah, the Glorified, admits into Paradise by virtue of truthfulness of intention and chastity of heart to whomsoever He wishes from among His creatures.

42. وقال عليه السلام لبعض أصحابه في علة اعتلها: جَعَلَ اللَّهُ مَا كَانَ مِنْ شُكُوكِ
حَطًّا لِسَيِّئَاتِكَ، فَإِنَّ الْمَرَضَ لَا أَجْرَ فِيهِ، وَلَكِنَّهُ يَحُطُّ السَّيِّئَاتِ، وَيَحْتُهَا حَتَّ الْأَوْزَاقِ، وَإِنَّمَا
الْأَجْرُ فِي الْقَوْلِ بِاللِّسَانِ، وَالْعَمَلِ بِالْأَيْدِي وَالْأَقْدَامِ، وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ يُدْخِلُ بِصِدْقِ النِّيَّةِ
وَالسَّرِيرَةِ الصَّالِحَةِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْجَنَّةَ

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Amir al-mu'minin is right in saying that there is no reward for sickness as such because compensation is admissible in respect of the acts of Allah, the Sublime, towards his creatures such as grief, illness and the like, whereas reward and recompense becomes admissible against actions by the creature. This is the difference between the two and Amir al-mu'minin has clarified it through his lustrous knowledge and sound view.

قال الرضي: و أقول: صدق (عليه السلام)، «إِنَّ الْمَرَضَ لَا أَجْرَ فِيهِ»، لانه ليس من قبيل ما يُسْتَحَقُّ عَلَيْهِ الْعَوْضُ، لَان الْعَوْضُ يَسْتَحَقُّ عَلَى مَا كَانَ فِي مَقَابِلَةِ فِعْلِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى بِالْعَبْدِ، مِنْ الْأَلَامِ وَالْأَمْرَاضِ، وَمَا يَجْرِي مَجْرَى ذَلِكَ، الْأَجْرُ وَالثَّوَابُ يَسْتَحَقُّانَ عَلَى مَا كَانَ فِي مَقَابِلَةِ فِعْلِ الْعَبْدِ، فَبَيْنَهُمَا فَرْقٌ قَدْ بَيَّنَّهُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ)، كَمَا يَقْتَضِيهِ عِلْمُهُ الثَّاقِبُ رَأْيَهُ الصَّائِبُ.

Hadith n. 43

43. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said about Khabbab ibn al-Aratt: ¹⁶

May Allah have mercy on Khabbab ibn al-Aratt since he accepted Islam willingly, immigrated (from Mecca) obediently, remained content with what sufficed him, was pleased with Allah and lived the life of a mujahid (holy soldier).

43. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فِي ذِكْرِ خَبَّابِ بْنِ الْأَرْطِ: يَرْحَمُ اللَّهُ خَبَّابَ بْنَ الْأَرْطِ فَلَقَدْ
أَسْلَمَ رَاغِبًا وَ هَاجَرَ طَائِعًا وَ قَنَعَ بِالْكَفَافِ وَ رَضِيَ عَنِ اللَّهِ وَ عَاشَ مُجَاهِدًا.

Hadith n. 44

44. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Blessed is the person who kept in mind the next life, acted so as to be able to render account, remained content with what sufficed him and remained pleased with Allah.

44. وقال عليه السلام: طُوبَى لِمَنْ ذَكَرَ الْمَعَادَ، وَعَمِلَ لِلْحِسَابِ، وَقَنِعَ بِالْكَفَافِ،

وَرَضِيَ عَنِ اللَّهِ.

Hadith n. 45

45. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Even if I strike the nose of a believer with this, my sword, for hating me he will not hate me, and even if I pile all the wealth of the world before a hypocrite (Muslim) for loving me he will not love me. This is because it is a verdict pronounced by the tongue of the revered Prophet, may Allah bless him and his descendants, as he said:

O `Ali, a believer will never hate you and a hypocrite (Muslim) will never love you.¹⁷

45. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لَوْ ضَرَبْتُ حَبِشُومَ الْمُؤْمِنِ بِسَيْفِي هَذَا عَلَى أَنْ يُبْغِضَنِي مَا

أَبْغَضَنِي وَ لَوْ صَبَبْتُ الدُّنْيَا بِجَمَّاتِهَا عَلَى الْمُنَافِقِ عَلَى أَنْ يُحِبَّنِي مَا أَحَبَّنِي . وَ ذَلِكَ أَنَّهُ قُضِيَ

فَأَنْقَضَى عَلَى لِسَانِ النَّبِيِّ الْأُمِّيِّ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) أَنَّهُ قَالَ: يَا عَلِيُّ لَا يُبْغِضُكَ مُؤْمِنٌ

وَ لَا يُحِبُّكَ مُنَافِقٌ

Hadith n. 46

46. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The sin that displeases you is better in the view of Allah than the virtue which makes you proud.¹⁸

46. وقال عليه السلام: سَيِّئَةٌ تَسُوؤُكَ خَيْرٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ تُعْجِبُكَ

Hadith n. 47

47. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The worth of a man is according to his courage, his truthfulness is according to his balance of temper, his valour is according to his self-respect and his chasteness is according to his sense of shame.

47. وقال عليه السلام: قَدْرُ الرَّجُلِ عَلَى قَدْرِ هِمَّتِهِ، وَصِدْقُهُ عَلَى قَدْرِ مُرُوءَتِهِ، وَشَجَاعَتُهُ

عَلَى قَدْرِ أَنْفَتِهِ، عِفَّتُهُ عَلَى قَدْرِ عَيْبَتِهِ

Hadith n. 48

48. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Victory is by determination; determination is by the turning over of thoughts; and thoughts are formed by guarding secrets.

48. وقال عليه السلام: الظَّفَرُ بِالْحَزْمِ، وَالْحَزْمُ بِإِجَالَةِ الرَّأْيِ، وَالرَّأْيُ بِتَخْصِينِ الْأَسْرَارِ.

Hadith n. 49

49. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fear the attack of a noble person when he is hungry, and that of an ignoble person when he is satiated.¹⁹

49. وقال عليه السلام: اخذروا صَوْلَةَ الْكَرِيمِ إِذَا جَاعَ، وَاللَّيْمِ إِذَا شَبِعَ.

Hadith n. 50

50. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The hearts of the people are like wild beasts. Whoever tames them, they would pounce upon him.²⁰

50. وقال عليه السلام: قُلُوبُ الرِّجَالِ وَحَشِيَّةٌ، فَمَنْ تَأَلَّفَهَا أَفْبَلَتْ عَلَيْهِ

Hadith n. 51

51. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: So long as your position is good, your defects will remain covered.

51. وقال عليه السلام: عَيْبُكَ مَسْتُورٌ مَا أَسْعَدَكَ جُدُّكَ.

Hadith n. 52

52. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The most capable of pardoning is he who is the most powerful to punish.

52. وقال عليه السلام: أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِالْعَفْوِ أَقْدَرُهُمْ عَلَى الْعُقُوبَةِ

Hadith n. 53

53. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Generosity is that which is by one's own initiative, because giving on being asked is either out of self-respect or to avoid rebuke.

53. وقال عليه السلام: السَّخَاءُ مَا كَانَ ابْتِدَاءً، فَأَمَّا مَا كَانَ عَنْ مَسْأَلَةٍ فَحَيَاءٌ وَتَذَمُّمٌ.

Hadith n. 54

54. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is no wealth like wisdom, no destitution like ignorance, no inheritance like refinement and no support like consultation.

54. وقال عليه السلام: لَا غِنَى كَالْعُقْلِ، وَلَا فَقْرٌ كَالْجُهْلِ، وَلَا مِيرَاثٌ كَالْأَدَبِ، وَلَا

ظَهِيرٌ كَالْمُشَاوَرَةِ.

Hadith n. 55

55. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Patience is of two kinds, patience over what pains you, and patience against what you covet.

55. وقال عليه السلام: الصَّبْرُ صَبْرَانِ: صَبْرٌ عَلَى مَا تَكْرَهُ، وَصَبْرٌ عَمَّا تُحِبُّ.

Hadith n. 56

56. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: With wealth a strange land is a homeland, while with destitution even a homeland is a strange land.²¹

56. وقال عليه السلام: الْغِنَى فِي الْغُرْبَةِ وَطَنٌ، وَالْفَقْرُ فِي الْوَطَنِ غُرْبَةٌ.

Hadith n. 57

57. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Contentment is wealth that does not diminish.²²

57. وقال عليه السلام: الْقَنَاعَةُ مَالٌ لَا يَنْقُذُ

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This saying has also been related from the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his descendants.

قال الرضي: و قد روي هذا الكلام عن النبي صلى الله عليه و آله و سلم.

Hadith n. 58

58. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Wealth is the fountain head of passions.

58. وقال عليه السلام: الْمَالُ مَادَّةُ الشَّهَوَاتِ

Hadith n. 59

59. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever warns you is like one who gives you good tidings.

59. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ حَذَّرَكَ كَمَنْ بَشَّرَكَ.

Hadith n. 60

60. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The tongue is a beast; if it is let loose, it devours.

60. وقال عليه السلام: اللِّسَانُ سَبْعٌ، إِنْ خُلِّيَ عَنْهُ عَقَرَ.

Hadith n. 61

61. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Woman is a scorpion whose sting is sweet.

61. وقال عليه السلام: الْمَرْأَةُ عَقْرَبٌ حُلْوَةُ اللَّسْبَةِ

Hadith n. 62

62. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If you are met with a greeting, give better greetings in return. If a hand of help is extended to you, do a better favour in return, although the credit would remain with the one who was first.

62. وقال عليه السلام: إِذَا حُيِّتَ بِتَحِيَّةٍ فَحَيِّ بِأَحْسَنَ مِنْهَا، وَإِذَا أُسْدِيَتْ إِلَيْكَ يَدٌ

فَكَافِئْهَا بِمَا يُرِي عَلَيْهَا، وَالْفَضْلُ مَعَ ذَلِكَ لِلْبَادِيءِ

Hadith n. 63

63. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The interceder is the wing of the seeker.

63. وقال عليه السلام: الشَّفِيعُ جَنَاحُ الطَّالِبِ

Hadith n. 64

64. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The people of the world are like travellers who are being carried while they are asleep.

64. وقال عليه السلام: أَهْلُ الدُّنْيَا كَرُكَبٍ يُسَارُّ بِهِنَّ وَهُمْ نِيَامٌ.

Hadith n. 65

65. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A lack of friends means strangeness.

65. وقال عليه السلام: فَقَدْ الْأَحْبَبَةُ عُزْبَةٌ.

Hadith n. 66

66. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: To miss what one needs is easier than to beg from an inappropriate person.²³

66. وقال عليه السلام: فَوْتُ الْحَاجَةِ أَهْوَنُ مِنْ طَلِبِهَا إِلَى غَيْرِ أَهْلِهَا.

Hadith n. 67

67. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not feel ashamed for giving little because refusal is smaller than that.

67. وقال عليه السلام: لَا تَسْتَحْ مِنْ إِعْطَاءِ الْقَلِيلِ، فَإِنَّ الْحِرْمَانَ أَقْلُ مِنْهُ.

Hadith n. 68

68. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Charity is the adornment of destitution while gratefulness (to Allah) is the adornment of riches.

68. وقال عليه السلام: الْعَقَافُ زِينَةُ الْقَفْرِ، وَالشُّكْرُ زِينَةُ الْغِنَى.

Hadith n. 69

69. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If what you aim at does not come about then do not worry as to what you were.

69. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِذَا لَمْ يَكُنْ مَا تُرِيدُ فَلَا تُبَلِّغْ مَا كُنْتَ

Hadith n. 70

70. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: You will not find an ignorant person but at one extreme or the other (i.e. a person who neglects or a person who exaggerates).

70. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لَا تَرَى الْجَاهِلَ إِلَّا مُفْرِطاً أَوْ مُفْرِطاً.

Hadith n. 71

71. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: As intelligence increases, speech decreases.²⁴

71. وقال عليه السلام: إِذَا تَمَّ الْعَمَلُ نَقَصَ الْكَلَامُ.

Hadith n. 72

72. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Time wears our bodies, renews desires, brings death nearer and takes away aspirations. Whoever is successful with it encounters grief and whoever misses its favours also undergoes hardships.

72. وقال عليه السلام: الدَّهْرُ يُخَلِّقُ الْأَبْدَانَ، وَيُجَدِّدُ الْأُمَالَ، وَيُقَرِّبُ الْمَنِيَّةَ، وَيُبَاعِدُ

الْأَمْنِيَّةَ، مَنْ ظَفِرَ بِهِ نَصِبَ، وَمَنْ فَاتَهُ تَعَبَ.

Hadith n. 73

73. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever places himself as a leader of the people should commence with educating his own self before educating others; and his teaching should be by his own conduct before teaching by the tongue.

The person who teaches and instructs his own self is more entitled to esteem than he who teaches and instructs others.

73. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ نَصَبَ نَفْسَهُ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا فَعَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَبْدَأَ بِتَعْلِيمِ نَفْسِهِ قَبْلَ تَعْلِيمِ غَيْرِهِ، وَلْيَكُنْ تَأْدِيبُهُ بِسِيرَتِهِ قَبْلَ تَأْدِيبِهِ بِلِسَانِهِ، وَمُعَلِّمٌ نَفْسِهِ وَمُؤَدِّبُهَا أَحَقُّ بِالْأَجْلَالِ مِنْ مُعَلِّمِ النَّاسِ وَمُؤَدِّبِهِمْ.

Hadith n. 74

74. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The breath of a man is a step towards his death.²⁵

74. وقال عليه السلام: نَفْسُ الْمَرْءِ حُطَّاءُهُ إِلَى أَجَلِهِ.

Hadith n. 75

75. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Every countable thing is to pass away and every expected thing must come about.

75. وقال (عليه السلام): كُلُّ مَعْدُودٍ مُنْقَضٌ، وَكُلُّ مُتَوَقَّعٍ آتٍ.

Hadith n. 76

76. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If matters get mixed up then the last ones should be appreciated according to the previous one.²⁶

76. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ الْأُمُورَ إِذَا اشْتَبَهَتْ اعْتَبِرْ آخِرَهَا بِأَوَّلِهَا.

Hadith n. 77

77. It is related that when Dirar ibn Hamzah (the correct: Damrah) ad-Dibabi (or as-Suda'i)²⁷ went to Mu'awiyah. and Mu'awiyah enquired from him about Amir al-mu'minin, peace he upon him, he said: I stand witness that I have seen him on several occasions when night had spread and he was standing in the niche (of the mosque) holding his heard, groaning like a man bitten by a snake and weeping as a grieved man, saying:

77. وَ مِنْ خَبَرِ ضِرَارِ بْنِ حَمْرَةَ الضَّبَّائِيِّ عِنْدَ دُخُولِهِ عَلَى مُعَاوِيَةَ وَ مَسْأَلَتِهِ لَهُ عَنْ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ ع وَ قَالَ فَأَشْهَدُ لَقَدْ رَأَيْتُهُ فِي بَعْضِ مَوَاقِفِهِ وَ قَدْ أَرْحَى اللَّيْلُ سُدُولَهُ وَ هُوَ قَائِمٌ فِي مِحْرَابِهِ قَابِضٌ عَلَى لِحْيَتِهِ يَتَمَلَّمُ تَمَلَّمُ السَّلِيمِ وَ يَبْكِي بُكَاءَ الْحَزِينِ وَ يَقُولُ

O world, O world! Get away from me. Why do you present yourself to me? Or are you eager for me? You may not get that opportunity to impress me. Deceive some other person. I have no concern with you. I have divorced you thrice whereafter there is no restitution. Your life is short, your importance is little and your aspirations are base. Alas! The provision is little, the way is long, the journey is far and the goal is hard to reach.

يَا دُنْيَا يَا دُنْيَا إِلَيْكَ عَنِّي، أَيْ تَعَرَّضْتَ أَمْ إِلَيَّ تَشَوَّقْتَ؟ لَا حَانَ حِينُكَ هَيْهَاتَ عُرَى غَيْرِي لَا حَاجَةَ لِي فِيكَ قَدْ طَلَّقْتُكَ ثَلَاثًا لَا رَجْعَةَ فِيهَا فَعَيْشُكَ قَصِيرٌ وَ حَطْرُكَ يَسِيرٌ وَ أَمَلُكَ حَقِيرٌ. أِهْ مِنْ قَلَّةِ الزَّادِ وَ طُولِ الطَّرِيقِ وَ بُعْدِ السَّفَرِ وَ عَظِيمِ الْمَوْرِدِ.

Hadith n. 78: On Predestination

78. A Syrian enquired from Amir al-mu'minin: Was our going to fight against the Syrians destined by Allah? Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, gave a detailed reply, a selection from which is hereunder:

78. وَ مِنْ كَلَامٍ لَهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لِلسَّائِلِ الشَّامِيِّ لَمَّا سَأَلَهُ أَ كَانَ مَسِيرُنَا إِلَى الشَّامِ بِقَضَاءِ

مِنْ اللَّهِ وَ قَدَرٍ بَعْدَ كَلَامٍ طَوِيلٍ هَذَا مُخْتَارُهُ

Woe to you! You take it as a final and unavoidable destiny²⁸ (according to which we are bound to act). If it were so, there would have been no question of reward or chastisement and there would have been no sense in Allah's promises or warnings. (On the other hand) Allah, the Glorified, has ordered ill people to act by free will and has cautioned them and refrained them (from evil). He has placed easy obligations on them and has not put heavy obligations. He gives them much (reward) in return for little (action). He is disobeyed, not because He is overpowered. He is obeyed but not under force. He did not send prophets just for fun. He did not send down the Book for the people without purpose. He did not create the skies, the earth and all that is in between them in vain. That is the imagination of those who disbelieve; then woe to those who disbelieve - because of the fire. (Qur'an, 38:27)

وَيُحْكَ لَعَلَّكَ ظَنَنْتَ قَضَاءً لَا زِمًا وَ قَدَرًا حَاتِمًا لَوْ كَانَ ذَلِكَ كَذَلِكَ لَبَطَلَ الثَّوَابُ وَ الْعِقَابُ وَ سَقَطَ الْوَعْدُ وَ الْوَعِيدُ . إِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ أَمَرَ عِبَادَهُ تَخْيِيرًا وَ نَهَاهُمْ تَحْذِيرًا وَ كَلَّفَ يَسِيرًا وَ لَمْ يُكَلِّفْ عَسِيرًا وَ أَعْطَى عَلَى الْقَلِيلِ كَثِيرًا وَ لَمْ يُعْصَ مَعْلُوبًا وَ لَمْ يُطْعَ مُكْرَهًا وَ لَمْ يُرْسِلِ الْأَنْبِيَاءَ لَعِبًا وَ لَمْ يُنْزِلِ الْكُتُبَ لِلْعِبَادِ عَثَاً وَ لَا خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَ الْأَرْضَ وَ مَا بَيْنَهُمَا بَاطِلًا (ذَلِكَ ظَنُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا فَوَيْلٌ لِلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنَ النَّارِ).

Hadith n. 79

79. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Take wise points from wherever they may be, because if a wise saying is in the bosom of a hypocrite it flutters in his bosom till it comes out and settles with others of its own category in the bosom of the believer.

79. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: خُذِ الْحِكْمَةَ أَيْنَ كَانَتْ فَإِنَّ الْحِكْمَةَ تَكُونُ فِي صَدْرِ الْمُنَافِقِ

فَتَلْجُلُجُ فِي صَدْرِهِ حَتَّى تَخْرُجَ فَتَسْكُنَ إِلَى صَوَاحِبِهَا فِي صَدْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ.

Hadith n. 80

80. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A wise saying is a lost article of the believer. Therefore, get wise sayings even though from people of hypocrisy.

80. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: الْحِكْمَةُ ضَالَّةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ فَخُذِ الْحِكْمَةَ وَ لَوْ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبِقَاعِ.

Hadith n. 81

81. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The worth of every man is in his attainments.²⁹

81. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: قِيَمَةُ كُلِّ امْرِئٍ مَا يُحْسِنُهُ.

as- Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is the sentence whose value cannot be assessed, with which no wise saying can be weighed and with which no other sentence can be matched.

قال الرضي: و هي الكلمة التي لا تصاب لها قيمة و لا توزن بها حكمة و لا تقرن إليها كلمة.

Hadith n. 82

82. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I impart to you five things which, if you ride your camels fast in search of them, you will find them worth it.

No one of you should repose hope save in his Lord (Allah); no one of you should fear anything save his sin; no one should feel ashamed of saying "I do not know" when he is asked a matter which he does not know; no one should feel ashamed of learning a thing that he does not know; and you should practise endurance, because endurance is for belief what the head is for the body, so that just as there is no good in a body without the head there is no good in belief without endurance.

82. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: أُوصِيكُمْ بِخَمْسٍ لَوْ ضَرَبْتُمْ إِلَيْهَا أَبَاطَ الْإِبِلِ لَكَانَتْ لِدَلِكِ أَهْلًا . لَا يَرْجُونَ أَحَدًا مِنْكُمْ إِلَّا رَبَّهُ وَ لَا يَخَافُونَ إِلَّا ذَنْبَهُ وَ لَا يَسْتَحِينَنَّ أَحَدٌ مِنْكُمْ إِذَا سُئِلَ عَمَّا لَا يَعْلَمُ أَنْ يَقُولَ لَا أَعْلَمُ وَ لَا يَسْتَحِينَنَّ أَحَدٌ إِذَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ الشَّيْءَ أَنْ يَتَعَلَّمَهُ . وَ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالصَّبْرِ فَإِنَّ الصَّبْرَ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ كَالرَّأْسِ مِنَ الْجَسَدِ وَ لَا خَيْرَ فِي جَسَدٍ لَا رَأْسَ مَعَهُ وَ لَا فِي إِيْمَانٍ لَا صَبْرَ مَعَهُ.

Hadith n. 83

83. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said about a man who praised him much, although he did not admire him: I am below what you express and above what you feel in your heart.

83. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لِرَجُلٍ أَفْرَطَ فِي الثَّنَاءِ عَلَيْهِ وَ كَانَ لَهُ مَثَمَةٌ: أَنَا دُونَ مَا تَقُولُ وَ فَوْقَ مَا فِي نَفْسِكَ.

Hadith n. 84

84. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The survivors of the sword (from getting killed) are large in number and have a large progeny.

وَ قَالَ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) بَقِيَّةُ السَّيْفِ أَبْقَى عَدَدًا وَ أَكْثَرُ وُلْدًا

Hadith n. 85

85. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever abandons saying, "I do not know" meets his destruction.

85. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَنْ تَرَكَ قَوْلَ لَا أَدْرِي أَصِيبَتْ مَقَاتِلُهُ.

Hadith n. 86

86. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I love the opinion of an old man more than the determination of a young man; (or according to another version) more than the martyrdom of a young man.

86. وقال عليه السلام: رَأْيُ الشَّيْخِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ جَلْدِ العُلَامِ - وروى: مِنْ مَشْهَدِ العُلَامِ.

Hadith n. 87

87. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I wonder about the man who loses hope despite the possibility of seeking forgiveness.

87. وقال عليه السلام: عَجِبْتُ لِمَنْ يَفْنُطُ وَمَعَهُ الإِسْتِعْقَارُ.

Hadith n. 88

88. (Imam) Abu Ja`far Muhammad ibn `Ali al-Baqir, peace be upon both of them, has related from Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, that he said:

88. وَ حَكَى عَنْهُ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَلِيِّ البَاقِرِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ:

There are two sources of deliverance from the Allah's punishment, one of which has been raised up, while the other is before you. You should therefore adhere to it. The source of deliverance which has been raised up is the Messenger of Allah (may He bless him and his descendants), while the source of deliverance that remains is the seeking of forgiveness. Allah, the Glorified, has said: And Allah is not to chastise them while you are among them, nor is Allah to chastise them while yet they seek forgiveness. (Qur'an, 8:33)

أَنَّ فِي الأَرْضِ أَمَانَانَ مِنْ عَذَابِ اللَّهِ وَ قَدْ رُفِعَ أَحَدُهُمَا فَدُونَكُمْ الأَخَرَ فَتَمَسَّكُوا بِهِ: أَمَّا الأَمَانُ الَّذِي رُفِعَ فَهُوَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص) وَ أَمَّا الأَمَانُ البَاقِي فَالإِسْتِعْقَارُ قَالَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى (وَ مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَ أَنْتَ فِيهِمْ وَ مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَ هُمْ يَسْتَعْفِفُونَ).

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is one of the most beautiful way of deducing the meaning and the most delicate manner of interpretation.

قال الرضى: و هذا من محاسن الاستخراج و لطائف الاستنباط.

Hadith n. 89

89. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If a man sets right matters between himself and Allah, then Allah sets right matters between him and other people; and if a man sets right the affairs of his next life then Allah sets right for him the affairs of this world. Whoever is a preacher for himself is protected by Allah.

89. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ أَصْلَحَ مَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ أَصْلَحَ اللَّهُ مَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ النَّاسِ، وَمَنْ أَصْلَحَ أَمْرَ آخِرَتِهِ أَصْلَحَ اللَّهُ لَهُ أَمْرَ دُنْيَاهُ، وَمَنْ كَانَ لَهُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ وَاعِظٌ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَافِظٌ.

Hadith n. 90

90. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The perfect jurist of Islam is he who does not let people lose hope from the mercy of Allah, does not make them despondent of Allah's kindness and does not make them feel safe from Allah's punishment.

90. وقال عليه السلام: الْفَقِيهُ كُلُّ الْفَقِيهِ مَنْ لَمْ يُقْنِطِ النَّاسَ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ، وَلَمْ يُؤْيِسْهُمْ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ وَلَمْ يُؤْمِنْهُمْ مِنْ مَكْرِ اللَّهِ.

Hadith n. 91

91. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The hearts get weary as bodies get weary; so look for beautiful wise sayings for them (to dispel their weariness).

91. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْقُلُوبَ تَمَلُّ كَمَا تَمَلُّ الْأَبْدَانُ، فَأَبْتَعُوا لَهَا طَرَائِفَ الْحِكْمَةِ.

Hadith n. 92

92. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The lowest form of knowledge is that which remains on the tongue and the most superior form is that which manifests itself through (the action of) the limbs and the organs of the body.

92. وقال عليه السلام: أَوْضَعُ الْعِلْمِ مَا وَفَفَ عَلَى اللِّسَانِ وَأَرْفَعُهُ مَا ظَهَرَ فِي الْجَوَارِحِ وَالْأَرْكَانِ.

Hadith n. 93

93. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: None of you should say, "O Allah, I seek Your protection from trouble" because there is no one who is not involved in trouble, but whoever seeks Allah's protection he should seek it from misguiding troubles, because Allah, the Glorified, says: And know you that your wealth and your children are a temptation!. (Qur'an, 8:28) and its meaning is that He tries people with wealth and progeny in order to distinguish one who is displeased with his livelihood from the one who is happy with what he has been given. Even though Allah, the Glorified, knows them more than they know themselves yet He does so to let them perform actions with which they earn reward or punishment because some of them like to have male (children) and dislike to have female (children), and some like to amass wealth, and dislike adversity.

93. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لَا يَقُولَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْفِتْنَةِ لِأَنَّهُ لَيْسَ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا وَهُوَ مُشْتَمِلٌ عَلَى فِتْنَةٍ وَ لَكِنَّ مَنْ اسْتَعَاذَ فَلَيْسَتْ عَيْدٌ مِنْ مُضِلَّاتِ الْفِتَنِ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ يَقُولُ وَ اعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ وَ مَعْنَى ذَلِكَ أَنَّهُ يَخْتَبِرُهُمْ بِالْأَمْوَالِ وَ الْأَوْلَادِ لِيَتَبَيَّنَ السَّاحِطَ لِرِزْقِهِ وَ الرَّاضِيَ بِقِسْمِهِ وَ إِنْ كَانَ سُبْحَانَهُ أَعْلَمَ بِهِمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَ لَكِنَّ

لِتَطَهَّرَ الْأَفْعَالَ الَّتِي بِهَا يُسْتَحَقُّ الثَّوَابُ وَالْعِقَابُ لِأَنَّ بَعْضَهُمْ يُجِبُّ الذُّكُورَ وَيَكْرَهُ الْإِنَاثَ وَ بَعْضُهُمْ يُجِبُّ تَنْمِيرَ الْمَالِ وَيَكْرَهُ انْتِثَامَ الْحَالِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is one of the wonderful interpretations related from him.

قال الرضى و هذا من غريب ما سمع منه فى التفسير.

Hadith n. 94

94. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked what is good and he replied: Good is not that your wealth and progeny should be much, but good is that your knowledge should be much, your forbearance should be great, and that you should vie with other people in worship of Allah. If you do good deeds you thank Allah, but if you commit evil you seek forgiveness of Allah. In this world good is for two persons only; the man who commits sins but rectifies them by repentance; and the man who hastens towards good actions.

94. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: وَ سُئِلَ عَنِ الْخَيْرِ مَا هُوَ فَقَالَ لَيْسَ الْخَيْرُ أَنْ يَكْثُرَ مَالُكَ وَ وَلَدُكَ وَ لَكِنَّ الْخَيْرَ أَنْ يَكْثُرَ عِلْمُكَ وَ أَنْ يَعْظُمَ حِلْمُكَ وَ أَنْ تُبَاهِيَ النَّاسَ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنْ أَحْسَنْتَ حَمَدَتِ اللَّهُ وَ إِنْ أَسَأْتَ اسْتَغْفَرَتِ اللَّهُ وَ لَا حَيْرَ فِي الدُّنْيَا إِلَّا لِرَجُلَيْنِ رَجُلٍ أَذْنَبَ ذُنُوبًا فَهُوَ يَتَدَارَكُهَا بِالتَّوْبَةِ وَ رَجُلٍ يُسَارِعُ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ.

Hadith n. 95

95. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Action accompanied by fear for Allah does not fail, and how can a thing fail that has been accepted.

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وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لَا يَقِلُّ عَمَلٌ مَعَ التَّقْوَى وَ كَيْفَ يَقِلُّ مَا يُتَمَبَّلُ.

Hadith n. 96

96. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The persons most attached to the prophets are those who know most what the prophets have brought. Then Amir al-mu'minin recited the verse: Verily, of men the nearest to Abraham are surely those who followed him and this (Our) Prophet (Muhammad) and those who believe (Qur'an, 3:68).

Then he said: The friend of Muhammad is he who obeys Allah, even though he may have no blood relationship, and the enemy of Muhammad is he who disobeys Allah even though he may have near kinship.

96. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِالْأَنْبِيَاءِ أَعْلَمُهُمْ بِمَا جَاءُوا بِهِ، ثُمَّ تَلَا (عَلَيْهِ

السَّلَامُ): (إِنَّ أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِإِبْرَاهِيمَ لَلَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُ وَهَذَا النَّبِيُّ وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ) ثُمَّ قَالَ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ): إِنَّ وَليَّ مُحَمَّدٍ مَنْ أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ وَإِنْ بَعَدَتْ حُكْمَتُهُ، وَإِنَّ عَدُوَّ مُحَمَّدٍ مَنْ عَصَى اللَّهَ وَإِنْ قَرَّبَتْ قَرَابَتَهُ!

Hadith n. 97

97. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, heard about a Kharijite who said the mid-night prayers and recited the Qur'an, then he said: Sleeping in a state of firm belief is better than praying in a state of doubtfulness.

97. وَ سَمِعَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ رَجُلًا مِنَ الْخُرُورِيَّةِ يَتَهَجَّدُ وَ يَقْرَأُ فَقَالَ: نَوْمٌ عَلَى يَقِينٍ خَيْرٌ مِنْ صَلَاةٍ فِي شَكٍّ.

Hadith n. 98

98. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When you hear a tradition test it according to the criterion of intelligence not that of mere hearing, because relaters of knowledge are numerous but those who guard it are few.

98. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: اعْقَلُوا الْخَبَرَ إِذَا سَمِعْتُمُوهُ عَقْلٌ رِعَايَةٌ لَا عَقْلٌ رِوَايَةٌ فَإِنَّ رِوَاةَ الْعِلْمِ كَثِيرٌ وَ رِعَايَتُهُ قَلِيلٌ.

Hadith n. 99

99. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, heard a man recite: Verily we are Allah's and verily to Him shall we return (Qur'an, 2:156).

Then he said: Our saying inna li'llah (Verily we are Allah's) is an admission of His Majesty over us and our saying "wa inna ilayhi raji 'un" (and verily to Him shall we return) is an admission of our being mortal.

99. وَ سَمِعَ رَجُلًا يَقُولُ (إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَ إِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ):
فَقَالَ: إِنَّ قَوْلَنَا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ إِفْرَازٌ عَلَى أَنْفُسِنَا بِالْمُلْكِ وَ قَوْلَنَا وَ إِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ إِفْرَازٌ عَلَى أَنْفُسِنَا بِالْهَلْكِ.

Hadith n. 100

100. Some people praised Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, to his face, then he said: O My God! You know me better than myself, and I know myself better than they do. O My God! Make us better than what they think and forgive us what they do not know.

100. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَ مَدَحَهُ قَوْمٌ فِي وَجْهِهِ فَقَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ أَعْلَمُ بِي مِنْ نَفْسِي وَ أَنَا أَعْلَمُ بِنَفْسِي مِنْهُمْ. اللَّهُمَّ اجْعَلْنَا خَيْرًا مِمَّا يَظُنُّونَ وَ اغْفِرْ لَنَا مَا لَا يَعْلَمُونَ.

Hadith n. 101

101. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fulfilment of (others') needs becomes a lasting virtue in three ways:-- regarding it small so that it attains bigness, concealing it so that it may manifest itself, and doing it quickly so that it becomes pleasant.

101. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لَا يَسْتَقِيمُ قِضَاءُ الْحَوَائِجِ إِلَّا بِثَلَاثٍ بِاسْتِصْغَارِهَا لِتَعْظُمَ وَ بِاسْتِكْتَامِهَا لِتَظْهَرَ وَ بِتَعْجِيلِهَا لِتَهْنَأَ.

Hadith n. 102

102. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Shortly a time will come for people when high positions will be given only to those who defame others, when vicious people will be regarded as witty and the just will be regarded as weak. People will regard charity as a loss, consideration for kinship as an obligation, and worship grounds for claiming greatness among others. At this time, authority will be exercised through the counsel of women, the posting of young boys in high positions and the running of the administration by eunuchs.

102. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: يَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ لَا يُقَرَّبُ فِيهِ إِلَّا الْمَاجِلُ وَ لَا يُطْرَفُ فِيهِ إِلَّا الْفَاجِرُ وَ لَا يُضَعَّفُ فِيهِ إِلَّا الْمُنْصِفُ يَعْتَدُونَ الصَّدَقَةَ فِيهِ عُزْمًا وَ صِلَةَ الرَّحِمِ مَنًّا وَ الْعِبَادَةَ اسْتِطَالَةً عَلَى النَّاسِ فَعِنْدَ ذَلِكَ يَكُونُ السُّلْطَانُ بِمَشْوَرَةِ النِّسَاءِ وَ إِمَارَةَ الصَّبِيَّانِ وَ تَدْبِيرِ الْخَصِيَّانِ.

Hadith n. 103

103. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was seen in worn-out clothes with patches and when it was pointed out to him he said: With it the heart fears, the mind feels humble and the believers emulate it. Certainly, this world and the next are two enemies against each other and two paths in different directions. Whoever likes this world and loves it hates the next arid is its enemy. These two are like East and West. If the walker between them gets near to one, he gets farther from the other. After all, they are like two fellow-wives.

103. وَ رُئِيَ عَلَيْهِ إِزَارٌ حَلَقٌ مَرْفُوعٌ فَعَبِلَ لَهُ فِي ذَلِكَ فَقَالَ: يَخْشَعُ لَهُ الْقَلْبُ وَ تَذِلُّ بِهِ النَّفْسُ وَ يَقْتَدِي بِهِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا وَ الْآخِرَةَ عَدَوَانِ مُتَفَاوِتَانِ وَ سَبِيلَانِ مُخْتَلِفَانِ فَمَنْ أَحَبَّ الدُّنْيَا وَ تَوَلَّاهَا أَبْغَضَ الْآخِرَةَ وَ عَادَاهَا وَ هُمَا بِمَنْزِلَةِ الْمَشْرِقِ وَ الْمَغْرِبِ وَ مَا شِ بَيْنَهُمَا كَلَّمَا قَرُبَ مِنْ وَاحِدٍ بَعُدَ مِنَ الْآخَرِ وَ هُمَا بَعْدُ صَرَثَانِ.

Hadith n. 104

104. It is related by Nawf al-Bikali that: I saw that one night Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, came out from his bed and looked at the stars, then he said to me: "O Nawf, are you awake or sleeping?" I said: "I am awake, O Amir al-mu'minin." Then he said:

104. وَ عَنِ نَوْفِ الْبِكَالِيِّ قَالَ رَأَيْتُ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَ ذَاتَ لَيْلَةٍ وَ قَدْ خَرَجَ مِنْ فِرَاشِهِ فَانْظَرَ فِي النُّجُومِ فَقَالَ لِي يَا نَوْفُ أَرَأَيْتَ أَنْتَ أَمْ رَامِقٌ فَقُلْتُ بَلْ رَامِقٌ فَقَالَ:

O Nawf! Blessed be those who abstain from this world and are eager for the next world. They are the people who regard this earth as a floor; its dust as their bed-cloth; and its water as their perfume; they recite the Qur'an in low tones and supplicate in high tones and then they are cut off from the world like 'Isa (Jesus).

يَا نَوْفُ طُوبَى لِلزَّاهِدِينَ فِي الدُّنْيَا الرَّاعِبِينَ فِي الآخِرَةِ أَوْلَيْكَ قَوْمٌ اتَّخَذُوا الْأَرْضَ بِسَاطًا وَ تَرَابَهَا فِرَاشًا وَ مَاءَهَا طَبِيًّا وَ الْقُرْآنَ شِعَارًا وَ الدُّعَاءَ دِتَارًا ثُمَّ قَرَضُوا الدُّنْيَا قَرْضًا عَلَى مِنْهَاجِ الْمَسِيحِ.

O Nawf! The prophet Dawud (David), peace be upon him, rose up at a similar hour one night and said, "This is the hour when whatever a person prays for is granted to him unless he is a tax-collector, an intelligence man, a police officer, a lute player or a drummer.

يَا نَوْفُ إِنَّ دَاوُدَ ع قَامَ فِي مِثْلِ هَذِهِ السَّاعَةِ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَقَالَ إِنَّهَا لَسَاعَةٌ لَا يَدْعُو فِيهَا عَبْدٌ إِلَّا اسْتُجِيبَ لَهُ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ عَشَّارًا أَوْ عَرِيفًا أَوْ شُرْطِيًّا أَوْ صَاحِبَ عَرْطَبَةٍ (وَ هِيَ الطُّنْبُورُ) أَوْ صَاحِبَ كَوْبَةٍ (وَ هِيَ الطَّبْلُ)

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: It is also said that "artabah" means "tabl" (drum) and "kubah" means 'lute'.

وَ قَدْ قِيلَ أَيْضًا إِنَّ الْعَرْطَبَةَ الطَّبْلُ وَ الْكَوْبَةُ الطُّنْبُورُ.

Hadith n. 105

105. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Allah has placed on you some obligations which you should not ignore, laid down for you limits which you should not transgress and prohibited you from certain things which you should not violate. He has kept silent about certain things but has not left them out through forgetfulness, so do not burden yourself with them.

105. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ افْتَرَضَ عَلَيْكُمْ فَرَائِضَ فَلَا تُصَيِّعُوهَا وَ حَدَّ لَكُمْ حُدُودًا فَلَا تَعْتَدُوهَا وَ نَهَاكُمْ عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ فَلَا تَنْتَهِكُوهَا وَ سَكَتَ لَكُمْ عَنْ أَشْيَاءَ وَ لَمْ يَدْعُوهَا نَسِيَانًا فَلَا تَنْكَلِفُوهَا.

Hadith n. 106

106. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If people give up something relating to religion to set right their worldly affairs, Allah will inflict upon them something more harmful than that.

106. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لَا يَتْرُكُ النَّاسُ شَيْئًا مِنْ أَمْرِ دِينِهِمْ لِاسْتِصْلَاحِ دُنْيَاهُمْ إِلَّا فَتَحَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مَا هُوَ أَضْرُّ مِنْهُ.

Hadith n. 107

107. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Often the ignorance of a learned man ruins him while the knowledge he has does not avail him.

107. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: رُبَّ عَالِمٍ قَدْ قَتَلَهُ جَهْلُهُ وَ عِلْمُهُ مَعَهُ لَا يَنْفَعُهُ.

Hadith n. 108

108. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: In man there is a piece of flesh attached to him with a vein and it is the strangest thing in him. It is the heart. It has a store of wisdom and things contrary to wisdom. If it sees a

ray of hope, eagerness humiliates it and when eagerness increases, greed ruins it. If disappointment overtakes it, grief kills it. If anger rises in it, a serious rage develops. If it is blessed with pleasure, it forgets to be cautious. If it becomes fearing, it becomes heedless. If peace extends all round, it becomes neglectful. If it earns wealth, freedom from care puts it in the wrong. If trouble befalls it, impatience makes it humble. If it faces starvation, distress overtakes it. If hunger attacks it, weakness makes it sit down. If its eating increases, heaviness of stomach pains it. Thus, every shortness is harmful to it and every excess is injurious to it.

108. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لَقَدْ عَلِقَ بِنَيْطِ هَذَا الْإِنْسَانِ بَضْعَةٌ هِيَ أَعْجَبُ مَا فِيهِ وَ ذَلِكَ الْقَلْبُ وَ ذَلِكَ أَنَّ لَهُ مَوَادَّ مِنَ الْحِكْمَةِ وَ أَضْدَادًا مِنْ خِلَافِهَا فَإِنْ سَنَحَ لَهُ الرَّجَاءُ أَدَّلَّهُ الطَّمَعُ وَ إِنْ هَاجَ بِهِ الطَّمَعُ أَهْلَكَهُ الْحِرْصُ وَ إِنْ مَلَكَهُ الْيَأْسُ قَتَلَهُ الْأَسْفُ وَ إِنْ عَرَضَ لَهُ الْعَضْبُ اشْتَدَّ بِهِ الْعَيْظُ وَ إِنْ أَسْعَدَهُ الرِّضَى نَسِيَ التَّحْفُظَ وَ إِنْ عَالَهُ الْخَوْفُ شَعَلَهُ الْحَذَرُ وَ إِنْ اتَّسَعَ لَهُ الْأَمْرُ اسْتَلَبَتْهُ الْعُرَّةُ وَ إِنْ أَفَادَ مَالًا أَطْعَاهُ الْعَنَى وَ إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ مُصِيبَةٌ فَضَحَّ الْجَزَعُ وَ إِنْ عَصَتْهُ الْفَاقَةُ شَعَلَهُ الْبَلَاءُ وَ إِنْ جَهَدَهُ الْجُوعُ قَعَدَ بِهِ الضَّعْفُ وَ إِنْ أَفْرَطَ بِهِ الشَّبِيغُ كَطَّئَتْهُ الْبِطْنَةُ فَكُلُّ تَقْصِيرٍ بِهِ مُضِرٌّ وَ كُلُّ إِفْرَاطٍ لَهُ مُفْسِدٌ.

Hadith n. 109

109. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: We (the members of the Prophet's family) are like the pillow in the middle. He who lags behind has to come forward to meet it while he who has exceeded the bounds has to return to it.

109. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: نَحْنُ التُّمْرُقَةُ الْوُسْطَى بِهَا يَلْحَقُ التَّالِي وَ إِلَيْهَا يَرْجِعُ الْعَالِي.

Hadith n. 110

110. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: No one can establish the rule of Allah, the Glorified, except he who shows no relenting (in the matter of right), who does not behave like wrong doers and who does not run after objects of greed.

110. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لَا يُقِيمُ أَمْرَ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ إِلَّا مَنْ لَا يُصَانِعُ وَ لَا يُضَارِعُ وَ لَا يَتَّبِعُ الْمَطَامِعَ.

Hadith n. 111

111. Sahl ibn Hunayf al-Ansari died at Kufah after his return from the battle of Siffin and he was very much loved by Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him. On this occasion Amir al-mu'minin said: Even if a mountain had loved me, it would have crumbled down.

111. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَقَدْ تَوَفَّى سَهْلُ بْنُ حُنَيْفٍ الْأَنْصَارِيِّ بِالْكُوفَةِ بَعْدَ مَرْجِعِهِ مَعَهُ مِنْ صَفِينٍ، وَكَانَ مِنْ أَحَبِّ النَّاسِ إِلَيْهِ: لَوْ أَحَبَّنِي جَبَلٌ لَتَهَاقَتْ

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: The meaning of this is that since the trial of the man who loves Amir al-mu'minin will be so, severe troubles would leap

towards him, and this is not the case except with the God-fearing, the virtuous and select good. There is another similar saying of Amir al-mu'minin's individuals, namely:

معنى ذلك أن المحنة تغلظ عليه فتسرع المصائب إليه و لا يفعل ذلك إلا بالأتقياء الأبرار
و المصطفين الأخيار و هذا مثل قوله [عليه السلام]:

Hadith n. 112

112. Whoever loves us, members of the Household (of the Prophet), should be prepared to face destitution.

112. مَنْ أَحَبَّنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ فَلَيْسَتْ عِدَّةٌ لِلْفَقْرِ جَلْبَابًا.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This has been interpreted in a different way as well, but on this occasion is not fit to mention here.³¹

و قد يقول ذلك على معنى آخر ليس هذا موضع ذكره.

Hadith n. 113

113. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: No wealth is more profitable than wisdom, no loneliness is more estranging than vanity, no wisdom is as good as tact, no honour is like fear from Allah, no companion is like the goodness of moral character, no inheritance is like civility, no guide is like promptitude, no trade is like virtuous acts, no profit is like Divine reward, no self-control is like inaction in time of doubt, no abstention is like that (which is) from prohibitions, no knowledge is like thinking, no worship is like the discharge of obligation, no belief is like modesty and endurance, no attainment is like humility, no honour is like knowledge, no power is like forbearance, and no support is more reliable than consultation.

113. وقال عليه السلام: لا مال أعود من العقل، ولا وحدة أوحش من العجب، ولا عقل كالتدبير، ولا كرم كالتقوى، ولا قرين كحسب الخلق، ولا ميراث كالأدب، ولا قائد كالتوفيق، ولا تجارة كالعمل الصالح، ولا ربح كالثواب، ولا ورع كالوقوف عند الشبهة، ولا زهد كالزهد في الحرام، ولا علم كالتفكير، ولا عبادة كأداء الفرائض، ولا إيمان كالحياء والصبر، ولا حسب كالتواضع، ولا شرف كالعلم، ولا مظاهرة أوثق من مشاورة.

Hadith n. 114

114. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: At a time when virtue is in vogue in the world and among people, if a person entertains an evil suspicion about another person from whom nothing evil has ever been seen, then he has been unjust. And at a time when vice is in vogue in the world and among people, if a man entertains a good idea about another person he has flung himself in peril.

114. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِذَا اسْتَوَى الصَّلَاحُ عَلَى الزَّمَانِ وَ أَهْلِهِ ثُمَّ أَسَاءَ رَجُلٌ الظَّنَّ بِرَجُلٍ لَمْ تَظْهَرِ مِنْهُ حُوبَةٌ فَقَدْ ظَلَمَ وَ إِذَا اسْتَوَى الْفَسَادُ عَلَى الزَّمَانِ وَ أَهْلِهِ فَأَحْسَنَ رَجُلٌ الظَّنَّ بِرَجُلٍ فَقَدْ عَزَّرَ.

Hadith n. 115

115. It was said to Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him: How are you, O Amir al-mu'minin? and he replied: How can he be whom life is driving towards death, whose state of healthiness can change into sickness any moment and who is to be caught (by death) from his place of safety.

115. وَ قِيلَ لَهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: كَيْفَ نَجْدُكَ يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ فَقَالَ ع: كَيْفَ يَكُونُ حَالُ مَنْ يَفْقَى بِنِقَائِهِ وَ يَسْتَقِمُ بِصِحَّتِهِ وَ يُؤْتَى مِنْ مَأْمَنِهِ.

Hadith n. 116

116. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There are many people who are given time (by Allah) through good treatment towards them, and many who are deceived because their sinful activities are veiled (by Allah), and many who are enamoured by good talk about themselves. And Allah does not try anyone as seriously as He tries him whom He allows time (to remain sinful).

116. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: كَمَ مِنْ مُسْتَدْرَجٍ بِالْإِحْسَانِ إِلَيْهِ وَ مَعْرُورٍ بِالسُّرْرِ عَلَيْهِ وَ مَفْتُونٍ بِحُسْنِ الْقَوْلِ فِيهِ وَ مَا ابْتَلَى اللَّهُ أَحَدًا بِمِثْلِ الْإِمْلَاءِ لَهُ.

Hadith n. 117

117. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Two categories of persons will face ruin on account of me: he who loves me with exaggeration, and he who hates me intensely.

117. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: هَلَكَ فِيَّ رَجُلَانِ مُحِبُّ عَالٍ وَ مُبْغِضٌ قَالٍ.

Hadith n. 118

118. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: To miss an opportunity brings about grief.

118. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِضَاعَةُ الْفُرْصَةِ عُصَّةٌ.

Hadith n. 119

119. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The example of the world is like a serpent. It is soft to the touch but its inside is full of venom. An ignorant person who has fallen into deceit is attracted towards it but a wise and intelligent man keeps on his guard against it.

119. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَثَلُ الدُّنْيَا كَمَثَلِ الْحَيَّةِ لَيِّنٌ مَسُّهَا وَ سَمٌّ النَّاقِعُ فِي جَوْفِهَا يَهْوَى إِلَيْهَا الْعَرُ الْجَاهِلُ وَ يَحْذَرُهَا ذُو اللَّبِّ الْعَاقِلُ.

Hadith n. 120

120. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about the Quraysh, when he replied: As for Banu Makhzum they are the blossoms of

the Quraysh. It is delightful to talk to their men and to marry their women. As for Banu 'Abd Shams, they are farsighted and cautious about all that is hidden from them. As for ourselves (Banu Hashim) we spend whatever we get and are very generous in offering ourselves in death. Consequently, those people are more numerous, more contriving and more ugly while we are more eloquent, well-wishing and handsome.

120. وقال عليه السلام وقد سئل عن قريش: أَمَا بَنُو مُحَمَّدٍ مَحْزُومٌ فَرِيحَانَةٌ فَرِيشٍ، حُبُّ حَدِيثِ رِجَالِهِمْ، وَالتَّكَاخُ فِي نِسَائِهِمْ. وَأَمَا بَنُو عَبْدِ شَمْسٍ فَأَبْعَدُهَا رَأْيًا، وَأَمْنَعُهَا لِمَا وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهَا. وَأَمَا نَحْنُ فَأَبْدَلُ لِمَا فِي أَيْدِينَا، وَأَسْمَحُ عِنْدَ الْمَوْتِ بِنُفُوسِنَا. وَهُمْ أَكْثَرُ وَأَمَكْرُ وَأَنْكَرُ، وَنَحْنُ أَفْصَحُ وَأَنْصَحُ وَأَصْبَحُ.

Hadith n. 121

121. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: What a difference there is between two kinds of actions: an act whose pleasure passes away but its (ill) consequence remains, and the act whose hardship passes away but its reward stays.

121. وقال عليه السلام: شَتَانٌ بَيْنَ عَمَلَيْنِ: عَمَلٍ تَذْهَبُ لَذَّتُهُ وَتَبْقَى تَبِعَتُهُ، وَعَمَلٍ تَذْهَبُ مُؤَوَّنَتُهُ وَتَبْقَى أَجْرُهُ.

Hadith n. 122

122. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was accompanying a funeral when he heard someone laugh. Then he said: Is it that death has been ordained only for others? Is it that right is obligatory only on others? Is it that those whom we see departing on their journey of death will come back to us? We lay them down in their graves and then enjoy their estate (as if we will live for good after them). We have ignored every preacher, man or woman, and have exposed ourselves to every catastrophe.

122. وَ تَبِعَ جِنَازَةً فَسَمِعَ رَجُلًا يَضْحَكُ فَقَالَ كَأَنَّ الْمَوْتَ فِيهَا عَلَى غَيْرِنَا كُتِبَ وَ كَأَنَّ الْحَقَّ فِيهَا عَلَى غَيْرِنَا وَجَبَ وَ كَأَنَّ الَّذِي نَرَى مِنَ الْأَمْوَاتِ سَفَرٌ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ إِلَيْنَا رَاجِعُونَ. نُبَوِّئُهُمْ أَجْدَانَهُمْ وَ نَأْكُلُ تُرَائِهِمْ كَأَنَّا مُخَلَّدُونَ بَعْدَهُمْ ثُمَّ قَدْ نَسِينَا كُلَّ وَاعِظٍ وَ وَاعِظَةٍ وَ رَمِينَا بِكُلِّ فَادِحٍ وَ جَائِحَةٍ.

Hadith n. 123

123. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Blessed be lie who humbles himself, whose livelihood is pure, whose heart is chaste, whose habits are virtuous, who spends his savings (in the name of Allah), who prevents his tongue from speaking nonsense, who keeps people safe from evil, who is pleased with the (Prophet's) sunnah, and who is unconnected with innovation (in religion).

123. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: طُوبَى لِمَنْ ذَلَّ فِي نَفْسِهِ وَ طَابَ كَسْبُهُ وَ صَلَحَتْ سَرِيرَتُهُ وَ حَسُنَتْ خَلِيقَتُهُ وَ أَنْفَقَ الْفَضْلَ مِنْ مَالِهِ وَ أَمْسَكَ الْفَضْلَ مِنْ لِسَانِهِ وَ عَزَلَ عَنِ النَّاسِ شَرَّهُ وَ وَسَعَتَهُ السُّنَّةُ وَ لَمْ يُنْسَبْ إِلَى الْبِدْعَةِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi Says: Some people attribute this and the previous saying to the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and his descendants).

قال الرضى: أقول: و من الناس من ينسب هذا الكلام إلى رسول الله ص و كذلك الذى قبله.

Hadith n. 124

124. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The jealousy of a woman (with co-wives) is heresy, while the jealousy of a man is a part of belief.

124. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: غَيْرَةُ الْمَرْأَةِ كُفْرٌ وَ غَيْرَةُ الرَّجُلِ إِيمَانٌ.

Hadith n. 125

125. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I am defining Islam as no one has defined before me: Islam is submission, submission is conviction, conviction is affirmation, affirmation is acknowledgement, acknowledgement is discharge (of obligations), and discharge of obligations is action.

125. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لَأَنْسِبَنَّ الْإِسْلَامَ نِسْبَةً لَمْ يَنْسِبَهَا أَحَدٌ قَبْلِي الْإِسْلَامُ هُوَ التَّسْلِيمُ وَ التَّسْلِيمُ هُوَ الْيَقِينُ وَ الْيَقِينُ هُوَ التَّصَدِيقُ وَ التَّصَدِيقُ هُوَ الْإِفْرَازُ وَ الْإِفْرَازُ هُوَ الْأَدَاءُ وَ الْأَدَاءُ هُوَ الْعَمَلُ.

Hadith n. 126

126. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I wonder at the miser who is speeding towards the very destitution from which he wants to run away and misses the very ease of life which he covets. Consequently, he passes his life in this world like the destitute, but will have to render an account in the next world like the rich.

126. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: عَجِبْتُ لِلْبَخِيلِ يَسْتَعْجِلُ الْفَقْرَ الَّذِي مِنْهُ هَرَبَ وَ يَقْوَتُهُ الْغِنَى الَّذِي إِتْيَاهُ طَلَبَ فَيَعِيشُ فِي الدُّنْيَا عَيْشَ الْفُقَرَاءِ وَ يُحَاسَبُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ حِسَابَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ.

I wonder at the proud man who was just a drop of semen the other day and will turn into a corpse tomorrow. I wonder at the man who doubts Allah although he sees His creations. I wonder at him who has forgotten death although he sees people dying. I wonder at him who denies the second life although he has seen the first life. I wonder at him who inhabits this transient abode but ignores the everlasting abode.

وَ عَجِبْتُ لِلْمُتَكَبِّرِ الَّذِي كَانَ بِالْأَمْسِ نُظْفَةً وَ يَكُونُ غَدًا جِيفَةً وَ عَجِبْتُ لِمَنْ سَلَكَ فِي
اللَّهِ وَ هُوَ يَرَى خُلُقَ اللَّهِ وَ عَجِبْتُ لِمَنْ نَسِيَ الْمَوْتَ وَ هُوَ يَرَى الْمَوْتَى وَ عَجِبْتُ لِمَنْ أَنْكَرَ
النَّشْأَةَ الْأُخْرَى وَ هُوَ يَرَى النَّشْأَةَ الْأُولَى وَ عَجِبْتُ لِعَامِرٍ دَارَ الْفَنَاءِ وَ تَارِكٍ دَارَ الْبَقَاءِ.

Hadith n. 127

127. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever falls short of actions falls into grief, and Allah has nothing to do with him who spares nothing from his wealth in the name of Allah.

127. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَنْ قَصَرَ فِي الْعَمَلِ ابْتُلِيَ بِأَهْمِهِ وَ لَا حَاجَةَ لِلَّهِ فِيمَنْ لَيْسَ لِلَّهِ
فِي مَالِهِ وَ نَفْسِهِ نَصِيبٌ.

Hadith n. 128

128. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Guard against cold in its (seasonal) beginning and welcome it towards its end because it effects bodies in the same way as it effects plants. In the beginning, it destroys them but in the end it gives them fresh leaves.³²

128. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: تَوَقَّؤُا الْبَرْدَ فِي أَوَّلِهِ وَ تَلَفَّؤُهُ فِي آخِرِهِ فَإِنَّهُ يَفْعَلُ فِي الْأَبْدَانِ
كَفَعْلِهِ فِي الْأَشْجَارِ أَوَّلُهُ يُحْرِقُ وَ آخِرُهُ يُورِقُ.

Hadith n. 129

129. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Greatness of the Creator appreciated by you would belittle the creatures in your view.

129. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: عِظْمُ الْخَالِقِ عِنْدَكَ يُصَغِّرُ الْمَخْلُوقَ فِي عَيْنِكَ.

Hadith n. 130

130. When Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, returned from (the battle of) Siffin and noticed the graves outside Kufah, he said: O residents of houses which give a sense of loneliness, of depopulated areas and gloomy graves. O people of the dust, O victims of strangeness, O people of loneliness and O people of desolateness! You have gone ahead and preceded us while we are following you and will meet you. The houses (you left) have been inhabited by others; the wives (you left) have been married by others; the properties have been distributed (among heirs). This is the news about those around us; what is the news about things around you?

130. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَ قَدْ رَجَعَ مِنْ صِفِّينَ فَأَشْرَفَ عَلَى الْقُبُورِ بِظَاهِرِ الْكُوفَةِ: يَا
أَهْلَ الدِّيَارِ الْمُوحِشَةِ وَ الْمَحَالِّ الْمُقْفَرَةِ وَ الْقُبُورِ الْمُظْلَمَةِ يَا أَهْلَ التُّرْبَةِ يَا أَهْلَ الْعُرْبَةِ يَا أَهْلَ
الْوَحْدَةِ يَا أَهْلَ الْوَحْشَةِ أَنْتُمْ لَنَا قَرِطٌ سَابِقٌ وَ نَحْنُ لَكُمْ تَبِعٌ لَأَحِقُّ أَمَّا الدُّورُ فَقَدْ سَكِنَتْ وَ
أَمَّا الْأَرْوَاحُ فَقَدْ نُكِحَتْ وَ أَمَّا الْأَمْوَالُ فَقَدْ قُسِمَتْ هَذَا حَبْرٌ مَا عِنْدَنَا فَمَا حَبْرٌ مَا عِنْدَكُمْ

Then Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, turned to his companions and said: Beware If they were allowed to speak they would inform you that:

Verily, the best provision is fear of Allah. (Qur'an, 2:197)

ثُمَّ التَّفَتَ إِلَى أَصْحَابِهِ فَقَالَ: أَمَا لَوْ أُذِنَ لَهُمْ فِي الْكَلَامِ لَأَخْبَرُوكُمْ أَنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّوْهُى.

Hadith n. 131: About Those Who Falsely Accuse This World

131. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, heard a man abusing the world and said: O you who abuse the world, O you who have been deceived by its deceit and cheated by its wrongs. Do you covet the world and then abuse it? Do you accuse it or it should accuse you? When did it bewilder you or deceive you whether by the decay and fall of your forefathers, or by the sleeping places of your mothers under the ground? How much you looked after them in their illness and nursed them during sickness, desiring them to be cured and consulting physicians for them in the morning when your medicine did not avail them and your wailing for them did not benefit them. Your mourning over them did not prove useful to them and you could not achieve your aims. You could not ward off (death) from them with all your power. In fact, through the dying man the world presented an illustration for you and showed you by the example of his falling down how you would (also) fall.

131. قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: وَ قَدْ سَمِعَ رَجُلًا يَذُمُّ الدُّنْيَا أَيُّهَا الدَّامُ لِلدُّنْيَا الْمُعْتَرِّ بِعُورِهَا الْمَحْدُوعُ بِأَبَاطِيلِهَا أ تَعْتَرُّ بِالدُّنْيَا ثُمَّ تَذُمُّهَا أَنْتَ الْمُنَجَّرِمُ عَلَيْهَا أَمْ هِيَ الْمُنَجَّرِمَةُ عَلَيْكَ مَتَى اسْتَهْوَيْتَ أَمْ مَتَى غَرَّبْتَ أَمْ بِمَصَارِعِ آبَائِكَ مِنَ الْبِلَى أَمْ بِمَصَاجِعِ أُمَّهَاتِكَ تَحْتَ التَّرَى كَمْ عَلَلْتَ بِكَفَيْتِكَ وَ كَمْ مَرَّضْتَ بِيَدَيْكَ تَبْتَعِي لَهُمُ الشِّفَاءَ وَ تَسْتَوْصِفُ لَهُمُ الْأَطِبَّاءَ عَدَاةَ لَا يُعْنِي عَنْهُمْ دَوَاؤُهُمْ وَ لَا يُجِدِي عَلَيْهِمْ بُكَاءُهُمْ لَمْ يَنْفَعِ أَحَدَهُمْ إِشْفَاقُكَ وَ لَمْ تُسَعِفْ فِيهِ بِطَلِبَتِكَ وَ لَمْ تَدْفَعْ عَنْهُ بِفُوتِكَ وَ قَدْ مَثَلْتَ لَكَ بِهِ الدُّنْيَا نَفْسَكَ وَ بِمَصْرَعِهِ مَصْرَعَكَ.

Certainly, this world is a house of truth for him who appreciates it; a place of safety for him who understands it; a house of riches for him who collects provision from it (for the next world); and a house of instructions for him who draws instruction from it. It is the place of worship for the lovers of Allah; the place of praying for the angels of Allah; the place where the revelation of Allah descends; and the marketing place for those devoted to Allah. Herein they earned mercy and herein they acquired Paradise by way of profit.

إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا دَارُ صِدْقٍ لِمَنْ صَدَقَهَا وَ دَارُ عَافِيَةٍ لِمَنْ فَهَمَ عَنْهَا وَ دَارُ غِنَى لِمَنْ تَزَوَّدَ مِنْهَا وَ دَارُ مَوْعِظَةٍ لِمَنْ اتَّعَظَ بِهَا مَسْجِدُ أَحِبَّاءِ اللَّهِ وَ مُصَلَّى مَلَائِكَةِ اللَّهِ وَ مَهْبِطُ وَحْيِ اللَّهِ وَ مَنَجَّرُ أَوْلِيَاءِ اللَّهِ اكْتَسَبُوا فِيهَا الرَّحْمَةَ وَ رَجَحُوا فِيهَا الْجَنَّةَ.

Therefore, who can abuse it when it has announced its departure and called out that it would leave! It had given news of its own destruction and the death of its people. By its hardship it set an example of their hardships. By its pleasures it created eagerness for the pleasures (of the next world). It brings ease in the evening and grief in the morning by way of persuasion, dissuasion, alarm and warning. People abuse it on the morning of their repentance but there are others who will praise it on the Day of Judgement.

The world recalled to them the next life and they bore it in mind. It related to them (things of the next life) and they acknowledged them. It preached to them and they took lesson therefrom.³³

فَمَنْ ذَا يَذُمُّهَا وَ قَدْ آذَنْتَ بَيْنَهَا وَ نَادَتْ بِفِرَاقِهَا وَ نَعَتْ نَفْسَهَا وَ أَهْلَهَا فَمَثَلَتْ لَهُمْ
بِبَلَائِهَا الْبَلَاءَ وَ شَوَّقَتْهُمْ بِسُرُورِهَا إِلَى السُّرُورِ رَاحَتْ بِعَافِيَةٍ وَ ابْتَكَّرَتْ بِفَجِيعَةٍ تَرْغِيباً وَ
تَرْهِيباً وَ تَخْوِيفاً وَ تَحْذِيراً فَذَمَّهَا رِجَالٌ عَدَاةَ النَّدَامَةِ وَ حَمِدَهَا آخَرُونَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ذَكَرْتَهُمْ
الدُّنْيَا فَتَذَكَّرُوا وَ حَدَّثْتَهُمْ فَصَدَّقُوا وَ وَعَظْتَهُمْ فَاتَّعَظُوا.

Hadith n. 132

132. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is an angel of Allah who calls out every day, "Beget children for death, collect wealth for destruction, and raise construction for ruin."

132. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِنَّ لِلَّهِ مَلَكاً يُنَادِي فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ لِدَاوِ لِّلْمَوْتِ وَ أَجْمَعُوا لِّلْفَنَاءِ
وَ ابْنُوا لِّلْحَرَابِ.

Hadith n. 133

133. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: This world is a place for transit, not a place for stay. The people herein are of two categories. One is the man who sold away his self (to his passions) and thus ruined it, and the other is the man who purchased his self (by control against his passions) and freed it.

133. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: الدُّنْيَا دَارٌ مَمَرٌ لَا دَارٌ مَقَرٌّ وَ النَّاسُ فِيهَا رَجُلَانِ رَجُلٌ بَاعَ
فِيهَا نَفْسَهُ فَأَوْبَقَهَا وَ رَجُلٌ ابْتَاعَ نَفْسَهُ فَأَعْتَقَهَا.

Hadith n. 134

134. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A friend is not a friend unless he affords protection to his comrade on three occasions: in his adversity, in his absence and at his death.

134. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لَا يَكُونُ الصَّدِيقُ صَدِيقاً حَتَّى يَحْفَظَ أَحَاهُ فِي ثَلَاثٍ فِي
نُكْبَتِهِ وَ غَيْبَتِهِ وَ وَفَاتِهِ.

Hadith n. 135

135. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is bestowed four things is not disallowed four things: he who is allowed to pray is not deprived of the response to it; he who is allowed to offer repentance is not deprived of its acceptance; he who is allowed to seek forgiveness is not deprived of forgiveness; and he who is allowed to be grateful is not deprived of furtherance of favours.

135. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَنْ أُعْطِيَ أَرْبَعاً لَمْ يُحْرَمَ أَرْبَعاً مَنْ أُعْطِيَ الدُّعَاءَ لَمْ يُحْرَمِ
الْإِجَابَةَ وَ مَنْ أُعْطِيَ التَّوْبَةَ لَمْ يُحْرَمِ الْقَبُولَ وَ مَنْ أُعْطِيَ الْإِسْتِغْفَارَ لَمْ يُحْرَمِ الْمَغْفِرَةَ وَ مَنْ
أُعْطِيَ الشُّكْرَ لَمْ يُحْرَمِ الزِّيَادَةَ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is confirmed by the Book of Allah. About praying, Allah says: "Call you to Me, I will answer you" (Qur'an, 4:60). About forgiveness Allah says: "And whoever does evil, or wrongs his own self and thereafter seeks pardon of Allah, shall find Allah Oft-forgiving, Merciful" (Qur'an, 4:110). About gratefulness He says: "If you be grateful I will increase (my favours) to you" (Qur'an, 14:7). About repentance He says: "Verily, repentance (acceptable) with Allah is only for those who do evil ignorantly and then turn (to Allah) soon (after); these (are those) Allah will turn (merciful) to them; and Allah is All-knowing, All-wise" (Qur'an, 4: 17).

قال الرضى و تصديق ذلك كتاب الله قال الله فى الدعاء اذعوني أستجب لكم و قال فى الاستغفار و من يعمل سوءاً أو يظلم نفسه ثم يستغفر الله يجد الله غفوراً رحيماً و قال فى الشكر لئن شكرتم لأزيدنكم و قال فى التوبة إنما التوبة على الله للذين يعملون السوء بجهالة ثم يتوبون من قريب فأولئك يتوب الله عليهم و كان الله عليماً حكيماً.

Hadith n. 136

136. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: For the God-fearing prayers is a means of seeking nearness to Allah; and for the weak the hajj (pilgrimage to Mecca) is as good as jihad (fighting in the way of Allah). For every thing there is a levy; and the levy of the body is fasting. The jihad of a woman is to afford pleasant company to her husband.

136. و قال عليه السلام: الصلاة قرىبان كل تقى و الحج جهاد كل ضعيف و لكل شىء زكاة و زكاة البدن الصيام و جهاد المرأة حسن التبعل.

Hadith n. 137

137. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Seek livelihood by giving alms.

137. و قال عليه السلام: استنزلوا الرزق بالصدقة.

Hadith n. 138

138. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is sure of a good return is generous in giving.

138. و قال عليه السلام: من أيقن بالخلف جاد بالعطية.

Hadith n. 139

139. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Assistance is allowed according to need.

139. و قال عليه السلام: تنزل المعونة على قدر المؤنة.

Hadith n. 140

140. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is moderate does not become destitute.

140. و قال عليه السلام: ما عال من اقتصد.

Hadith n. 141

141. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A small family is one of the ways of (securing) ease.

141. وقال عليه السلام: قَلَّةُ الْعِيَالِ أَحَدُ الْيَسَارِينِ.

Hadith n. 142

142. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Loving one another is half of wisdom

142. وقال عليه السلام: التَّوَدُّدُ نِصْفُ الْعَقْلِ

Hadith n. 143

143. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Grief is half of old age.

143. وقال عليه السلام: الهمُّ نِصْفُ الهَرَمِ.

Hadith n. 144

144. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Endurance comes according to the affliction. He who beats his hand on the thigh in his affliction ruins all his good actions.

144. وقال عليه السلام: يَنْزِلُ الصَّبْرُ عَلَى قَدْرِ الْمُصِيبَةِ، وَمَنْ ضَرَبَ يَدَهُ عَلَى فَخْذِهِ

عِنْدَ مُصِيبَتِهِ حَبَطَ أَجْرُهُ.

Hadith n. 145

145. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is many a person who fasts whose fast is nothing but just hunger and thirst, and many an offerer of prayers whose prayer is no better than wakefulness and hardship. The sleep as well as the eating and drinking of the intelligent (God-knowing) person is far better.

145. وقال عليه السلام: كَمِ مَنْ صَامٍ لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ صِيَامِهِ إِلَّا الظَّمْ، وَكَمِ مَنْ قَامٍ

لَيْسَ لَهُ مِنْ قِيَامِهِ إِلَّا العَنَاءُ، حَبَدًا نَوْمِ الأَكْيَاسِ وَإِفْطَارُهُمْ.

Hadith n. 146

146. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Protect your belief by charity; guard your wealth by paying Allah's share; and ward off the waves of calamity by praying.

146. وقال عليه السلام: سُوِّوْا إِيْمَانَكُمْ بِالصَّدَقَةِ، وَحَصِّنُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بِالزَّكَاةِ، وَادْفَعُوا

أَمْوَاجَ البَلَاءِ بالدُّعَاءِ.

Hadith n. 147: Amir Al-Mu'minin's Conversation With Kumayl Ibn Ziyad An-Nakha'i

ومن كلام له عليه السلام لكُمَيْلِ بن زياد النخعي

147. Kumayl ibn Ziyad An-Nakha'i³⁴ has related: Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, caught hold of my hand and took me to the graveyard. When he had passed through the graveyard and left the city behind, he breathed a deep sigh and said:

147. قال كُمَيْلُ بْنُ زِيَادٍ: أَخَذَ بِيَدِي أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلِيَّ بْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ،

فَأَخْرَجَنِي إِلَى الْجَبَانِ فَلَمَّا أَصْحَرَ تَنَفَّسَ الصَّعْدَاءُ ثُمَّ قَالَ:

O Kumayl, these hearts are containers. The best of them is that which preserves (its contents). So, preserve what I say to you.

يَا كُمَيْلُ بْنُ زِيَادٍ، إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْقُلُوبَ أَوْعِيَةٌ فَخَيْرُهَا أَوْعَاهَا فَاحْفَظْ عَنِّي مَا أَقُولُ لَكَ:

People are of three types: One is the scholar and divine; then the seeker of knowledge who is also on the way to deliverance. Then (lastly) the common rot who run after every caller and bend in the direction of every wind. They seek no light from the effulgence of knowledge and do not take protection of any reliable support.

النَّاسُ ثَلَاثَةٌ: فَعَالِمٌ رَبَّانِيٌّ وَمُتَعَلِّمٌ عَلَى سَبِيلِ نَجَاةٍ، وَهَمَّجٌ رَعَاغٌ أَتْبَاعُ كُلِّ نَاعِقٍ يَمِيلُونَ مَعَ

كُلِّ رِيحٍ، لَمْ يَسْتَضِيئُوا بِنُورِ الْعِلْمِ، وَلَمْ يَلْجَأُوا إِلَى رُكْنٍ وَثِيقٍ.

O Kumayl, knowledge is better than wealth. Knowledge guards you, while you have to guard the wealth. Wealth decreases by spending, while knowledge multiplies by spending, and the results of wealth die as wealth decays.

يَا كُمَيْلُ، الْعِلْمُ خَيْرٌ مِنَ الْمَالِ: الْعِلْمُ يَحْرُسُكَ وَأَنْتَ تَحْرُسُ الْمَالَ، وَالْمَالُ تَنْفُصُهُ التَّفَقُّةُ،

وَالْعِلْمُ يَزْكُو عَلَى الْإِنْفَاقِ، وَصَنِيعُ الْمَالِ يَزُولُ بِزَوَالِهِ.

O Kumayl, knowledge is belief which is acted upon. With it man acquires obedience during his life and a good name after his death. Knowledge is the ruler while wealth is ruled upon.

يَا كُمَيْلُ بْنُ زِيَادٍ مَعْرِفَةُ الْعِلْمِ دِينٌ يُدَانُ بِهِ بِهِ يَكْسِبُ الْإِنْسَانُ الطَّاعَةَ فِي حَيَاتِهِ وَجَمِيلَ

الْأُحْدُوثَةِ بَعْدَ وَفَاتِهِ وَ الْعِلْمُ حَاكِمٌ وَ الْمَالُ مَحْكُومٌ عَلَيْهِ.

O Kumayl, those who amass wealth are dead even though they may be living while those endowed with knowledge will remain as long as the world lives. Their bodies are not available but their figures exist in the hearts. Look, here is a heap of knowledge (and Amir al-mu'minin pointed to his bosom). I wish I could get someone to bear it. Yes, I did find (such a one); but either he was one who could not be relied upon. He would exploit the religion for worldly gains, and by virtue of Allah's favours on him he would domineer over the people and through Allah's pleas he would lord over His devotees. Or he was one who was obedient to the hearers of truth but {here was no intelligence in his bosom. At the first appearance of doubt he would entertain misgivings in his heart.

يَا كُمَيْلُ هَلَكَ حُزْرَانُ الْأَمْوَالِ وَ هُمْ أَحْيَاءُ وَ الْعُلَمَاءُ بَاقُونَ مَا بَقِيَ الدَّهْرُ أَعْيَانُهُمْ مَفْقُودَةٌ

وَ أَمْثَالُهُمْ فِي الْقُلُوبِ مَوْجُودَةٌ هَا إِنَّ هَاهُنَا لَعِلْمًا جَمًّا وَ أَشَارَ بِيَدِهِ إِلَى صَدْرِهِ لَوْ أَصَبْتُ لَهُ

حَمَلَةً بَلَى أَصَبْتُ لِفِنَاءِ غَيْرِ مَأْمُونٍ عَلَيْهِ مُسْتَعْمِلًا آلَةَ الدِّينِ لِلدُّنْيَا وَ مُسْتَشْطَهْرًا بِنِعْمِ اللَّهِ عَلَى

عِبَادِهِ وَ بِحُجَجِهِ عَلَى أَوْلِيَائِهِ أَوْ مُنْقَاداً لِحِمْلَةِ الْحَقِّ لَا بِصِيرَةٍ لَهُ فِي أَخْنَائِهِ يَنْقَدِحُ الشُّكُّ فِي قَلْبِهِ لِأَوَّلِ عَارِضٍ مِنْ شُبْهَةٍ.

So, neither this nor that was good enough. Either the man is eager for pleasures, easily led away by passions, or is covetous for collecting and hoarding wealth. Neither of them has any regard for religion in any matter. The nearest example of these is the loose cattle. This is the way that knowledge dies away with the death of its bearers.

أَلَا لَا دَا وَ لَا ذَاكَ أَوْ مِنْهُمَ بِاللَّذَّةِ سَلِسِ الْفِيَادِ لِلشَّهْوَةِ أَوْ مُعْرَمًا بِالْجَمْعِ وَ الْإِدْحَارِ لَيْسَا مِنْ رِعَاةِ الدِّينِ فِي شَيْءٍ أَقْرَبُ شَيْءٍ شَبَهًا بِهِمَا الْأَنْعَامُ السَّائِمَةُ كَذَلِكَ يَمُوتُ الْعِلْمُ بِمَوْتِ حَامِلِيهِ.

O My God! Yes; but the earth is never devoid of those who maintain Allah's plea either openly and reputedly or, being afraid, as hidden in order that Allah's pleas and proofs should not be rebutted. How many are they and where are they? By Allah, they are few in number, but they are great in esteem before Allah. Through them Allah guards His pleas and proofs till they entrust them to others like themselves and sow the seeds thereof in the hearts of those who are similar to them.

اللَّهُمَّ بَلَى! لَا تَخْلُو الْأَرْضُ مِنْ قَائِمٍ لِلَّهِ بِحُجَّةٍ، إِمَّا ظَاهِرًا مَشْهُورًا، أَوْ خَائِفًا مَعْمُورًا لِقَلَّ تَبْطُلَ حُجَجُ اللَّهِ وَبَيِّنَاتُهُ. وَكَمْ دَا وَأَيْنَ أَوْلِيكَ؟ أَوْلِيكَ. وَاللَّهِ. الْأَقْلُونَ عَدَدًا، وَالْأَعْظُمُونَ قَدْرًا، يَحْفَظُ اللَّهُ بِهِمْ حُجَجَهُ وَبَيِّنَاتِهِ، حَتَّى يُودِعُوهَا نُظْرَاءَهُمْ، وَيَزِرُوهَا فِي قُلُوبِ أَشْبَاهِهِمْ،

Knowledge has led them to real understanding and so they have associated themselves with the spirit of conviction. They take easy what the easygoing regard as hard. They endear what the ignorant take as strange. They live in this world with their bodies here but their spirits resting in the high above. They are the vicegerents of Allah on His earth and callers to His religion.

Oh, oh, how I yearn to see them! Go away now, O Kumayl, wherever you wish!

هَجَمَ بِهِمُ الْعِلْمُ عَلَى حَقِيقَةِ الْبَصِيرَةِ، وَبَاشَرُوا رُوحَ الْيَقِينِ، وَاسْتَلَانُوا مَا اسْتَوْعَرَهُ الْمُتَرَفُونَ وَأَنْسُوا بِمَا اسْتَوْحَشَ مِنْهُ الْجَاهِلُونَ، وَصَحِبُوا الدُّنْيَا بِأَبْدَانٍ أَرْوَاحُهَا مُعَلَّقَةٌ بِالْمَحَلِّ الْأَعْلَى، أَوْلِيكَ خُلَفَاءُ اللَّهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ، وَالِدُعَاةُ إِلَى دِينِهِ، آه آه شَوْقًا إِلَى رُؤْيَيْهِمْ! انصَرَفَ إِذَا شِئْتَ!

Hadith n. 148

148. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Man is hidden under his tongue. ³⁵

148. وقال عليه السلام: المرء محبوبٌ تحت لسانه.

Hadith n. 149

149. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who does not know his own worth is ruined.

149. وقال عليه السلام: هَلَكَ امْرُؤٌ مَّ يَعْرفُ قَدْرَهُ.

Hadith n. 150: On Preaching

150. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to a man who had requested him to preach:

150. وقال عليه السلام لرجلٍ سأله أن يعظه:

Do not be like him who hopes for (bliss in) the next life without action, and delays repentance by lengthening desires, who utters words like ascetics in this world but acts like those who are eager for it; if he is allowed something from it he does not feel satisfied; if he is denied he is not content; he is not grateful for what he gets and covets for increase in whatever remains with him; he refrains others but not himself; he commands others for what he himself does not do; he loves the virtuous but does not behave like them; he hates the vicious but himself is one of them; he dislikes death because of the excess of his sins but adheres to that for which he is afraid of death.

لَا تَكُنْ مِمَّنْ يَرْجُو الآخِرَةَ بِعَمَلٍ وَيُرْجَى التَّوْبَةَ بِطُولِ الأَمَلِ يَقُولُ فِي الدُّنْيَا يَقُولُ
الرَّاهِدِينَ وَ يَعْمَلُ فِيهَا بِعَمَلِ الرَّاعِبِينَ إِنْ أُعْطِيَ مِنْهَا لَمْ يَشْبَعْ وَ إِنْ مُنِعَ مِنْهَا لَمْ يَقْنَعْ يَعَجِزُ
عَنْ شُكْرِ مَا أُوتِيَ وَ يَبْتَغِي الرِّيَاذَةَ فِيمَا بَقِيَ يَنْهَى وَ لَا يَنْتَهَى وَ يَأْمُرُ بِمَا لَا يَأْتِي يُحِبُّ
الصَّالِحِينَ وَ لَا يَعْمَلُ عَمَلَهُمْ وَ يُبْعِضُ المُذْنِبِينَ وَ هُوَ أَحَدُهُمْ يَكْرَهُ المَوْتَ لِكَثْرَةِ ذُنُوبِهِ وَ
يُقِيمُ عَلَى مَا يَكْرَهُ المَوْتَ مِنْ أَجْلِهِ.

If he falls ill he is remorseful; if he is healthy he feels secure and indulges in amusements; when he recovers from illness he feels vain about himself; when he is afflicted he loses hope; if distress befalls him he prays like a bewildered man; when he finds ease of life he falls into deceit and turns his face away; his heart overpowers him by means of imaginary things while he cannot control his heart by his conviction; for others he is afraid of small sins, but for himself he expects more reward than his performance; if he becomes wealthy he becomes self-conceited and falls into vice; if he becomes poor he despairs and becomes weak; he falls short when doing a good thing but goes too far when he is begging; when passion overtakes him he is quick in committing sin but delays repentance; if hardship befalls him he goes beyond the cannons of the (Islamic) community; he describes instructive events but does not take instruction himself; he preaches at length but does not accept any preaching for himself; he is tall in speaking but short in action; he aspires for things that will perish and ignores things that will last for good; he regards profit as loss and loss as profit; he fears death but does nothing in its anticipation.

إِنْ سَقَمَ ظَلَّ نَادِمًا وَإِنْ صَحَّ أَمِنَ، لَاهِيًا يُعْجَبُ بِنَفْسِهِ إِذَا عُوِيَ وَ يَفْتِنُ إِذَا ابْتُلِيَ، إِنْ أَصَابَهُ بَلَاءٌ دَعَا مُضْطَرًّا وَإِنْ نَالَهُ رَخَاءٌ أَعْرَضَ مُعْتَرًّا، تَعْلِيَهُ نَفْسُهُ عَلَى مَا يَظُنُّ وَ لَا يَعْلِيهَا عَلَى مَا يَسْتَيْقِنُ، يَخَافُ عَلَى غَيْرِهِ بِأَذَى مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ وَ يَرْجُو لِنَفْسِهِ بِأَكْثَرٍ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ، إِنْ اسْتَعْنَى بَطْرَ وَ فُتِنَ وَ إِنْ افْتَقَرَ فَبَطْرَ وَ وَهَنَ، يُقْصِرُ إِذَا عَمِلَ وَ يُبَالِغُ إِذَا سَأَلَ، إِنْ عَرَضَتْ لَهُ شَهْوَةٌ أَسْلَفَ الْمُعْصِيَةَ وَ سَوَّفَ التَّوْبَةَ وَ إِنْ عَرَنَهُ مِحْنَةٌ انْفَرَجَ عَنِ شَرَائِطِ الْمِلَّةِ، يَصِفُ الْعِبْرَةَ وَ لَا يَعْتَبِرُ وَ يُبَالِغُ فِي الْمَوْعِظَةِ وَ لَا يَتَعَطَّ، فَهُوَ بِالْقَوْلِ مُدِلٌّ وَ مِنَ الْعَمَلِ مُقِلٌّ يُنَافِسُ فِيمَا يَفْعَى وَ يُسَامِعُ فِيمَا يَنْقَى يَرَى الْغَنَمَ مَعْرَمًا وَ الْعُرْمَ مَعْنَمًا، يَخْشَى الْمَوْتَ وَ لَا يُبَادِرُ الْفُوتَ.

He regards the sins of others as big but considers the same things for himself as small; if he does something in obedience to Allah he considers it much but if others do the same he considers it small; he therefore rebukes others but flatters himself; entertainment in the company of the wealthy is dearer to him than remembrance (of Allah) with the poor; he passes verdicts against others for his own interests and does not do so against himself for others' interests; he guides others but misguides himself; he is obeyed by others but he himself disobeys (Allah); he seeks fulfilment (of obligations towards himself) but does not fulfil his obligations (towards others); he fears the people (and acts) for other than his Lord (Allah) and does not fear his Lord in his dealings with the people.

يَسْتَعْظِمُ مِنْ مَعْصِيَةِ غَيْرِهِ مَا يَسْتَقِلُّ أَكْثَرَ مِنْهُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ، وَ يَسْتَكْثِرُ مِنْ طَاعَتِهِ مَا يَحْقِرُهُ مِنْ طَاعَةِ غَيْرِهِ، فَهُوَ عَلَى النَّاسِ طَاعِنٌ وَ لِنَفْسِهِ مُدَاهِنٌ، اللَّهُوَ مَعَ الْأَعْيَانِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيْهِ مِنَ الذِّكْرِ مَعَ الْفُقَرَاءِ، يَحْكُمُ عَلَى غَيْرِهِ لِنَفْسِهِ وَ لَا يَحْكُمُ عَلَيْهَا لِغَيْرِهِ يُرْشِدُ غَيْرَهُ وَ يُغْوِي نَفْسَهُ، فَهُوَ يُطَاعُ وَ يَعْصَى وَ يَسْتَوْفَى وَ لَا يُوفَى، وَ يَخْشَى الْخَلْقَ فِي غَيْرِ رَبِّهِ وَ لَا يَخْشَى رَبَّهُ فِي خَلْقِهِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: If this book had contained nothing save this short utterance it would have sufficed as a successful piece of preaching, a specimen of high philosophy, an object of wisdom for the onlooker and a source of instruction for the meditative watcher.

قال الرضى و لو لم يكن في هذا الكتاب إلا هذا الكلام لكفى به موعظة ناجعة و
حكمة بالغة و بصيرة لمبصر و عبرة لناظر مفكر.

Hadith n. 151

151. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Every human being has to meet the end, sweet or bitter.

151. وقال عليه السلام: لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ عَاقِبَةٌ حُلْوَةٌ أَوْ مُرَّةٌ.

Hadith n. 152

152. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Every comer has to return and after returning it is as though he never existed.

152. وقال عليه السلام: لِكُلِّ مُقْبِلٍ إِذْبَارٌ، وَمَا أَدْبَرَ كَأَنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ.

Hadith n. 153

153. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The endurer does not miss success although it may take a long time.

153. وقال عليه السلام: لَا يَعْذَمُ الصَّبُورُ الظَّفَرُ وَإِنْ طَالَ بِهِ الرَّمَانُ.

Hadith n. 154

154. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who agrees with the action of a group of persons is as though he joins them in that action. And every one who joins in wrong commits two sins; one sin for committing the wrong and the other for agreeing with it.

154. وقال عليه السلام: الرَّاضِي بِفِعْلِ قَوْمٍ كَالدَّاخِلِ فِيهِ مَعَهُمْ، وَعَلَى كُلِّ دَاخِلٍ فِي

بَاطِلٍ إِثْمَانٍ: إِثْمُ الْعَمَلِ بِهِ، وَإِثْمُ الرِّضَى بِهِ.

Hadith n. 155

155. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Adhere to contracts and entrust their fulfilment to steadfast persons.

155. وقال عليه السلام: اعْتَصِمُوا بِالذِّمَمِ فِي أَوْتَادِهَا.

Hadith n. 156

156. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: On you lies (the obligation of) obedience to the person about whom you cannot plead the excuse of ignorance.³⁶

156. وقال عليه السلام: عَلَيْكُمْ بِطَاعَةِ مَنْ لَا تُعْذَرُونَ بِجَهَالَتِهِ.

Hadith n. 157

157. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Surely, you have been made to see if (only) you care to see; surely, you have been guided if (only) you care to take guidance; and surely, you have been made to hear if (only) you care to lend your ears.

157. وقال عليه السلام: قَدْ بُصِرْتُمْ إِنْ أَبْصَرْتُمْ وَقَدْ هُدَيْتُمْ إِنْ اهْتَدَيْتُمْ، وَأُسْمِعْتُمْ إِنْ

اسْتَمَعْتُمْ.

Hadith n. 158

158. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Admonish your brother (comrade) by good behaviour towards him, and ward off his evil by favouring him.³⁷

158. وقال عليه السلام: عَاتِبْ أَخَاكَ بِالْأَحْسَانِ إِلَيْهِ، وَارْزُدْ شَرَّهُ بِالْأَنْعَامِ عَلَيْهِ.

Hadith n. 159

159. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who puts himself in conditions of ill-repute should not blame those who entertain bad ideas about him.

159. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ وَضَعَ نَفْسَهُ مَوَاضِعَ التُّهْمَةِ فَلَا يُلُومَنَّ مَنْ أَسَاءَ بِهِ الظَّنَّ.

Hadith n. 160

160. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever obtains authority (usually) adopts partiality.

160. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ مَلَكَ اسْتَأْتَرَ.

Hadith n. 161

161. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who acts solely according to his own opinion gets ruined, and he who consults other people shares in their understanding.

161. وقال عليه السلام: وَمَنْ اسْتَبَدَّ بِرَأْيِهِ هَلَكَ، وَمَنْ شَاوَرَ الرِّجَالَ شَارَكَهَا فِي عُقُولِهَا.

Hadith n. 162

162. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who guards his secrets retains control in his own hands.

162. وقال عليه السلام: وَمَنْ كَتَمَ سِرَّهُ كَانَتْ الحَيْرَةُ بِيَدِهِ.

Hadith n. 163

163. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Destitution is the greatest death.

163. وقال عليه السلام: الْفَقْرُ المَوْتُ الأَكْبَرُ.

Hadith n. 164

164. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who fulfils the right of a man who does not fulfil his right, (is as though he) worships him.

164. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ قَضَى حَقَّ مَنْ لَا يَفْضِي حَقَّهُ فَقَدْ عَبَدَهُ.

Hadith n. 165

165. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There should be no obeying anyone against Allah's commands.

165. وقال عليه السلام: لَا طَاعَةَ لِمَخْلُوقٍ فِي مَعْصِيَةِ الخَالِقِ.

Hadith n. 166

166. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: No person is to be blamed for delay in (securing) his own right but blame lies on him who takes what he is not entitled to.

166. وقال عليه السلام: لَا يُعَابُ المَرْءُ بِتَأخِيرِ حَقِّهِ، إِنَّمَا يُعَابُ مَنْ أَخَذَ مَا لَيْسَ لَهُ.

Hadith n. 167

167. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Vanity prevents progress.³⁸

167. وقال عليه السلام: الأَعْجَابُ يَمْنَعُ مِنَ الأَزْدِيَادِ.

Hadith n. 168

168. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The Day of Judgement is near and our mutual company is short.

168. وقال عليه السلام: الأَمْرُ قَرِيبٌ والأَصْطِحَابُ قَلِيلٌ.

Hadith n. 169

169. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: For the man who has eyes the dawn has already appeared.

169. وقال عليه السلام: قَدْ أَضَاءَ الصُّبْحُ لِذِي عَيْنَيْنِ.

Hadith n. 170

170. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Abstention from sin is easier than seeking forgiveness afterwards.³⁹

170. وقال عليه السلام: تَرَكُ الذَّنْبِ أَهْوَنُ مِنْ طَلَبِ التَّوْبَةِ.

Hadith n. 171

171. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Many a single eating prevents several eatings.⁴⁰

171. وقال عليه السلام: كَمِ مِنْ أَكَلَةٍ مَنَعَتْ أَكَلَاتٍ.

Hadith n. 172

172. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: People are enemies of what they do not know.⁴¹

172. وقال عليه السلام: النَّاسُ أَعْدَاءُ مَا جَهِلُوا.

Hadith n. 173

173. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who has several opinions understands the pitfalls.

173. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ اسْتَفْبَلَ وُجُوهَ الْأَرَاءِ عَرَفَ مَوَاقِعَ الْخُطَا.

Hadith n. 174

174. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who sharpens the teeth of anger for the sake of Allah acquires the strength to kill the stalwarts of wrong.⁴²

174. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ أَحَدَّ سِنَانَ الْعَضْبِ لِلَّهِ قَوِيَ عَلَى قَتْلِ أَشْدَاءِ الْبَاطِلِ.

Hadith n. 175

175. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When you are afraid of something dive straight into it, because the intensity of abstaining from it is greater (worse) than what you are afraid of.

175. وقال عليه السلام: إِذَا هَبْتَ أَمْرًا فَفَعِّ فِيهِ، فَإِنَّ شِدَّةَ تَوَقُّفِهَا عَظِيمٌ بِمَا تَخَافُ مِنْهُ.

Hadith n. 176

176. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The means to secure high authority is breadth of chest (i.e., generosity).

176. وقال عليه السلام: أَلَّةُ الرِّيَاسَةِ سَعَةُ الصَّدْرِ.

Hadith n. 177

177. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Rebuke the evil-doer by rewarding the good-doer.⁴³

177. وقال عليه السلام: ارْجُرِ الْمُسِيءَ بِثَوَابِ الْمُحْسِنِ.

Hadith n. 178

178. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Cut away evil from the chest of others by snatching (it) away from your own chest.⁴⁴

178. وقال عليه السلام: احْصِدِ الشَّرَّ مِنْ صَدْرٍ غَيْرِكَ بِقَلْعِهِ مِنْ صَدْرِكَ.

Hadith n. 179

179. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Stubbornness destroys (good) advice.

179. وقال عليه السلام: اللَّجَاجَةُ تَسْلُكُ الرَّأْيَ

Hadith n. 180

180. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him said: Greed is a lasting slavery.

180. وقال عليه السلام: الطَّمَعُ رِقٌّ مُؤَبَّدٌ.

Hadith n. 181

181. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The result of neglect is shame, while the result of far-sightedness is safety.

181. وقال عليه السلام: تَمَرَّةُ التَّفْرِيطِ النَّدَامَةُ، وَتَمَرَّةُ الْحَزْمِ السَّلَامَةُ

Hadith n. 182

182. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is no advantage ill keeping quiet about an issue of wisdom, just as there is no good in speaking out an unintelligent thing.

182. وقال عليه السلام: لَا خَيْرَ فِي الصَّمْتِ عَنِ الْحُكْمِ، كَمَا أَنَّهُ لَا خَيْرَ فِي الْقَوْلِ

بِالْجَهْلِ .

Hadith n. 183

183. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If there are two different calls then one (of them) must be towards misguidance.

183. وقال عليه السلام: مَا اخْتَلَفَتْ دَعْوَتَانِ إِلَّا كَانَتْ إِحْدَاهُمَا ضَلَالَةً.

Hadith n. 184

184. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I have never entertained doubt about right since I was shown it.

184. وقال عليه السلام: مَا شَكَّكْتُ فِي الْحَقِّ مُذْ أُرَيْتُهُ.

Hadith n. 185

185. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I have neither spoken a lie nor have I been told a lie. I have neither deviated nor have I been made to deviate (others).

185. وقال عليه السلام: مَا كَذَّبْتُ وَلَا كُذِّبْتُ، وَلَا ضَلَلْتُ وَلَا ضُلَّ بِي

Hadith n. 186

186. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who takes the lead in oppression has to bite his hand (in repentance) tomorrow.

186. وقال عليه السلام: لِلظَّالِمِ الْبَادِي عَدَاً بِكَفِّهِ عَصَّةٌ.

Hadith n. 187

187. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The departure (from this world) is imminent.

187. وقال عليه السلام: الرَّحِيلُ وَشَيْكٌ.

Hadith n. 188

188. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever turned away from right was ruined.

188. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ أَبْدَى صَفْحَتَهُ لِحَقِّ هَلَكٌ.

Hadith n. 189

189. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If patience does not give relief to a man impatience kills him.

189. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ لَمْ يُنَجِّهِ الصَّبْرُ أَهْلَكَهُ الْجَرْعُ.

Hadith n. 190

190. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: How strange? Could the caliphate be through the (Prophet's) companionship but not through (his) companionship and (his) kinship?

190. وقال عليه السلام: وَأَعْجَبًا! أَتَكُونُ الْخِلَافَةَ بِالصَّحَابَةِ وَلَا تَكُونُ بِالصَّحَابَةِ

وَالْقَرَابَةِ؟

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Verses have also been related from Amir al-mu'minin on the same matter. They are:--

If you claim to have secured authority by consultation, how did it happen when those to be consulted were absent! If you have scored over your opponents by kinship then someone else has greater right for being nearer to the Holy Prophet.⁴⁵

قال الرضي: و روي له شعر في هذا المعنى، وهو:

فَإِنْ كُنْتَ بِالشُّورَى مَلَكَتْ أُمُورَهُمْ * فَكَيْفَ بَهَذَا وَالْمُشِيرُونَ غَيْبُ

وَإِنْ كُنْتَ بِالقُرْبَى حَجَجْتَ حَصِيمَهُمْ * فَغَيْرِكَ أَوْلَى بِالنَّبِيِّ وَأَقْرَبُ

Hadith n. 191

191. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: In this world man is the target towards which the arrows of death fly, and is like that wealth whose destruction is quickened by hard ships. (In this world) with every drink there is suffocation and with every morsel there is choking. Here no one gets anything unless he loses something else, and not a day of his age advances till a day passes out from his life. Thus, we are helpers of death and our lives are the targets of mortality. How then can we expect everlasting life since the night and day do not raise anything high without quickly arranging for the destruction of whatever they have built and for the splitting asunder of whatever they have joined together.

191. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّمَا الْمَرْءُ فِي الدُّنْيَا غَرَضٌ تَنْتَضِلُ فِيهِ الْمَنَائِي وَ نَهَبٌ تُبَادِرُهُ الْمَصَائِبُ وَ مَعَ كُلِّ جُرْعَةٍ شَرَقٌ وَ فِي كُلِّ أَكْلَةٍ عَصَصٌ وَ لَا يَبَالُ الْعَبْدُ نِعْمَةً إِلَّا بِفِرَاقِ أُخْرَى وَ لَا يَسْتَقْبِلُ يَوْمًا مِنْ عُمْرِهِ إِلَّا بِفِرَاقِ آخَرَ مِنْ أَجَلِهِ فَحَسْبُ أَعْوَانُ الْمُنُونِ وَ أَنْفُسُنَا نَصَبُ الْحُتُوفِ فَمِنْ أَيْنَ نَرْجُو الْبَقَاءَ وَ هَذَا اللَّيْلُ وَ النَّهَارُ لَمْ يَرْفَعَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ شَرْفًا إِلَّا أَسْرَعَا الْكُرَّةَ فِي هَدْمِ مَا بَنَيَا وَ تَفْرِيقِ مَا جَمَعَا.

Hadith n. 192

192. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O son of Adam, whatever you earn beyond your basic needs you are only a treasurer of it for others.

192. وقال عليه السلام: يَا بَنَ آدَمَ مَا كَسَبْتَ فَوْقَ قُوتِكَ، فَأَنْتَ فِيهِ حَازِنٌ لِعَيْرِكَ.

Hadith n. 193

193. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Hearts are imbued with passion and the power of advancing and retreating. Therefore, approach them for action at the time of their passionateness and when they are in a mood for advancing, because if hearts are forced (to do a thing) they will be blinded.

193. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ لِلْقُلُوبِ شَهْوَةً وَإِقْبَالًَ وَإِدْبَارًا، فَأَتُوها مِنْ قَبْلِ شَهْوَتِهَا وَإِقْبَالِهَا، فَإِنَّ الْقَلْبَ إِذَا أُكْرِهَ عَمِيَ.

Hadith n. 194

194. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, used to say: If I am angry when shall I vent my anger - when I am unable to take revenge and it be said to me, "better you endure" or when I have power to take revenge and it be said to me, "better forgive"?

194. وكان عليه السلام يقول: مَتَى أَشْفِي عَيْظِي إِذَا عَضِبْتُ؟ أَحِينَ أَعْجِزُ عَنِ الْإِتِّقَامِ فَيُقَالُ لِي: لَوْ صَبَرْتَ؟ أَمْ حِينَ أَقْدِرُ عَلَيْهِ فَيُقَالُ لِي: لَوْ عَفَوْتَ.

Hadith n. 195

195. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, passed beside a dump of rubbish full of filth and remarked: This is what the misers used to be niggardly about.

195. وقال عليه السلام وقد مرّ بقدر على مزبلة: هذا ما يجال به الباخلون.

In another tradition it is related that he said: This is what you used to dispute with each other about until yesterday!

و روي في خبر آخر أنه قال: هذا ما كنتم تتنافسون فيه بالأمس!

Hadith n. 196

196. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The wealth that teaches you lesson does not go waste.⁴⁶

196. وقال عليه السلام: أَمْ يَذْهَبُ مِنْ مَالِكَ مَا وَعَظْتَكَ.

Hadith n. 197

197. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The hearts become tired as the bodies become tired. You should therefore search for beautiful sayings for them (to enjoy by way of refreshment).

197. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ هَذِهِ الْقُلُوبَ تَمَلُّ كَمَا تَمَلُّ الْأَبْدَانُ، فَأَبْتَعُوا لَهَا طَرَائِفَ الْحِكْمَةِ.

Hadith n. 198

198. When Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, heard the slogan of the Kharijites: There is no verdict save of Allah-, he said: This sentence is true but it is interpreted wrongly.

198. وقال عليه السلام لما سمع قول الخوارج . لا حكم إلا لله .: كَلِمَةٌ حَقٌّ يُرَادُ بِهَا بَاطِلٌ.

Hadith n. 199

199. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said about the crowd of people: These are the people who, when they assemble together, are overwhelming but when they disperse they cannot be recognized.

199. وقال عليه السلام في صفة الغوغاء هُمْ الَّذِينَ إِذَا اجْتَمَعُوا غَلَبُوا، وَإِذَا تَفَرَّقُوا لَمْ يُعْرَفُوا

It is related that instead of this Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: These are the people who when they assemble together cause harm but when they disperse are beneficial. It was pointed out to him: We know their harm at the time of their assembling but what is their benefit at the time of their dispersal?

Then he replied: The workers return to their work and people get benefit out of them, like the return of the mason to the building site, that of the weaver to his loom, and that of the baker to his bakery.

وقيل: بل قال: هُمْ الَّذِينَ إِذَا اجْتَمَعُوا ضُرُّوا، وَإِذَا تَفَرَّقُوا نَفَعُوا. فقيل: قد علمنا مضرة اجتماعهم، فما منفعة افتراقهم؟ فقال: يَرْجِعُ أَصْحَابُ الْمِهْنِ إِلَى مِهْنِهِمْ، فَيَنْتَفِعُ النَّاسُ بِهِمْ، كَرْجُوعِ الْبِنَاءِ إِلَى بِنَائِهِ، وَالنَّسَاجِ إِلَى مَنْسَجِهِ، وَالْحَبَّازِ إِلَى مَحْبَزِهِ.

Hadith n. 200

200. An offender was brought before Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, and there was a crowd of people with the man, so Amir al-mu'minin remarked: Woe to the faces who are seen only on foul occasions.

200. وقال عليه السلام وقد أُتِيَ بِجَانٍ وَمَعَهُ غَوْغَاءٌ: لَا مَرْحَبًا بِوُجُوهِهِ لَأَنْ تُرَى إِلَّا عِنْدَ كُلِّ سَوَاءٍ .

Hadith n. 201

201. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: With every individual there are two angels who protect him; when destiny approaches they let it have its own way with him. Certainly, the appointed time is a protective shield (against the events which occur before it).

201. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ مَعَ كُلِّ إِنْسَانٍ مَلَكَيْنِ يَحْفَظَانِهِ، فَإِذَا جَاءَ الْقَدَرُ حَلَّىا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَهُ، وَإِنَّ الْأَجَلَ جُنَّةٌ حَصِيْنَةٌ .

Hadith n. 202

202. When Talhah and az-Zubayr said to him: We are prepared to swear allegiance to you on condition that we have a share with you in this matter (of caliphate), Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: No, but you will have a share in strengthening (the caliphate) and in affording assistance and you will both be helping me at the time of need and hardship.

202. وقال عليه السلام، وقد قال له طلحة والزبير: نبايعك على أننا شركاؤك في هذا الأمر. فقال: لا، ولكنكما شريكان في القوة والاستعانة، وعونان على العجز والأود.

Hadith n. 203

203. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O people, fear Allah Who is such that when you speak He hears and when you conceal (a secret) He knows it. Prepare yourself to meet death which will overtake you even if you run away, catch you even if you stay and remember you even if you forget it.

203. وقال عليه السلام: أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي إِنْ قُلْتُمْ سَمِعَ، وَإِنْ أَسْمَرْتُمْ عَلِمَ، وَبَادَرُوا الْمَوْتَ الَّذِي إِنْ هَرَبْتُمْ أَذْرَكَكُمْ، وَإِنْ أَقَمْتُمْ أَحَدَكُمْ، وَإِنْ نَسِيتُمْوهُ ذَكَرْتُمْ.

Hadith n. 204

204. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If someone is not grateful to you, that should not prevent you from good actions, because (possibly) such a person will feel grateful about it who has not even drawn any benefit from it, and his gratefulness will be more than the ingratitude of the denier; And Allah loves those who do good. (Qur'an, 3:134,148; 5:93)

204. وقال عليه السلام: لَا يُزْهَدَنَّكَ فِي الْمَعْرُوفِ مَنْ لَا يَشْكُرُهُ لَكَ، فَقَدْ يَشْكُرُكَ عَلَيْهِ مَنْ لَا يَسْتَمْتِعُ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْهُ، وَقَدْ تُدْرِكُ مِنْ شُكْرِ الشَّاكِرِ أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا أَضَاعَ الْكَافِرُ (وَ اللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ).

Hadith n. 205

205. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Every container gets narrower according to what is placed in it except the container of knowledge which expands instead.

205. وقال عليه السلام: كُلُّ وَعَاءٍ يَضِيقُ بِمَا جُعِلَ فِيهِ إِلَّا وَعَاءَ الْعِلْمِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَتَّسِعُ.

Hadith n. 206

206. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The first reward the exerciser of forbearance gets is that people become his helpers against the ignorant.

206. وقال عليه السلام: أَوَّلُ عِوَضِ الْحَلِيمِ مِنْ حِلْمِهِ أَنَّ النَّاسَ أَنْصَارُهُ عَلَى الْجَاهِلِ.

Hadith n. 207

207. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If you cannot forbear, feign to do so because it is seldom that a man likens himself to a group and does not become as one of them.⁴⁷

207. وقال عليه السلام: إِنْ لَمْ تَكُنْ حَلِيمًا فَتَحَلَّمْ، فَإِنَّهُ قَلَّ مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ إِلَّا أَوْشَكَ أَنْ يَكُونَ مِنْهُمْ.

Hadith n. 208

208. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever takes account of his self is benefited, and whoever remains neglectful of it suffers. Whoever fears remains safe; whoever takes instruction (from things around) perceives; and whoever perceives gains understanding, and whoever gains understanding secures knowledge.

208. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ حَاسَبَ نَفْسَهُ رَجَحَ، وَمَنْ عَفَلَ عَنْهَا خَسِرَ، وَمَنْ خَافَ أَمِنَ، وَمَنْ اعْتَبَرَ أَبْصَرَ، مَنْ أَبْصَرَ فَهَمَّ، وَمَنْ فَهَمَ عَلِمَ.

Hadith n. 209

209. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him said: The world will bend towards us after having been refractory as the biting she-camel bends towards its young. Then Amir al-mu'minin recited the verse:

And intend We to bestow (Our) favour upon those who were considered weak in the land, and to make them the Imams (guides in faith), and to make them the heirs. (Qur'an, 28:5)⁴⁸

209. وقال عليه السلام: لَتَعْطِفَنَّ الدُّنْيَا عَلَيْنَا بَعْدَ شِمَاسِهَا عَطْفَ الصَّرْوَسِ عَلَى وَلَدِهَا. وَ تَلَا عَقِيبَ ذَلِكَ: (وَأُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضِعُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَ نَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً وَ نَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ).

Hadith n. 210

210. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fear Allah like the one who prepares himself after extracting himself (from worldly affairs) and after getting ready in this way makes effort; then he acts quickly during the period of this life, hastens in view of the dangers (of falling into error) and has his eye on proceeding towards the goal, on the end of his journey and on the place of his (eventual) return.

210. وقال عليه السلام: اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ تَقِيَّةً مَنْ سَمَّرَ تَجْرِيداً وَ جَدَّ تَشْمِيرًا وَ كَمَشَ فِي مَهَلٍ وَ بَادَرَ عَنْ وَجَلٍ وَ نَظَرَ فِي كَرَّةِ الْمُؤْتَلِ وَ عَاقِبَةَ الْمُصَدِّرِ وَ مَعَبَّةِ الْمُرْجِعِ.

Hadith n. 211

211. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Generosity is the protector of honour; forbearance is the bridle of the fool; forgiveness is the levy of success; disregard is the punishment of him who betrays; and consultation is the chief way of guidance. He who is content with his own opinion faces danger. Endurance braves calamities while impatience is a helper of the hardships of the world. The best contentment is to give up desires. Many a slavish mind is subservient to overpowering longings. Capability helps preservation of experience. Love means well-utilized relationship. Do not trust one who is grieved.

211. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: الْجُودُ حَارِسُ الْأَعْرَاضِ وَالْحِلْمُ فِدَامُ السَّنَفِيهِ وَالْعَفْوُ زَكَاةُ الظَّفَرِ وَالسُّلُو عِوَضُكَ مِمَّنْ غَدَرَ وَالِاسْتِشَارَةُ عَيْنُ الْهُدَايَةِ وَقَدْ خَاطَرَ مَنْ اسْتَعْنَى بِرَأْيِهِ وَالصَّبْرُ يُنَاضِلُ الْحِدَثَانَ وَالْجُرْعُ مِنَ أَعْوَانِ الزَّمَانِ وَأَشْرَفُ الْعِنَى تَرْكُ الْمُنَى وَكَمْ مِنْ عَقْلٍ أُسِيرَ تَحْتَ هَوَى أَمِيرٍ وَمِنَ التَّوْفِيقِ حِفْظُ التَّجْرِبَةِ وَالْمَوَدَّةُ قَرَابَةٌ مُسْتَفَادَةٌ وَلَا تَأْمَنَنَّ مَوْلَاً.

Hadith n. 212

212. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A man's vanity for himself is one of the enemies of his intelligence.⁴⁹

212. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: عَجْبُ الْمَرْءِ بِنَفْسِهِ أَحَدُ حُسْنَادِ عَقْلِهِ.

Hadith n. 213

213. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Ignore pain otherwise you will never be happy. (Or according to another reading): Ignore pain and grief; you will ever be happy.⁵⁰

213. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: أَعْضُ عَلَى الْقَدَى وَالْأَلَمُ تَرْضَى أَبَدًا.

Hadith n. 214

214. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The tree whose trunk is soft has thick branches.⁵¹

214. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَنْ لَانَ عُودُهُ كَثُفَتْ أَغْصَانُهُ.

Hadith n. 215

215. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Opposition destroys good counsel.

215. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: الْخِلَافُ يَهْدِمُ الرَّأْيَ.

Hadith n. 216

216. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who gives generously achieves position. (Or according to another interpretation): He who achieves position begins to make wrong use of it.

216. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَنْ نَالَ اسْتَطَالَ.

Hadith n. 217

217. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Through change of circumstances the mettle of men is known.

217. وقال عليه السلام: فِي تَقَلُّبِ الْأَحْوَالِ عِلْمٌ جَوَاهِرِ الرِّجَالِ.

Hadith n. 218

218. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Jealousy by a friend means defect in his love.

218. وقال عليه السلام: حَسَدُ الصَّدِيقِ مِنْ سُقْمِ الْمَوَدَّةِ.

Hadith n. 219

219. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Most of the deficiency of intelligence occurs due to the flash of greed.⁵²

219. وقال عليه السلام: أَكْثَرُ مَصَارِعِ الْعُقُولِ تَحْتَ بُرُوقِ الْمَطَامِعِ .

Hadith n. 220

220. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is no justice in passing a verdict by relying on probability.

220. وقال عليه السلام: لَيْسَ مِنَ الْعَدْلِ الْقَضَاءُ عَلَى التَّقْيَةِ بِالظَّنِّ.

Hadith n. 221

221. Amir a'-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The worst provision for the Day of Judgement is high-handedness over people.

221. وقال عليه السلام: بِئْسَ الرَّأْدُ إِلَى الْمَعَادِ الْعُدْوَانُ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ.

Hadith n. 222

222. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The highest act of a noble person is to ignore what he knows.

222. وقال عليه السلام: مِنْ أَشْرَفِ أَعْمَالِ الْكَرِيمِ عَفْلُهُ عَمَّا يَعْلَمُ.

Hadith n. 223

223. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whomever modestly clothes with its dress people cannot see his defects.⁵³

223. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ كَسَاهُ الْحَيَاءُ ثَوْبَهُ لَمْ يَرَ النَّاسُ عَيْبَهُ.

Hadith n. 224

224. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Excess of silence produces awe; justice results in more close friends; generosity heightens position; with humility blessings abound in plenty; by facing hardships leadership is achieved; by just behaviour the adversary is overpowered; and with forbearance against a fool there is increase of one's supporters against him.

224. وقال عليه السلام: بِكَثْرَةِ الصَّمْتِ تَكُونُ الْهَيْبَةُ وَبِالنَّصْفَةِ يَكْتُمُ الْمُوَاصِلُونَ وَ بِالْإِفْضَالِ تَعْظُمُ الْأَقْدَارُ وَ بِالتَّوَاضُعِ تَبْتِمُ النَّعْمَةُ وَ بِإِحْتِمَالِ الْمُؤْنِ يَجِبُ السُّؤْدُودُ وَ بِالسَّيْرَةِ الْعَادِلَةِ يُفْهَرُ الْمُتَنَاوِيُّ وَ بِالْحِلْمِ عَنِ السَّفِيهِ تَكْتُمُ الْأَنْصَارُ عَلَيْهِ.

Hadith n. 225

225. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: It is strange that the jealous do not feel jealous about bodily health.⁵⁴

225. وقال عليه السلام: الْعَجَبُ لِعَفْلَةِ الْحُسَّادِ عَنِ سَلَامَةِ الْأَجْسَادِ.

Hadith n. 226

226. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The greedy is in the shackles of disgrace.

226. وقال عليه السلام: الطَّامِعُ فِي وَثَاقِ الدُّلِّ.

Hadith n. 227

227. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about belief (iman) when he said: Belief means appreciation with the heart, acknowledgement with the tongue, and action with the limbs.

227. وقال عليه السلام وقد سئل عن الإيمان: الأيمانُ معرفةٌ بالقلبِ، وإقرارٌ باللسانِ،

وعَمَلٌ بالأركانِ.

Hadith n. 228

228. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is sorrowful for this world is in fact displeased with the dispensation of Allah. He who complains of a calamity that befalls him complains of his Lord (Allah). He who approaches a rich man and bends before him on account of his riches then two-third of his religion is gone. If a man reads the Qur'an and on dying goes to Hell then it means that he was among those who treated Divine verses with mockery. If a man's heart gets attached to the world, then it catches three things, namely worry that never leaves him, greed that does not abandon him and desire which he never fulfils.

228. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ أَصْبَحَ عَلَى الدُّنْيَا حَزِينًا فَقَدْ أَصْبَحَ لِقَضَاءِ اللَّهِ سَاخِطًا،

وَمَنْ أَصْبَحَ يَشْكُو مُصِيبَةً نَزَلَتْ بِهِ فَقَدْ أَصْبَحَ يَشْكُو رَبَّهُ، وَمَنْ أَتَى غَنِيًّا فَتَوَاضَعَ لِعِنَاهُ ذَهَبَ

ثُلُثَا دِينِهِ، وَمَنْ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ فَمَاتَ فَدَخَلَ النَّارَ فَهُوَ مِمَّنْ كَانَ يَسْخُدُ آيَاتِ اللَّهِ هُزُوعًا، وَمَنْ لَهَجَ

قَلْبُهُ بِحُبِّ الدُّنْيَا التَّاطَ قَلْبُهُ مِنْهَا بِثَلَاثٍ: هَمٌّ لَا يُعْبَهُ، وَحِرْصٌ لَا يَتْرُكُهُ، وَأَمَلٌ لَا يُدْرِكُهُ.

Hadith n. 229

229. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Contentment is as good as estate, and goodness of moral character is as good as a blessing.

229. وقال عليه السلام: كَفَى بِالْقَنَاعَةِ مُلْكًا، وَبِحُسْنِ الْخُلُقِ نَعِيمًا.

Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about Allah's saying: (Whosoever did good, whether male or female, and he be a believer, then); We will certainly make him live a life good and pure (and certainly We will give them their return with the best of what they were doing). (Qur'an, 16:97) when he said: that means (a life of) contentment.⁵⁵

وَ سُئِلَ عَنِ قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى (فَلَنُحْيِيَنَّهٗ حَيَاةً طَيِّبَةً) قَالَ: هِيَ الْقَنَاعَةُ.

Hadith n. 230

230. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Be a sharer with him who has an abundant livelihood because he is more probable to get more riches and likely to secure an increase of the share therein.

230. وقال عليه السلام: شَارِكُوا الَّذِي قَدْ أَقْبَلَ عَلَيْهِ الرِّزْقُ، فَإِنَّهُ أَحْلَقُ لِلْغِنَى، وَأَجْدَرُ

بِإِقْبَالِ الْحِطِّ عَلَيْهِ.

Hadith n. 231

231. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said about Allah's saying: Verily, Allah enjoins justice ('adl) and benevolence (ihsan), (Qur'an, 16:90). Here 'adl means equidistribution and ihsan means favour.

231. وقال عليه السلام في قول الله تعالى: (إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ): الْعَدْلُ

الْأَنْصَافُ، وَالْإِحْسَانُ التَّفَضُّلُ

Hadith n. 232

232. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who gives with his short hand is given by a long hand.

232. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ يُعْطِ بِالْيَدِ الْقَصِيرَةِ يُعْطَى بِالْيَدِ الطَّوِيلَةِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: The meaning of this saying is that even though what a man spends in charity from his possessions may be small, yet Allah, the Sublime, gives good reward for it. And the two hands referred to, here means two favours. Thus, Amir al-mu'minin has differentiated between the favour of man and the favour of the Lord (Allah) -- exalted be the mention of His name -- since he has described the first as small and the other as big. This is because the favours of Allah are ever multiplied manifold to the favours of man since Allah's favours are the basis of all favours in the sense that every other favour springs from it and turns to it.

قال الرضى و معنى ذلك أن ما ينفقه المرء من ماله في سبيل الخير و البر و إن كان يسيرا فإن الله تعالى يجعل الجزاء عليه عظيما كثيرا و اليدان هاهنا عبارة عن نعمتين ففرق ع بين نعمة العبد و نعمة الرب تعالى ذكره بالقصيرة و الطويلة فجعل تلك قصيرة و هذه طويلة لأن نعم الله أبدا تضعف على نعم المخلوق أضعافا كثيرة إذ كانت نعم الله أصل النعم كلها فكل نعمة إليها ترجع و منها تنزع.

Hadith n. 233

233. Amir al-mu'minin said to his son al-Hasan, peace be upon them both: Do not call out for fighting, but if you are called to it do respond, because the caller to fighting is a rebel and the rebel deserves destruction.⁵⁶

233. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لِابْنِهِ الْحَسَنِ ع: لَا تَدْعُونَ إِلَى مُبَارَزَةٍ وَ إِن دُعِيتَ إِلَيْهَا

فَأَجِبْ فَإِنَّ الدَّاعِيَ إِلَيْهَا بَاغٍ وَ الْبَاغِي مَصْرُوعٌ.

Hadith n. 234

234. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The best traits of women are those which are the worst traits of men, namely: vanity, cowardice and miserliness. Thus, since the woman is vain, she will not allow anyone access to herself; since she is miserly, she will preserve her own property and the property of her husband; and since she is weak-hearted, she will be frightened with everything that befalls her.

234. وقال عليه السلام: خَيْرُ خِصَالِ النِّسَاءِ شِرَارُ خِصَالِ الرِّجَالِ: الرَّهْوُ وَالْجُبْنُ وَالْبُخْلُ، فَإِذَا كَانَتِ الْمَرْأَةُ مَرْهُوَّةً لَمْ تُمَكِّنْ مِنْ نَفْسِهَا، وَإِذَا كَانَتْ بِحِيلَةٍ حَفِظَتْ مَالَهَا وَمَالَ بَعْلِهَا، وَإِذَا كَانَتْ جَبَانَةً فَرِقَتْ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ يَعْرِضُ لَهَا.

Hadith n. 235

235. It was said to Amir a'-mu'minin, peace be upon him: Describe the wise to us; and he said: The wise is one who places things in their proper positions. Then, he was asked: Describe the ignorant to us; and he said: I have already done so.

235. وقيل له عليه السلام: صف لنا العاقل. فقال عليه السلام: هُوَ الَّذِي يَضَعُ الشَّيْءَ مَوَاضِعَهُ. قيل: فصف لنا الجاهل. قال: قَدْ فَعَلْتُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: The meaning is that the ignorant is one who does not place things in their proper positions. In this way, Amir al-mu'minin's abstention from describing was a way of describing him because the attributes of the ignorant are the opposite of the wise.

قال الرضى: يعنى أن الجاهل هو الذى لا يضع الشيء مواضعه فكأن ترك صفته صفة له إذ كان بخلاف وصف العاقل.

Hadith n. 236

236. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: By Allah, this world of yours is more lowly in my view than the (left over) bone of a pig in the hand of a leper.

236. وقال عليه السلام: وَاللَّهِ لَدُنِّيَاكُمْ هَذِهِ أَهْوَنُ فِي عَيْنِي مِنْ عِرَاقٍ خَنْزِيرٍ فِي يَدِ مَجْدُومٍ.

Hadith n. 237

237. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A group of people worshipped Allah out of desire for reward surely, this is the worship of traders. Another group worshipped Allah out of fear; this is the worship of slaves. Still another group worshipped Allah out of gratefulness; this is the worship of free men.

237. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ قَوْمًا عَبَدُوا اللَّهَ رَغْبَةً فَبَلَغَتْ عِبَادَةُ التُّجَّارِ، وَإِنَّ قَوْمًا عَبَدُوا اللَّهَ رَهْبَةً فَبَلَغَتْ عِبَادَةُ الْعَبِيدِ، وَإِنَّ قَوْمًا عَبَدُوا اللَّهَ شُكْرًا فَبَلَغَتْ عِبَادَةُ الْأَحْرَارِ.

Hadith n. 238

238. Amir a'-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Woman is evil, all in all; and the worst of it is that one cannot do without her.

238. وقال عليه السلام: الْمَرْأَةُ شَرُّ كُلِّهَا، وَشَرُّ مَا فِيهَا أَنَّهُ لَا بُدَّ مِنْهَا.

Hadith n. 239

239. Amir a'-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is a sluggard loses his rights and he who believes in the backbiter loses his friend.

239. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ أَطَاعَ التَّوَائِيَّ ضَيَّعَ الْحُقُوقَ، وَمَنْ أَطَاعَ الْوَاشِيَّ ضَيَّعَ

الصَّدِيقَ

Hadith n. 240

240. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: One ill-gotten piece of stone in a house is a guarantee for its ruin.

240. وقال عليه السلام: الْحَجَرُ الْعَصِيبُ فِي الدَّارِ رَهْنٌ عَلَى خَرَابِهَا.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: In one tradition this saying is attributed to the Prophet. It is no wonder that the two sayings should resemble each other because they are driven from the same source and dispersed through the same means.

قال الرضى و يروى هذا الكلام عن النبي (ص) و لا عجب أن يشتهب الكلامان لأن

مستفاهما من قليب و مفرغهما من ذنوب.

Hadith n. 241

241. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The day of the oppressed over the oppressor will be severer than the day of the oppressor over the oppressed.⁵⁷

241. وقال عليه السلام: يَوْمُ الْمَظْلُومِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِ أَشَدُّ مِنْ يَوْمِ الظَّالِمِ عَلَى الْمَظْلُومِ.

Hadith n. 242

242. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fear Allah to some degree (even) though it be little; and set a curtain between you and Allah (even) though it be thin.

242. وقال عليه السلام: اتَّقِ اللَّهَ بَعْضَ التَّقَى وَإِنْ قَلَّ، وَاجْعَلْ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَ اللَّهِ سِتْرًا وَإِنْ

رَقَّ.

Hadith n. 243

243. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When replies are numerous the correct point remains obscure.⁵⁸

243. وقال عليه السلام: إِذَا ازْدَحَمَ الْجَوَابُ حَفِيَ الصَّوَابُ.

Hadith n. 244

244. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Surely in every blessing there is a right of Allah. If one discharges that right Allah increases the

blessing, and if one falls short of doing so one stands in danger of losing the blessing.

244. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ اللَّهَ فِي كُلِّ نِعْمَةٍ حَقًّا، فَمَنْ آذَاهُ زَادَهُ مِنْهَا، وَمَنْ قَصَرَ مِنْهُ خَاطَرَ بِزَوَالِ نِعْمَتِهِ.

Hadith n. 245

245. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When capability increases, desire decreases.

245. وقال عليه السلام: إِذَا كَثُرَتِ الْمُقْدِرَةُ قَلَّتِ الشَّهْوَةُ.

Hadith n. 246

246. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Keep on guard against the slipping away of blessings because not everything that runs away comes back.

246. وقال عليه السلام: اخذروا نِقَارَ النِّعَمِ فَمَا كُلُّ شَارِدٍ يَمْرُدُودٍ.

Hadith n. 247

247. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Generosity is more prompting to good than regard for kinship.

247. وقال عليه السلام: الْكَرَمُ أَعْطَفُ مِنَ الرَّحِمِ.

Hadith n. 248

248. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If a person has a good idea about you make his idea be true.

248. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ ظَنَّ بِكَ خَيْرًا فَصَدِّقْ ظَنَّهُ.

Hadith n. 249

249. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The best act is that which you have to force yourself to do.

249. وقال عليه السلام: أَفْضَلُ الْأَعْمَالِ مَا أَكْرَهْتَ نَفْسَكَ عَلَيْهِ .

Hadith n. 250

250. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I came to know Allah, the Glorified, through the breaking of determinations, change of intentions and losing of courage.⁵⁹

250. وقال عليه السلام: عَرَفْتُ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ بِفَسْخِ الْعَزَائِمِ وَحَلِّ الْعُقُودِ .

Hadith n. 251

251. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The bitterness of this world is the sweetness of the next world while the sweetness of this world is the bitterness of the next one.

251. وقال عليه السلام: مَرَارَةُ الدُّنْيَا حَلَاوَةُ الْآخِرَةِ، وَحَلَاوَةُ الدُّنْيَا مَرَارَةُ الْآخِرَةِ.

Hadith n. 252

252. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Allah has laid down iman (belief) for purification from polytheism; salat (prayer) for purification

from vanity; zakat (levy) as a means of livelihood; siyam (fasting) as a trial of the people; hajj (pilgrimage to the House of Allah in Mecca) as a support for religion; jihad (fighting in the way of Allah) for the honour of Islam; persuasion for good (al-amr bi'l-ma'ruf) for the good of the common people; dissuasion from evil (an-nahy 'ani'l-munkar) for the control of the mischievous; regard for kinship for increase of number; revenge for stoppage of bloodshed; the award of penalties for the realization of importance of the prohibitions; the abstinence from drinking wine for protection of the wit; the avoidance of theft for inculcating chastity; abstinence from adultery for safeguarding descent; abstinence from sodomy for increase of progeny; tendering evidence for furnishing proof against contentions; abstinence from the lie for increasing esteem for truth; maintenance of peace (salam) for protection from danger; imamah or Imamate (Divine Leadership) for the orderliness of the community and obedience (to Imams) as a mark of respect to the Imamate.⁶⁰

252. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: فَرَضَ اللَّهُ الْإِيمَانَ تَطْهِيراً مِنَ الشِّرْكِ وَ الصَّلَاةَ تَنْزِيهاً عَنِ الْكِبْرِ وَ الرِّكَاءَةَ تَسْبِيهاً لِلرِّزْقِ وَ الصِّيَامَ اِتِّبَاءً لِإِخْلَاصِ الْخَلْقِ وَ الْحُجَّ تَقَرُّباً لِلدِّينِ وَ الْجِهَادَ عِزًّا لِلْإِسْلَامِ وَ الْأَمْرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ مَصْلِحَةً لِلْعَوَامِّ وَ النَّهْيَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ رَدْعاً لِلسُّفْهَاءِ وَ صِلَةَ الرَّحِمِ مَنَمَةً لِلْعَدَدِ وَ الْفِصَاصَ حِفْناً لِلدِّمَاءِ وَ إِفَامَةَ الْحُدُودِ إِعْظَاماً لِلْمَحَارِمِ وَ تَرْكَ شَرْبِ الْحَمْرِ تَحْصِيناً لِلْعَقْلِ وَ مُجَانَبَةَ السَّرِقَةِ إِجَاباً لِلْعَقْبَةِ وَ تَرْكَ الرِّبَى تَحْصِيناً لِلنَّسَبِ وَ تَرْكَ الْيُوطِ تَكْثِيراً لِلنَّسْلِ وَ الشَّهَادَاتِ اسْتِظْهَاراً عَلَى الْمُجَاحِدَاتِ وَ تَرْكَ الْكُذِبِ تَشْرِيفاً لِلصِّدْقِ وَ السَّلَامَ أَمَاناً مِنَ الْمَخَافِ وَ الْأَمَانَةَ نِظَاماً لِلْأُمَّةِ وَ الطَّاعَةَ تَعْظِيماً لِلْإِمَامَةِ.

Hadith n. 253

253. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, used to say: If you want an oppressor to take an oath ask him to swear like this that he is out of Allah's might and His power, because if he swears falsely in this way he will be quickly punished, while if he swears by Allah Who is such that there is no god but He, he will not be quickly punished since he is expressing the Unity of Allah, the Sublime.⁶¹ ciii

253. وَ كَانَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَقُولُ: أَخْلِفُوا الظَّالِمَ إِذَا أَرَدْتُمْ يَمِينَهُ بِأَنَّهُ بَرِيءٌ مِنْ حَوْلِ اللَّهِ وَ قُوَّتِهِ فَإِنَّهُ إِذَا حَلَفَ بِهَا كَاذِباً عُوجِلَ الْعُقُوبَةُ وَ إِذَا حَلَفَ بِاللَّهِ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ لَمْ يُعَاجِلْ لِأَنَّهُ قَدْ وَحَدَّ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى.

Hadith n. 254

254. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O son of Adam, be your own representative in the matter of your property and do about it whatever you want to be done with it after your death.⁶²

254. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: يَا ابْنَ آدَمَ كُنْ وَصِيَّ نَفْسِكَ فِي مَالِكَ وَ اعْمَلْ فِيهِ مَا تُؤْتِرُ أَنْ يُعْمَلَ فِيهِ مِنْ بَعْدِكَ.

Hadith n. 255

255. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Anger is a kind of madness because the victim to it repents afterwards. If he does not repent his madness is confirmed.

255. وقال عليه السلام: الْحِدَّةُ ضَرْبٌ مِنَ الْجُنُونِ، لِإِنَّ صَاحِبَهَا يَنْدَمُ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَنْدَمْ فَجُنُونُهُ مُسْتَحْكِمٌ.

Hadith n. 256

256. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Health of body comes from paucity of envy.⁶³

256. وقال عليه السلام: صِحَّةُ الْجَسَدِ مِنْ قِلَّةِ الْحَسَدِ.

Hadith n. 257

257. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to Kumayl ibn Ziyad an-Nakha'i: O Kumayl, direct your people to go out in the day to achieve noble traits and to go out in the night to meet the needs of those who might be sleeping, for I swear by Him Whose hearing extends to all voices if ever someone pleases another's heart, Allah will create a special thing out of this pleasing so that whenever any hardship befalls him it will come running like flowing water and drive away the hardship as wild camels are driven away.

257. وقال عليه السلام لِكُمَيْلِ بْنِ زِيَادِ النَّخَعِيِّ: يَا كُمَيْلُ، مُرْ أَهْلَكَ أَنْ يَرْوَحُوا فِي كَسْبِ الْمَكَارِمِ، وَيُدْجُوا فِي حَاجَةِ مَنْ هُوَ نَائِمٌ، فَوَالَّذِي وَسِعَ سَمْعُهُ الْأَصْوَاتَ مَا مِنْ أَحَدٍ أَوْدَعَ قَلْبًا سُورًا إِلَّا وَخَلَقَ اللَّهُ لَهُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ السُّورِ لُطْفًا، فَإِذَا نَزَلَتْ بِهِ نَائِبَةٌ جَرَى إِلَيْهَا كَالْمَاءِ فِي الْحَدَارِ حَتَّى يَطْرُدَهَا عَنْهُ كَمَا تُطْرُدُ عَرَبِيَّةُ الْأَبْلِ.

Hadith n. 258

258. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When you fall into destitution, trade with Allah through charity.

258. وقال عليه السلام: إِذَا أَمْلَقْتُمْ فَتَاجِرُوا اللَّهَ بِالصَّدَقَةِ.

Hadith n. 259

259. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Faithfulness with faithless people is faithlessness with Allah, while faithlessness with faithless people is faithfulness with Allah.

259. وقال عليه السلام: الْوَفَاءُ لِأَهْلِ الْعَدْرِ عَدْرٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ، وَالْعَدْرُ بِأَهْلِ الْعَدْرِ وَفَاءٌ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ.

Hadith n. 260

260. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is many a man being gradually brought towards punishment by good treatment with him; many a man who remains in deceit because his evils are covered; and many a man who is in illusion because of good talk about him, while there is no greater ordeal by Allah, the Glorified, than the giving of time.

260. وقال عليه السلام: كَمْ مِنْ مُسْتَدْرِجٍ بِالْأَحْسَانِ إِلَيْهِ، وَمَعْرُورٍ بِالسُّتْرِ عَلَيْهِ، وَمَقْتُونٍ بِحُسْنِ الْقَوْلِ فِيهِ، مَا ابْتَلَى اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ أَحَدًا بِمِثْلِ الْأَمَلَاءِ لَهُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This saying has appeared earlier as well but here it contains a beautiful and useful addition.

قال الرضي: و قد مَضَى هذا الكلام فيما تقدم، إلا أن فيه هاهنا زيادة مفيدة

Section Wherein We Have Included Selections From Wonderful Sayings Of Amir Al-Mu'minin, Peace Be Upon Him, Which Require Explanation

فصل نذكر فيه شيئاً من غريب كلامه، عليه السلام،

المحتاج الى التفسير

I. A tradition related from Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, says: When the situation is like this, then the head of the religion will rise and people will gather around him as pieces of rainless cloud collect during autumn.

I. في حديثه عليه السلام: فَإِذَا كَانَ ذَلِكَ ضَرَبَ يَعْسُوبُ الدِّينِ بَدَنِيهِ، فَيَجْتَمِعُونَ إِلَيْهِ

كَمَا يَجْتَمِعُ قَرْنُ الْحُرَيْفِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "Ya'sub" ⁶⁴ is the great chief who is in charge of the people's affairs, and "quza`" means the pieces of cloud which have no rain.

قال الرضي: يعسوب الدين: السيد العظيم المالك لأمور الناس يومئذ، والقزع: قطع الغيم

التي لا ماء فيها.

II. A tradition of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, says: He is a versatile speaker. ⁶⁵

II. وفي حديثه عليه السلام: هَذَا الْخُطِيبُ الشَّحْشَحُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "shahshah" means one expert and free in speech, and every one who is free in speech or walking is called "shahshah", while in another sense this word means a miserly and niggardly person.

يريد: الماهر بالخطبة الماضي فيها، وكل ماض في كلام أو سير فهو شحشح، والشحشح

في غير هذا الموضع: البخيل الممسك

III. A tradition from Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, says: Quarrels bring about ruin.

III. وفي حديثه عليه السلام: إِنَّ لِلْخُصُومَةِ قُحْمًا.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "quhm" means ruin because quarrels often drive men into ruin and grief. In the same way, it is said "quhmatu'l-A 'rab" which means the period (of drought) when the cattle owned by the nomad desert Arabs are reduced to bones, and this is their being driven to it. Another argument is also advanced in this matter; namely that the situation drives

them to green areas, in other words the hardship of the desert life drives them to hadar (a civilized region with town and villages and a settled population [as opposed to desert]).

يريد بالقحم المهالك، لأنها تُقحم أصحابها في المهالك والمتالف في الأكثر، ومن ذلك قُحمة الأعراب، هو أن تصيهم السنة فتعرق أموالهم فذلك تقحمها فيهم. و قيل فيه وجه آخر: وهو أنها تُقحمهم بلادَ الريف، أي توجههم إلى دخول الحضر عند تحول البدو.

IV. A tradition of Amir al-mu'niin, peace be upon him, says: When girls reach the stage of (realizing) realities, relations on the father's side are preferable.

IV وفي حديثه عليه السلام: إِذَا بَلَغَ النِّسَاءُ نَصَّ الحِقَاقِ فَالْعَصْبَةُ أَوْلَى.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Instead of "nassa'l-hiqaq" "the combination "nassa'l-haqa'iq" has also been related. "nass" means the last end of things or their remotest limit, such as "an-nassi fi's sayr" means the maximum a beast can walk. Or you say "nasastu'r-rajula 'ani'l-amri" when you have questioned a man to the extreme to make him utter all he has. Thus, "nassu'l-haqa'iq" means prudence because it is the last limit of childhood and is the time when a child crosses childhood into majority, and this is a very eloquent reference to the point, and strange too. Amir al-mu'minin intends to say: When girls reach this stage their relations on father's side have a better right than their mother, provided they are those with whom marriage is prohibited like brothers and uncles, to arrange for their marriages if they so desire. "al-hiqaq" also means the quarrelling of the mother with a girl's paternal relations. This quarrel is that everyone of them says he has a better 'right for her. That is why it is said "haqatuhu hiqaqan" on the lines of "jadaltuhu jidalan". It has also been said that "nassu'l-hiqaq" means acquiring understanding and this is prudence, because Amir al-mu'minin refers to the stage when rights and duties become applicable. The person who has related the word as "haqa'iq" intends to signify the plural of "haqiqah" (reality).

قال: ويروى (نص الحقائق)، والنص منتهى الأشياء ومبلغ أقصاها كالنص في السير لأنه أقصى ما تقدر عليه الدابة، ويقال نصت الرجل عن الامر إذا استقصيت مسألته لتستخرج ما عنده فيه، ونص الحقائق يريد به الادراك، لأنه منتهى الصغر، والوقت الذي يخرج منه الصغير إلى حد الكبر، وهو من أفصح الكنايات عن هذا الامر وأغربها، يقول فإذا بلغ النساء ذلك فالعصبة أولى بالمرأة من أمها إذا كانوا محرما مثل الاخوة والأعمام، وتزويجها إن أرادوا ذلك.

والحقاق: محاكاة الام للعصبة في المرأة، وهو الجدال، والخصومة، وقول كل واحد منهما للآخر: أنا أحق منك بهذا، يقال منه: حاqqته حقاقا، مثل جادلته جدالا. قال: وقد قيل إن

نص الحقائق بلوغ العقل وهو الادراك، لأنه عليه السلام إنما أراد منتهى الامر الذي تجب به الحقوق والاحكام. قال: ومن رواه (نص الحقائق) فإنما أراد جمع حقيقة،

The above is what Abu 'Ubayd al-Qasim ibn Sallam has stated (in Gharib al-hadith, vol.3, pp.456 -458); but I think that the intention here by the word "nassu'l-hiqaq" is a girl's reaching the stage when it is possible to marry her and to allow her to dispose of her rights herself on the analogy of "bil hiaqqa mina 'l-ibili" (a camel's attaining majority) wherein "hiqaq is the plural of "hiqqah" or "hiqq" and it means completion of three years (of age) and entry into the fourth, which is the time when it reaches the age when it is possible to ride on its back and to exert it in walking. "haqa'iq" too is the plural of "hiqqah". Thus, both the versions point to the same meaning, and this interpretation is more in keeping with the way of the Arabs than the other one stated earlier.

هذا معنى ما ذكره أبو عبيد القاسم بن سلام. قال: والذي عندي أن المراد بنص الحقائق هاهنا بلوغ المرأة إلى الحد الذي يجوز فيه تزويجها وتصرفها في حقوقها، تشبيها بالحقاق من الإبل، وهي جمع حقة وحق، وهو الذي استكمل ثلاث سنين ودخل في الرابعة، وعند ذلك يبلغ إلى الحد الذي يمكن فيه من ركوب ظهره ونصه في سيره، والحقائق أيضا: جمع حقة، فالروايتان جميعا ترجعان إلى مسمى واحد، وهذا أشبه بطريقة العرب من المعنى المذكور أولا.

V. A tradition of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, says: Faith produces a "lumzah" in the heart. As faith develops, the "lumzah" also increases.

V. وفي حديثه عليه السلام: إِنَّ الْإِيمَانَ يَبْدُو لُمْظَةً فِي الْقَلْبِ، كُلَّمَا أَزْدَادَ الْإِيمَانُ أَزْدَادَتِ
الْلُمْظَةُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "lumzah" is a white spot or something like that. On that analogy if a horse has a white spot on its lower lip it is called "farusun almaz", that is, a white-spotted horse.

الْلُمْظَةُ مثل النكتة أو نحوها من البياض، ومنه قيل فرس المظ: إذا كان بجحفلته شيء من البياض.

VI. A tradition of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him) says: If a man has a "ad-daynu'z-zanun" (i.e. doubtful loan) it is his duty to pay zakat thereon for all the past years when he recovers it.

VI. وفي حديثه عليه السلام: إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ إِذَا كَانَ لَهُ الدَّيْنُ الظَّنُونُ يَجِبُ عَلَيْهِ أَنْ يُرَكِّبَهُ لِمَا
مَضَى إِذَا قَبَضَهُ.

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "az-zanun" is the loan about which the lender does not know whether he will be able to recover it from the borrower. He is like the one who hopes as well as loses hope. This is the most eloquent way of expression. In this way everything about which you do not know where you stand would be zanun. In the same strain poet al-A' sha (Maymun ibn Qays al-Wa'ili [d. 7/629]) says:

The az-zanun well (i.e., the one that may or may not have water) which is also deprived of the rain of the raining clouds cannot be compared to the Euphrates whose waves are rising high and which is pushing away the boat as well as the adept swimmer.

"Judd" means the well (situated in a wilderness), while zanun is that about which it is not known whether or not it has water.

فالظَّنُونُ: الذي لا يَعْلَمُ صاحِبُهُ أَيْقَبُضُهُ من الذي هو عليه أم لا، فكأنته الذي يُظَنُّ به،
فمرة يرجوه و مرة لا يرجوه. و هو من أفصح الكلام، وكذلك كلُّ أمرٍ تطلبه ولا تدري على
أي شيء أنت منه فهو ظَنُون،

وعلى ذلك قول الأعشى:

مَا يُجْعَلُ الْجُدُّ الظَّنُونُ الَّذِي * جُنَّبَ صَوْبَ اللَّجْبِ الْمَاطِرِ

مِثْلَ الْفَرَايِي إِذَا مَا طَمًا * يَقْدِفُ بِالْبُوصِيِّ وَالْمَاهِرِ

والجُدُّ: البئر، والظنون: التي لا يُدري هل فيها ماء أم لا .

VII. A tradition of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, relates that he arranged a force for advancing for jihad and said: i'dhibu (turn away) from women so far as you can.

VII. وفي حديثه عليه السلام أنه شبع جيشاً يَغْزِيهِ فقال: اعْذِبُوا عَنِ النِّسَاءِ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: It (i'dhibu) means that "keep off" from thoughts of women and from clinging your heart to them, and do not have union with them; because all this produces weakness in enthusiasm, affects the firmness of determination, weakens against the enemy and prevents from exerting in fighting. Whatever prevents from something is called "adhaba 'anhu" i.e., turned away from it. Thus, "al-'adhib" and "al-'adhub" mean one who gives up eating and drinking.

و معناه: اصْدِفُوا عَنِ ذَكَرِ النِّسَاءِ وَشُغْلِ الْقَلْبِ بِهِنَّ، وامتنعوا من المقاربة لهنّ، لأن ذلك يُفْتُ في عَضُدِ الْحَمِيَّةِ، ويقدم في معاهد العزيمة ويكسر عن العُدْوِ، وَيَلْفِتُ عَنِ الْإِبْعَادِ فِي الْغَزْوِ، وكلُّ من امتنع من شيء فقد أعْدَبَ عنه، والعاذبُ والعُدُوبُ: الممتنع من الأكل والشرب.

VIII. A tradition of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, says: Like the successful shooter (al-yasir al-falij) who looks forward to achieving success at his first shot.

VIII. وفي حديثه عليه السلام: كَأَيَّاسِرِ الْقَالِحِ يَنْتَظِرُ أَوَّلَ فَوْزَةٍ مِنْ قَدَاحِهِ..

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: "al-ya~sirun" (pl. of al-yasir) means those who shoot with arrows on the slaughtered camel by way of gambling; while "al-falij" means successful or victorious. For example, it is said: 'falaja 'alayhim" or 'falajahum" (that is, he got victory over them or overpowered them). A poet has said by way of war recital:

When I noticed a successful person securing victory.

قال: الياسرون هم الذين يتضاربون بالقداح على الجزور، والفالج: القاهر الغالب، يقال: قد فلح عليهم وفلجهم، قال الراجز:
لما رأيت فالجا قد فلجا

IX. A tradition of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, runs: When the crisis became red-hot we sought refuge with the Messenger of Allah (peace-be upon him and his descendants), and none of us was closer to the enemy than he himself.

IX وفي حديثه عليه السلام: كُنَّا إِذَا احْمَرَ الْبَأْسُ اتَّقَيْنَا بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، فَلَمْ يَكُنْ أَحَدٌ مِنَّا أَقْرَبَ إِلَى الْعَدُوِّ مِنْهُ.

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This means that when fear of the enemy increased and fighting became serious, the Muslims would begin to think that since the Messenger of Allah had taken up fighting himself, Allah must give them victory through him and that therefore they would be safe from all the dangers because of his existence.

ومعنى ذلك: أنه إذا عَظُمَ الخوفُ من العدو واشتدَّ عِصَابُ الحَرْبِ فَرَعَ المسلمون إلى قتال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله بنفسه، فَيُنزِلُ اللهُ تعالى النصرَ عليهم، ويؤمنون ما كانوا يخافونه بمكانه.

And the words "idha'hmarra'l-ba'su" (when the crisis became red-hot) refers to the seriousness of the matter. For this purpose several expressions have been used out of which this is the best one, since Amir al-mu'minin has likened war with fire which combines heat and redness both in action as well as colour. This is confirmed by the words of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his descendants) when on the day of Hunayn he noticed people of Hawazin (tribe) fighting he said, "Now 'watis' has heated up" and 'watis' is the place where fire is lighted. In this way, the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him and his descendants) likened the seriousness of fighting by men to the seriousness of the fire and its flames.

وقوله: (إذا احمر البأس): كناية عن اشتداد الامر، وقد قيل في ذلك أقوال، أحسنها أنه شبه حمى الحرب بالنار التي تجمع الحرارة والحمرة بفعلها ولونها، وما يقوى ذلك قول الرسول صلى الله عليه وآله وقد رأى مجتلد الناس يوم حنين وهي حرب هوازن: (الان حمى الوطيس)، والوطيس: مستوقد النار، فشبه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله ما استحر من جلاذ القوم باحتدام النار وشدته التهاجها.

This section ends and we return to the original theme of the chapter.

انقضى هذا الفصل، ثم رجعنا إلى سنن الغرض الأول في هذا الباب.

Hadith n. 261

261. When the news of the attack of Mu'awiyah's men on al-Anbar reached Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, he himself came out walking till he reached an-Nukhaylah, where people overtook him and said: "O' Amir al-mu'minin, we are enough for them," then he said:

261. وقال عليه السلام لما بلغه إغارة أصحاب معاوية على الأنبار، فخرج بنفسه ماشياً حتى أتى التُّحَيْلَةَ فأدركه الناسُ وقالوا: يا أميرالمؤمنين نحن نكفيكهم. فقال عليه السلام:

You cannot be enough for me against yourselves, so how can you be enough for me against others? Before me the people used to complain of the oppression of their rulers but now I have to complain of the wrongful actions of my people; as though I am led by them and they are the leaders or that I am the subject and they are the rulers.

وَاللَّهِ مَا تَكْفُونِي أَنْفُسَكُمْ، فَكَيْفَ تَكْفُونِي غَيْرَكُمْ؟ إِنْ كَانَتِ الرَّعَايَا قَبْلِي لَتَشْكُوا حَيْفَ رُعَايَاهَا، وَإِنِّي الْيَوْمَ لَأَشْكُو حَيْفَ رَعِيَّتِي، كَأَنِّي الْمَقُودُ وَهُمْ الْقَادَةُ، أَوْ الْمَوْزُوعُ وَهُمْ الْوَزَعَةُ.

The narrator says: When Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, uttered this during his long speech which we have included in the collection of sermons (No.27), two men from his companions advanced towards him and one of them said: I rule no one except myself and my brother (Qur'an, 5:25). So, order us with your command, O Amir al-mu'minin and we will accomplish it. Thereupon, Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: How can you two accomplish what I aim at?

فلما قال عليه السلام هذا القول، في كلامٍ طويلٍ قد ذكرنا مختارَه في جملةِ الحُطْبِ، تقدّم إليه رجلان من أصحابه فقال أحدهما: إني لا أملك إلا نفسي وأخي، فمُرنا بأمرك يا أميرالمؤمنين نُنفِذْ له. فقال عليه السلام: وَأَيْنَ تَقَعَانِ مِمَّا أُرِيدُ؟

Hadith n. 262

262- It is said that al-Harith ibn Hawt came to Amir al-mu'minin, and said: Do you believe I can ever imagine that the people of Jamal were in the wrong? Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O al-Harith! You have seen below yourself but not above yourself, and so you have been confused. Certainly, you have not known right, so that you can recognize the righteous. And you have not known wrong, so that you can recognize the people of wrong! Then al-Harith said: In that case, I shall withdraw along with Sa'd ibn Malik and 'Abdullah: ibn 'Umar; whereupon Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Verily, Sa'd and 'Umar have neither sided with Right nor forsaken Wrong.⁶⁶

262. وقيل: إنَّ الحارث بن حُوَظِ أتاَه عليه السلام فقال: أتراني أظنُّ أصحابَ الجمل كانوا على ضلالة؟ فقال عليه السلام: يا حارث، إِنَّكَ نَظَرْتَ تَحْتَكَ وَلَمْ تَنْظُرْ فَوْقَكَ فَحِرْزَتْ إِنَّكَ لَمْ تَعْرِفِ الْحَقَّ فَتَعَرَّفَ مَنْ أَنَا، وَلَمْ تَعْرِفِ الْبَاطِلَ فَتَعَرَّفَ مَنْ أَنَا. فقال الحارث: فإني

أَعْتَرَلَ مَعَ سَعِيدِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ وَعَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَمْرٍو. فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِنَّ سَعِيداً وَعَبْدَ اللَّهِ بْنَ عُمَرَ لَمْ يَنْصُرَا الْحَقَّ، وَلَمْ يَخْذُلَا الْبَاطِلَ.

Hadith n. 263

263- Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The holder of authority is like the rider on a lion - he is envied for his position but he well knows his position.⁶⁷

263. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: صَاحِبُ السُّلْطَانِ كِرَاكِبِ الْأَسَدِ: يُعْبَطُ بِمَوْقِعِهِ، وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَوْضِعِهِ .

Hadith n. 264

264. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do good with the bereaved ones of others so that good is done to your bereaved ones also.

264. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: أَحْسِنُوا فِي عَقَبِ غَيْرِكُمْ تُحْفَظُوا فِي عَقَبِكُمْ.

Hadith n. 265

265. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When the utterance of the wise is to the point it serves as a cure, but if it is wrong it proves like an illness.⁶⁸

265. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِنَّ كَلَامَ الْحُكَمَاءِ إِذَا كَانَ صَوَاباً كَانَ دَوَاءً، وَإِذَا كَانَ خَطَأً كَانَ دَاءً.

Hadith n. 266

266. Someone asked Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, to define faith for him, so he said: Come to me tomorrow so that I enlighten you in the presence of all the people, so that if you forget what I say others might retain it, because an utterance is like a fluttering prey which may be grappled with by someone but missed by others.

266. وَسَأَلَهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ رَجُلٌ أَنْ يَعْرِفَهُ مَا الْإِيمَانُ. فَقَالَ: إِذَا كَانَ غَدًا فَأَتِنِي حَتَّى أُخْبِرَكَ عَلَى أَسْمَاعِ النَّاسِ، فَإِنْ نَسِيتَ مَقَالَتِي حَفِظَهَا عَلَيْكَ غَيْرُكَ، فَإِنَّ الْكَلَامَ كَالشَّارِدَةِ، يَنْقُضُهَا هَذَا وَيُحْطِئُهَا هَذَا.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: We have already stated in the earlier chapter what Amir al-mu'minin replied to this man, namely his saying (no.31) "Faith stands on four supports."

وقد ذكرنا ما أجابه به عليه السلام فيما تقدم من هذا الباب، وهو قوله: الإيمان على أربع شعب.

Hadith n. 267

267. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O son of Adam, do not inflict the worry of the day that has not yet come on the day which has already come, because if that day be in your life Allah will bestow its livelihood also.

267. وقال عليه السلام: يَا بَنَ آدَمَ، لَا تَحْمِلْ هَمَّ يَوْمِكَ الَّذِي لَمْ يَأْتِكَ عَلَى يَوْمِكَ الَّذِي قَدْ أَتَاكَ، فَإِنَّهُ إِنْ يَكُ مِنْ عُمْرِكَ يَأْتِ اللَّهُ فِيهِ بِرِزْقِكَ.

Hadith n. 268

268. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Have love for your friend up to a limit, for it is possible that he may turn into your enemy some day; and hate your enemy up to a limit for it is possible that he may turn into your friend some day.

268. وقال عليه السلام: أَحْبِبْ حَبِيبَكَ هَوْنًا مَا عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونَ بَغِيضَكَ يَوْمًا مَا، وَأُبْغِضْ بَغِيضَكَ هَوْنًا مَا عَسَى أَنْ يَكُونَ حَبِيبَكَ يَوْمًا مَا.

Hadith n. 269

269. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There are two kinds of workers in the world. One is a person who works in this world for this world and his work of this world keeps him unmindful of the next world. He is afraid of destitution for those he will leave behind but feels himself safe about it. So, he spends his life after the good of others. The other is one who works in this world for what is to come hereafter, and he secures his share of this world without effort. Thus, he gets both the benefits together and becomes the owner of both the houses together. In this way, he is prestigious before Allah. If he asks Allah anything He does not deny him.

269. وقال عليه السلام: النَّاسُ فِي الدُّنْيَا عَامِلَانِ: عَامِلٌ عَمِلَ فِي الدُّنْيَا لِلدُّنْيَا، قَدْ شَعَلَتْهُ دُنْيَاهُ عَنْ آخِرَتِهِ، يَخْشَى عَلَى مَنْ يَخْلُقُهُ الْفَقْرَ، وَيَأْمَنُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ، فَيُفْنِي عُمْرَهُ فِي مَنَفَعَةِ غَيْرِهِ. وَعَامِلٌ عَمِلَ فِي الدُّنْيَا لِمَا بَعْدَهَا، فَجَاءَهُ الَّذِي لَهُ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا بِغَيْرِ عَمَلٍ، فَأَحْرَزَ الْحُطْبَيْنِ مَعًا، وَمَلَكَ الدَّارَيْنِ جَمِيعًا، فَأَصْبَحَ وَجِيهًا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ، لَا يَسْأَلُ اللَّهُ حَاجَةً فَيَمْنَعُهُ.

Hadith n. 270

270. It is related that during the days of (Caliph) 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, the question of the excess of the ornaments of the Ka'bah was mentioned to him and some people suggested: If you prepare with it an army of Muslims that will be a matter of great reward; and what would the Ka'bah do with the ornaments? 'Umar thought of doing so but asked Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, who said:

270. وروى أنه ذكر عند عمر بن الخطاب في أيامه حُلِي الكعبة وكثرتُهُ، فقال قوم: لو أخذته فجهزت به جيوش المسلمين كان أعظم للأجر، وما تصنع الكعبة بالحُلِي؟ فهم عمر بذلك، وسأل عنه أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام.

When the Qur'an was descended on the Prophet, peace be upon him and his descendants, there were four kinds of property. One, the property of Muslim individuals which he distributed among the successors according to fixed shares. Second, the tax (fay') which he distributed to those for whom it was meant. Third, the one-fifth (khums) levy for which Allah had fixed the ways of disposal. Fourth, amounts of charity (sadaqat) whose disposal was

also fixed by Allah. The ornaments of Ka'bah did exist in those days but Allah left them as they were, but did not leave them by omission, nor were they unknown to Him. Therefore, you retain them where Allah and His Prophet placed them.

فقال: إِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ أَنْزَلَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَالْأَمْوَالُ أَرْبَعَةٌ: أَمْوَالُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فَفَسَمَهَا بَيْنَ الْوَرِثَةِ فِي الْفَرَائِضِ، وَالْفَيْءُ فَفَسَمَهُ عَلَى مُسْتَحِقِّهِ، وَالْحُمْسُ فَوَضَعَهُ اللَّهُ حَيْثُ وَضَعَهُ، وَالصَّدَقَاتُ فَجَعَلَهَا اللَّهُ حَيْثُ جَعَلَهَا. وَكَانَ حَلِي الْكَعْبَةِ فِيهَا يَوْمَئِذٍ، فَتَرَكَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَى حَالِهِ، وَلَمْ يَتْرِكْهُ نِسْيَانًا، وَلَمْ يَخْفَ عَلَيْهِ مَكَانًا، فَأَقْرَهُ حَيْثُ أَقْرَهُ اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ.

Thereupon, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab said: If you had not been here we would have been humiliated; and he left the ornaments as they were.⁶⁹

فقال له عمر: لولاك لافتضحنا. وترك الحلي بحاله.

Hadith n. 271

271. It is related that two persons were brought to Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him. They had committed theft of public property. One of them was a slave purchased from public money and the other had been purchased by someone among the people. Then Amir al-mu'minin said: As for this one who is the property of public money, there is no punishment for him for it means one property of Allah having taken another property of Allah. As for the other, he should get the punishment. Consequently, his hand was cut.

271. وروي أنه عليه السلام رُفِعَ إِلَيْهِ رَجُلَانِ سَرَقَا مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ، أَحَدُهُمَا عَبْدٌ مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ، وَالْآخَرُ مِنْ عُرُوضِ النَّاسِ. فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: أَمَّا هَذَا فَهُوَ مِنْ مَالِ اللَّهِ وَلَا حُدَّ عَلَيْهِ، مَالِ اللَّهِ أَكَلَّ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا، وَأَمَّا الْآخَرُ فَعَلَيْهِ الْحُدُّ، فَقَطَعَ يَدَهُ.

Hadith n. 272

272. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If my steps acquire firmness out of these slippery places, I will alter several things.⁷⁰

272. وقال عليه السلام: لَوْ قَدِ اسْتَوَتْ قَدَمَايَ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْمَدَاحِضِ لَعَيَّرْتُ أَشْيَاءَ.

Hadith n. 273

273. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Know with full conviction that Allah has not fixed for any person more livelihood than what has been ordained in the Book of Destiny, even though his means (of seeking it) may be great, his craving for it intense and his efforts for it acute; nor does the weakness of a person or the paucity of his means stand in the way between what is ordained in the Book of Destiny and himself. He who realizes it and acts upon it is the best of them all in point of comfort and benefit; while he who disregards it arid doubts it exceeds all men in disadvantages. Very often a favoured person is being slowly driven (towards punishment) through those favours; and very often an afflicted person is being done good through his affliction. Therefore, O listener, increase your

gratefulness, lessen your haste and stay within the bounds of your livelihood.

273. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: اعْلَمُوا عِلْمًا يَقِينًا أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَجْعَلِ لِلْعَبْدِ وَ إِنْ عَظُمَتْ حِيلَتُهُ وَ اسْتَدَّتْ طَلِبَتُهُ وَ قَوِيَتْ مَكِيدَتُهُ أَكْثَرَ مِمَّا سُمِّيَ لَهُ فِي الذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ وَ لَمْ يَخْلُ بَيْنَ الْعَبْدِ فِي ضَعْفِهِ وَ قِلَّةِ حِيلَتِهِ وَ بَيْنَ أَنْ يَبْلُغَ مَا سُمِّيَ لَهُ فِي الذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ وَ الْعَارِفُ هَذَا الْعَامِلُ بِهِ أَعْظَمُ النَّاسِ رَاحَةً فِي مَنَفَعَةٍ وَ التَّارِكُ لَهُ الشَّاكُ فِيهِ أَعْظَمُ النَّاسِ شُغْلًا فِي مَضَرَّةٍ وَ رَبُّ مَنْعَمٍ عَلَيْهِ مُسْتَدْرَجٌ بِالنُّعْمَى وَ رَبُّ مُبْتَلَى مَصْنُوعٌ لَهُ بِالْبُلُوى فَرْدٌ أَيُّهَا الْمُسْتَنْفَعُ فِي شُكْرِكَ وَ قَصْرٍ مِنْ عَجَلَتِكَ وَ قِفْ عِنْدَ مُنْتَهَى رِزْقِكَ.

Hadith n. 274

274. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not turn your knowledge into ignorance or your conviction into doubt. When you gain knowledge act (upon it) and when you acquire conviction proceed (on its basis).⁷¹

274. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لَا تَجْعَلُوا عِلْمَكُمْ جَهْلًا وَ يَقِينَكُمْ شَكًّا إِذَا عَلِمْتُمْ فَأَعْمَلُوا وَ إِذَا تَيَقَّنْتُمْ فَأَقْدِمُوا.

Hadith n. 275

275. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Greed takes a person to the watering place but gets him back without letting him drink. It undertakes responsibility but does not fulfil it. Often the drinker gets choked before the quenching of his thirst. The greater the worth of a thing yearned for the greater is the grief for its loss. Desires blind the eyes of understanding. The destined share will reach him who does not approach it.

275. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِنَّ الطَّمْعَ مُورِدٌ عَيْزٍ مُصْدِرٍ وَ ضَامِنٌ عَيْزٍ وَبِيٍّ وَ زَيْمًا شَرِقٍ شَارِبِ الْمَاءِ قَبْلَ رِيَّتِهِ وَ كُلَّمَا عَظُمَ قَدْرُ الشَّيْءِ الْمُتَنَافَسِ فِيهِ عَظُمَتِ الرَّزِيَّةُ لِقَعْدِهِ وَ الْأَمَانِيُّ نُعْمَى أَعْيُنِ الْبَصَائِرِ وَ الْحُظُّ يَأْتِي مَنْ لَا يَأْتِيهِ.

Hadith n. 276

276. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O My God, I seek Your protection from this that I may appear to be good in the eyes of the people whilst my inward self may be sinful before You, and that I may guard myself (from sins) only for show before the people although You are aware of all about me. Thus, I appear before the people in good shape although my evil deeds are placed before You. This means achieving nearness to Your creatures but remoteness from Your pleasure.

276. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ أَنْ تُحَسِّنَ فِي لَامِعَةِ الْعُيُونِ عَلَائِيَّتِي وَ تَنْفِخَ فِيمَا أُبْطِنُ لَكَ سِرِّيَّتِي مُحَافِظًا عَلَيَّ رِثَاءِ النَّاسِ مِنْ نَفْسِي بِجَمِيعِ مَا أَنْتَ مُطَّلِعٌ عَلَيْهِ

مِنِّي فَأُبْدِي لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنَ ظَاهِرِي وَ أْفْضِي إِلَيْكَ بِسُوءِ عَمَلِي تَقَرُّبًا إِلَى عِبَادِكَ وَ تَبَاعُدًا مِنْ مَرْضَاتِكَ.

Hadith n. 277

277. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I swear by Him Who let us pass the dark night after which there was a bright day that such and such⁷² did not happen.

277. وقال عليه السلام: لَأِ وَالَّذِي أَمْسَيْنَا مِنْهُ فِي غُبْرِ لَيْلَةٍ دَهْمَاءَ تَكْشِرُ عَنْ يَوْمِ أَعْرَى مَا كَانَ كَذَاكَذَا.

Hadith n. 278

278. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A small action which is continued with regularity is more beneficial than a long one performed with disgust.

278. وقال عليه السلام: قَلِيلٌ تَدْوُمٌ عَلَيْهِ أَزْجَى مِنْ كَثِيرٍ مَمْلُولٍ.

Hadith n. 279

279. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When optional issues stand in the way of obligatories, abandon them.

279. وقال عليه السلام: إِذَا أَضْرَبَتِ النَّوَافِلُ بِالْفَرَائِضِ فَارْفُضُوهَا.

Hadith n. 280

280. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever keeps in view the distance of the journey remains prepared.

280. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ تَذَكَّرَ بَعْدَ السَّفَرِ اسْتَعَدَّ.

Hadith n. 281

281. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Perception by the eyes is not real observation because the eyes sometimes deceive people; but wisdom does not deceive whomsoever it counsels.

281. وقال عليه السلام: لَيْسَتْ الرُّؤْيَةُ كَالْمُعَايَنَةِ مَعَ الْأَبْصَارِ، فَقَدْ تَكْذِبُ الْعُيُونُ أَهْلَهَا، وَلَا يَعْشُّ الْعَقْلُ مَنْ اسْتَنْصَحَهُ.

Hadith n. 282

282. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Between you and the preaching there is a curtain of deception.

282. وقال عليه السلام: بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ الْمَوْعِظَةِ حِجَابٌ مِنَ الْعَرَةِ.

Hadith n. 283

283. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The ignorant among you are excessive in their deeds (without knowledge) while your learned fall short (in their deeds).

283. وقال عليه السلام: جَاهِلُكُمْ مُزْدَادٌ وَعَالِمُكُمْ مُسَوِّفٌ.

Hadith n. 284

284. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Knowledge dispels the excuse of those who advance excuses.

284. وقال عليه السلام: قَطَعَ الْعِلْمُ عُذْرَ الْمُتَعَلِّلِينَ.

Hadith n. 285

285. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He whom death overtakes early seeks time while he whose death is deferred puts forth excuses for postponement (of doing good actions).

285. وقال عليه السلام: كُلُّ مُعَاجِلٍ يَسْأَلُ الْأَنْظَارَ وَكُلُّ مُؤَجَّلٍ يَتَعَلَّلُ بِالتَّسْوِيفِ.

Hadith n. 286

286. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: For every thing to which people say "how good!" there is an evil hidden in this world.

286. وقال عليه السلام: مَا قَالَ النَّاسُ لَشَيْءٍ: طُوبَى لَهُ، إِلَّا وَقَدْ خَبَأَ لَهُ الدَّهْرُ يَوْمَ

سَوْءٍ.

Hadith n. 287

287. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about Destiny, when he said: It is a dark path -- do not tread upon it, it is a deep ocean - do not dive in it, and it is the secret of Allah -- do not take trouble about (knowing) it.

287. وسئل عن القدر، فقال: طَرِيقٌ مُظْلِمٌ فَلَا تَسْلُكُوهُ، وَبَحْرٌ عَمِيقٌ فَلَا تَلْجُؤُوهُ، وَسِرٌّ لِلَّهِ

فَلَا تَتَكَلَّفُوهُ.

Hadith n. 288

288. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When Allah intends to humiliate a person He denies him knowledge.

288. وقال عليه السلام: إِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا حَظَرَ عَلَيْهِ الْعِلْمَ.

Hadith n. 289

289. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: In the past I had a brother-in-faith⁷³ and he was prestigious in my view because the world was humble in his eyes, the needs of the stomach did not have sway over him, he did not long for what he did not get; if he got a thing he would not ask for more; most of his time he was silent, if he spoke he silenced the other speakers, he quenched the thirst of questioners, he was weak and feeble but at the time of fighting he was like the lion of the forest or the serpent of the valley, he would not put forth an argument unless it was decisive.

289. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: كَانَ لِي فِيمَا مَضَى أَخٌ فِي اللَّهِ وَ كَانَ يُعْظِمُهُ فِي عَيْنِي صِغَرُ

الدُّنْيَا فِي عَيْنِهِ وَ كَانَ خَارِجاً مِنْ سُلْطَانِ بَطْنِهِ فَلَا يَشْتَهِي مَا لَا يَجِدُ وَ لَا يُكْتَرُ إِذَا وَجَدَ وَ

كَانَ أَكْثَرَ دَهْرِهِ صَامِتاً فَإِنْ قَالَ بَدَّ الْقَائِلِينَ وَ نَفَعَ عَلِيلَ السَّائِلِينَ وَ كَانَ ضَعِيفاً مُسْتَضْعِفاً

فَإِنْ جَاءَ الْجِدُّ فَهُوَ لَيْثٌ غَابٍ وَ صِلٌ وَادٍ لَا يُدْلِي بِحُجَّةٍ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ قَاضِياً.

He would not reproach anyone in an excusable matter unless he had heard the excuse, he would not speak of any ailment except after its disappearance, he would say what he would do, and would not say what he would not do, even if he could be exceeded in speaking, he could not be excelled in silence; he was more eager to listen than to speak and if two things confronted him he would see which was more akin to the longing of the heart and he would oppose it.

وَ كَانَ لَا يَلُومُ أَحَدًا عَلَى مَا يَجِدُ الْعُذْرَ فِي مِثْلِهِ حَتَّى يَسْمَعَ اعْتِدَارَهُ وَ كَانَ لَا يَشْكُو وَجَعًا إِلَّا عِنْدَ بُرْئِهِ وَ كَانَ يَقُولُ مَا يَفْعَلُ وَ لَا يَقُولُ مَا لَا يَفْعَلُ وَ كَانَ إِذَا غُلِبَ عَلَى الْكَلَامِ لَمْ يُغْلَبْ عَلَى السُّكُوتِ وَ كَانَ عَلَى مَا يَسْمَعُ أَحْرَصَ مِنْهُ عَلَى أَنْ يَتَكَلَّمَ وَ كَانَ إِذَا بَدَّهَ أَمْرَانِ يَنْظُرُ أَيُّهُمَا أَقْرَبُ إِلَى الْهُوَى فَيُخَالِفُهُ.

These qualities are incumbent upon you. So, you should acquire them and excel each other in them. Even if you cannot acquire them you should know that acquiring a part is better than giving up the whole.

فَعَالَيْكُمْ بِهَذِهِ الْخَلَائِقِ فَالزَّمُّوْهَا وَ تَنَافَسُوا فِيهَا فَإِنَّ لَمْ تَسْتَطِيعُوْهَا فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ أَخَذَ الْقَلِيلِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ تَرْكِ الْكَثِيرِ.

Hadith n. 290

290. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Even if Allah had not warned of chastisement on those disobedient to Him, it would be obligatory by way of gratefulness for His favours that He should not be disobeyed.

290. وقال عليه السلام: لو لم يتوعد الله على معصية لكان يجب أن لا يُعصى شُكْرًا

لِنِعْمِهِ.

Hadith n. 291

291. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said in condoling Ash'ath ibn Qays about (the death of) his son: O Ash'ath, if you grieve over your son, certainly it is the consequence of the blood relationship; but if you endure, then Allah provides recompense for every affliction. O Ash'ath, if you endure even then matters will move on as ordained by Allah but in that case you will deserve reward; while if you lose patience, matters will again move as ordained by Allah, but in this case you will be bearing the burden (of sins). O Ash'ath, your son (when he lived) gave you happiness while, at the same time, he was a trial and hardship and (when he died) he grieved you while, at the same time, he has proved a source of reward and mercy for you.

291. وقال عليه السلام، وقد عزى الأشعث بن قيس عن ابن له: يا أشعث، إن تحزن

على ابنك فقد استحققت ذلك منك الرحم، وإن تصبر ففي الله من كل مصيبة خلف. يا

أشعث، إن صبرت جرى عليك القدر وأنت مأجور، وإن جزعت جرى عليك القدر وأنت

مأزور ابنك سرّك وهو بلاءٌ وفتنة، وحرزكوهو ثوابٌ ورحمة.

Hadith n. 292

292. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said on the grave of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his descendants, at the time of burial:

292. وقال عليه السلام على قبر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله ساعة دُفِنَ:

Certainly, endurance is good except about you; fretting is bad except over you; and the affliction about you is great while every other affliction before or after it is small.

إِنَّ الصَّبْرَ لَجَمِيلٌ إِلَّا عَنْكَ، وَإِنَّ الْجُرْعَ لَقَبِيحٌ إِلَّا عَلَيْكَ، وَإِنَّ الْمُصَابَ بِكَ لَجَلِيلٌ، وَإِنَّهُ قَبْلَكَ وَبَعْدَكَ لَجَلَلٌ.

Hadith n. 293

293. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not associate with a fool because he will beautify his actions before you and long that you too be like him.⁷⁴

293. وقال عليه السلام: لَا تَصْحَبِ الْمَائِقَ فَإِنَّهُ يُزَيِّنُ لَكَ فِعْلَهُ، وَيَوَدُّ أَنْ تَكُونَ مِثْلَهُ.

Hadith n. 294

294. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about the distance between East and West when he replied: One day's travelling for the sun.

294. وقال عليه السلام وقد سئل عن مسافة ما بين المشرق والمغرب: مَسِيرَةٌ يَوْمٍ

لِلشَّمْسِ.

Hadith n. 295

295. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Your friends are three and your enemies are (also) three. Your friends are: your friend, your friend's friend and your enemy's enemy. And your enemies are: your enemy, your friend's enemy and your enemy's friend.

295. وقال عليه السلام: أَصْدِقَاؤُكَ ثَلَاثَةٌ، وَأَعْدَاؤُكَ ثَلَاثَةٌ: فَأَصْدِقَاؤُكَ: صَدِيقُكَ،

وَصَدِيقُ صَدِيقِكَ، وَعَدُوُّ عَدُوِّكَ. وَأَعْدَاؤُكَ: عَدُوُّكَ، وَعَدُوُّ صَدِيقِكَ، وَصَدِيقُ عَدُوِّكَ.

Hadith n. 296

296. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, saw a man busy against his enemy with what was harmful to himself too, so he said: You are like one who pierces a spear through himself in order to kill the person sitting behind him.

296. وقال عليه السلام لرجل رآه يسعى على عدوِّ له بما فيه إضرار بنفسه: إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ

كَالطَّاعِنِ نَفْسَهُ لِيَقْتُلَ رَدْفَهُ.

Hadith n. 297

297. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: How many are the objects of lessons, but how few the taking of lessons.⁷⁵

297. وقال عليه السلام: مَا أَكْثَرَ الْعِبَرَ وَأَقَلَّ الْأَعْتِبَارَ.

Hadith n. 298

298. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who goes too far in quarrelling is a sinner, but if one falls short in it, one is oppressed and it is difficult for a quarreller to fear Allah.

298. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ بَالَغَ فِي الْحُصُومَةِ أَثَمَ، وَمَنْ قَصَرَ فِيهَا ظَلِمَ، وَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يَتَّقِيَ اللَّهَ مَنْ خَاصَمَ.

Hadith n. 299

299. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I am not worried by a sin after which I get time to offer prayer in two units (rak'ah) and beg safety from Allah.

299. وقال عليه السلام: مَا أَهَمَّنِي ذَنْبٌ أُمَهِّلْتُ بَعْدَهُ حَتَّى أُصَلِّيَ رَكَعَتَيْنِ وَأَسْأَلَ اللَّهَ الْعَافِيَةَ.

Hadith n. 300

300. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked: How Allah would conduct the accounting of all persons despite their large number. He replied: Just as He provides them livelihood despite their large number. Then it was said to him: How will He conduct their accounting without their seeing Him. He replied: Just as He provides them livelihood although they do not see Him.

300. وسئل عليه السلام: كيف يحاسب الله الخلق على كثرتهم؟ فقال عليه السلام: كما يَرْزُقُهُمْ عَلَى كَثْرَتِهِمْ. فقيل: كيف يُحَاسِبُهُمْ وَلَا يَرَوْنَهُ؟ قال عليه السلام: كما يَرْزُقُهُمْ وَلَا يَرَوْنَهُ.

Hadith n. 301

301. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Your messenger is the interpreter of your intelligence while your letter is more eloquent in expressing your true self.

301 وقال عليه السلام: رَسُولُكَ تَرْجُمَانُ عَقْلِكَ، وَكِتَابُكَ أَبْلَغُ مَا يَنْطِقُ عَنْكَ.

Hadith n. 302

302. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The person who is afflicted with hardship is not in greater need of praying than the one who has been spared affliction but is not immune from it.

302. وقال عليه السلام: مَا الْمُبْتَلَى الَّذِي قَدِ اشْتَدَّ بِهِ الْبَلَاءُ، بِأَحْوَجٍ إِلَى الدُّعَاءِ مِنَ الْمُعَافَى الَّذِي لَا يَأْمَنُ الْبَلَاءَ.

Hadith n. 303

303. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: People are the progeny of the world and no one can be blamed for loving his mother.

303. وقال عليه السلام: النَّاسُ أَوْثَانُ الدُّنْيَا، وَلَا يَلَامُ الرَّجُلُ عَلَى حُبِّ أُمِّهِ.

Hadith n. 304

304. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The destitute is the Messenger of Allah. Whoever denies him denies Allah and whoever gives him gives Allah.

304. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ الْمِسْكِينَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، فَمَنْ مَنَعَهُ فَقَدْ مَنَعَ اللَّهَ، وَمَنْ أَعْطَاهُ فَقَدْ أَعْطَى اللَّهَ.

Hadith n. 305

305. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A self-respecting man never commits adultery.

305. وقال عليه السلام: مَا زَنَى غَبُورٌ قَطُّ.

Hadith n. 306

306. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The fixed limit of life is enough to remain watchful.⁷⁶

306. وقال عليه السلام: كَفَى بِالْأَجْلِ حَارِسًا.

Hadith n. 307

307. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A man can sleep on the death of his child, but cannot sleep at loss of property.

307. وقال عليه السلام: يَنَامُ الرَّجُلُ عَلَى الثُّكُلِ وَلَا يَنَامُ عَلَى الْحَرْبِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: It means that a man keeps patience on the death of his children but does not do so on the loss of property.

و قال الرضي: ومعنى ذلك: أنه يصبر على قتل الأولاد، ولا يصبر على سلب الأموال.

Hadith n. 308

308. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Mutual affection between fathers creates a relationship between the sons. Relationship is more in need of affection than affection is of relationship.

308. وقال عليه السلام: مَوَدَّةُ الْأَبَاءِ قَرَابَةٌ بَيْنَ الْأَبْنَاءِ، وَالْقَرَابَةُ إِلَى الْمَوَدَّةِ أَحْوَجُ مِنَ الْمَوَدَّةِ إِلَى الْقَرَابَةِ.

Hadith n. 309

309. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Be afraid of the ideas of believers, because Allah, the Sublime, has put truth on their tongues.

309. وقال عليه السلام: اتَّقُوا طُنُونَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى جَعَلَ الْحَقَّ عَلَى أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ.

Hadith n. 310

310. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The belief of a person cannot be regarded as true unless his trust in what is with Allah is more than his trust in what he himself has.

310. وقال عليه السلام: لَا يَصْدُقُ إِيمَانُ عَبْدٍ، حَتَّى يَكُونَ بِمَا فِي يَدِ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ أَوْثَقَ مِنْهُ بِمَا فِي يَدِهِ.

Hadith n. 311

311. When Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, came to Basrah he sent Anas ibn Malik to Talhah and az-Zubayr to make them recall what he (Anas) himself had heard the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his descendants, say concerning them both, but he avoided doing so and when he came back to Amir al-mu'minin, he said that he had forgotten that matter. Thereupon, Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If you are speaking a lie Allah may afflict you with white spots (leucoderma) which even the turban may not cover.

311. وقال عليه السلام لأنس بن مالك، وقد كان بعثه إلى طلحة والزبير لما جاء إلى البصرة يذكرهما شيئاً سمعه من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله في معناهما، فلوى عن ذلك، فرجع إليه، فقال: إني أنسيْتُ ذلك الأمر. فقال عليه السلام: إن كنت كاذباً فضربك الله بما بيضاء لامة لا تُوارِيها العمامة.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: White spot means leucoderma. After sometime this disease did occur to Anas's face so much so that he was never seen without a veil.⁷⁷

قال الرضي: . يعني البرص، فأصاب أنساً هذا الداء فيما بعد في وجهه، فكان لا يرى إلا مُبرقعاً.

Hadith n. 312

312. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Sometimes the hearts move forward and sometimes they move backward. When they move forward get them to perform the optionals (as well), but when they move backward keep them confined to obligatories only.

312. وقال عليه السلام: إنَّ لِلْقُلُوبِ إقبَالاً وَإِدْبَاراً فَإِذَا أَقبَلَتْ فَاحْمِلُوهَا عَلَى التَّوَابِلِ، وَإِذَا أَدْبَرَتْ فَاقْتَصِرُوا بِهَا عَلَى الْفَرَائِضِ.

Hadith n. 313

313. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The Qur'an contains news about the past, foretellings about the future and commandments for the present.

313. وقال عليه السلام: وفي القرآن نبأ ما قبلكم، وخبر ما بعدكم، وحكم ما بينكم.

Hadith n. 314

314. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Throw a stone in return from where one comes to you because evil can be met only with evil.

314. وقال عليه السلام: رُدُّوا الْحِجْرَمِينَ حَيْثُ جَاءَ، فَإِنَّ الشَّرَّ لَا يَدْفَعُهُ إِلَّا الشَّرُّ.

Hadith n. 315

315. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to his secretary 'Ubaydullah ibn Abi Rafi': Put cotton flake in the inkpot, keep the nib of your pen long, leave space between lines and close up the letters because this is good for the beauty of the writing.

315. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامَةُ لِكَاتِبِهِ عُبَيْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ أَبِي رَافِعٍ: أَلَيْقَ دَوَاتِكَ وَ أَطْلَانَ حِلْفَةَ قَلْمِكَ وَ فَرَجَ بَيْنَ السُّطُورِ وَ قَرَمَطَ بَيْنَ الحُرُوفِ فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ أَجْدَرُ بِصَبَاحَةِ الحُطِّ.

Hadith n. 316

316. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: I am the ya'sub (leader) of the believers, while wealth is the leader of the wicked.

316. وقال عليه السلام: أنا يعسوب المؤمنين، والمال يعسوب الفجار.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: It means that the believers follow me while the wicked follow wealth just as the bees follow their "ya'sub" who is their leader.⁷⁸

قال الرضي: ومعنى ذلك أن المؤمنين يتبعونني، والفجار يتبعون المال، كما تتبع النحل

يعسوبها، وهو رئيسها.

Hadith n. 317

317. *Some Jews said to Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him; You had not buried your Prophet when you picked up differences about him, when Amir al-mu'minin replied: We did not differ about him but we differed after him (i.e. about his succession); whereas your feet had not yet dried after coming out of the river (Nile) when you began asking your Prophet: Make you for us a god as they have gods of their own. Said he; 'Verily you are a people behaving ignorantly.'*⁷⁹ (Qur'an, 7:138)

317. قَالَ لَهُ بَعْضُ اليَهُودِ: مَا دَفَنْتُمْ نَبِيِّكُمْ حَتَّى اخْتَلَفْتُمْ فِيهِ. فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لَهُ: إِنَّمَا اخْتَلَفْنَا عَنْهُ لَا فِيهِ وَ لَكِنَّكُمْ مَا جَعَلْتُمْ أَرْجُلَكُمْ مِنَ البَحْرِ حَتَّى قُلْتُمْ لِنَبِيِّكُمْ اجْعَلْ لَنَا إِلَهًا كَمَا لَهُمْ آلِهَةٌ قَالَ إِنَّكُمْ قَوْمٌ بَاطِلُونَ.

Hadith n. 318

318. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked: With what did you overpower your adversaries? He answered: Whenever I confronted a person he helped me against himself.

318. وَ قِيلَ لَهُ: بِأَيِّ شَيْءٍ عَظِمْتَ الأَقْرَانَ فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَا لَقِيتُ رَجُلًا إِلَّا أَعَانَنِي

عَلَى نَفْسِهِ.

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Amir al-mu'minin is pointing out his striking of awe in the hearts.⁸⁰

قال الرضي يومئذ بذلك إلى تمكن هيئته في القلوب.

Hadith n. 319

319. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to his son Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyyah: O my son, I fear lest destitution overtakes you. So, you should seek Allah's protection from it, because destitution is deficiency of religious belief, perplexity of intelligence, and it is conducive to hatred of obstinate people.

319. وَ قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لِابْنِهِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْحَنَفِيَّةِ: يَا بُنَيَّ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكَ الْفَقْرَ فَاسْتَعِذْ بِاللَّهِ مِنْهُ فَإِنَّ الْفَقْرَ مَنْقَصَةٌ لِلدِّينِ مَدْهَشَةٌ لِلْعَقْلِ دَاعِيَةٌ لِلْمَقْتِ.

Hadith n. 320

320. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, replied to a man who had asked him a difficult question: Ask me in order to gain understanding but do not ask me seeking to create confusion, because the ignorant person who tries to learn is like the learned man, but the learned man who tries to create confusion is like the ignorant.

320. قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لِسَائِلٍ سَأَلَهُ عَنْ مُعْضِلَةٍ: سَلْ تَفْقَهُهَا وَ لَا تَسْأَلْ تَعْتَنَّا فَإِنَّ الْجَاهِلَ الْمُتَعَلِّمَ شَبِيهُ بِالْعَالِمِ وَ إِنَّ الْعَالِمَ الْمُتَعَسِّفَ شَبِيهُ بِالْجَاهِلِ الْمُتَعَتِّتِ.

Hadith n. 321

321. 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas once advised Amir al-mu'minin peace be upon him, against his views, so he said: You have only to advise me but then I have to see (what to do); and if I act against your advice you have to follow me.⁸¹

321. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لِعَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الْعَبَّاسِ، وَقَدْ أَشَارَ عَلَيْهِ فِي شَيْءٍ لَمْ يُوَافِقْ رَأْيَهُ: لَكَ أَنْ تُشِيرَ عَلَيَّ وَأَرَى، فَإِنْ عَصَيْتُكَ فَأَطِيعْنِي.

Hadith n. 322

322. When Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, returned to Kufah from Siffin he passed by the residences of the Shibamites (who belonged to the tribe of Shibam) and heard the women weeping over those killed in Siffin. At that time a Shibamite, Harb ibn Shurahbil ash-Shibami, who was one of the nobles of those people, came to him, and Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to him: Do your women have control over you as regards the weeping that I hear? Do you not refrain them from this crying? Harb began to walk with him while Amir al-mu'minin was on horseback, so Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to him: Get back because the walking of a man like you with one like me is mischief for the ruler and disgrace for the believer.

322. وَرَوَى أَنَّهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لَمَّا وَرَدَ الْكُوفَةَ قَادِمًا مِنْ صَفِينِ مَرَّ بِالشَّبَامِيِّينَ فَسَمِعَ بَكَاءَ النِّسَاءِ عَلَى قَتْلِ صَفِينِ، وَخَرَجَ إِلَيْهِ حَرْبُ بْنُ شُرْحَبِيلِ الشَّبَامِيِّ، وَكَانَ مِنْ وَجْهِ قَوْمِهِ. فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: أَتَعْلِبُكُمْ نِسَاؤُكُمْ عَلَى مَا أَسْمَعُ؟ أَلَا تَنْهَوْنَهُنَّ عَنْ هَذَا الرَّيْنِ وَ أَقْبَلْ بِمَشِيِّ مَعَهُ، وَهُوَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ رَاكِبٌ. فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ لَهُ: ارْجِعْ، فَإِنَّ مَشْيِي مِثْلَكَ مَعَ مِثْلِي فِتْنَةٌ لِلْوَالِي، وَمَدَلَّةٌ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ.

Hadith n. 323

323. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, passed by the dead bodies of the Kharijites on the day of the battle of Nahrawan and said: Woe unto you! You have been harmed by him who deceived you. He was asked: O Amir

al-mu'minin, who deceived them? Then, he replied: Satan, the deceiver, and the inner spirit that leads one to evil deceived them through passions, made it easy for them to get into sins, promised them victory and eventually threw them into the Fire.

323. وقال عليه السلام وقد مرّ بقتلى الخوارج يوم التَّهْرَوَانِ: بُؤْساً لَكُمْ، لَقَدْ ضَرَّكُمْ مَنْ غَرَّكُمْ. فقليل له: مَنْ غَرَّهم يا أميرالمؤمنين؟ فقال: الشَّيْطَانُ الْمُضِلُّ، وَالْأَنْفُسُ الْأَمَّارَةُ بِالسُّوءِ، غَرَّتْهُمُ بِالْأَمَانِيِّ، وَفَسَّخَتْ هُمْ فِي الْمَعَاصِي، وَعَدَّتْهُمُ الْأَطْهَارُ، فَافْتَحَمَتْ بِهِمُ النَّارُ.

Hadith n. 324

324. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Beware of disobeying Allah in solitude, because the witness (of that situation) is also the judge.

324. وقال عليه السلام: اتَّقُوا مَعَاصِي اللَّهِ فِي الْخَلَوَاتِ، فَإِنَّ الشَّاهِدَ هُوَ الْحَاكِمُ.

Hadith n. 325

325. When the news of killing of Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr ⁸² reached Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, he said: Our grief over him is as great as their (i.e. the enemy's) joy for it, except that they have lost an enemy and we have lost a friend.

325. وقال عليه السلام، لما بلغه قتل مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَبِي بَكْرٍ: إِنَّ حُزْنَنا عَلَيْهِ عَلَى قَدْرِ سُورِهِمْ بِهِ، إِلَّا أَنَّهُمْ نَقَصُوا بَعْضاً، وَنَقَصْنَا حَبِيباً

Hadith n. 326

326. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The age up to which Allah accepts any excuse for a human being is sixty years.

326. وقال عليه السلام: الْعُمُرُ الَّذِي أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ فِيهِ إِلَى ابْنِ آدَمَ سِتُونَ سَنَةً.

Hadith n. 327

327. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He whom sin overpowers is not victorious, and he who secures victory by evil is (in fact) vanquished.

327. وقال عليه السلام: مَا ظَفَرَ مِنْ ظَفِرِ الْأَثْمِ بِهِ، وَالْعَالِبُ بِالشَّرِّ مَغْلُوبٌ.

Hadith n. 328

328. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Allah, the Glorified, has fixed the livelihood of the destitute in the wealth of the rich. Consequently, whenever a destitute remains hungry it is because some rich person has denied (him his share). Allah, the Sublime, will question them about it.

328. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ قَرَضَ فِي أَمْوَالِ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ أَقْوَاتَ الْفُقَرَاءِ، فَمَا جَاعَ فَقِيرٌ إِلَّا بِمَا مَنَعَ بِهِ غَنِيٌّ، وَاللَّهُ تَعَالَى سَائِلُهُمْ عَنْ ذَلِكَ.

Hadith n. 329

329. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Not to be in need of putting forth an excuse is better than putting forth a true excuse. ⁸³

329. وقال عليه السلام: الْأَسْتَعْنَاءُ عَنِ الْعُدْرِ أَعَزُّ مِنَ الصِّدْقِ بِهِ.

Hadith n. 330

330. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The least right of Allah on you is that you should not make use of His favours in committing His sins.⁸⁴

330. وقال عليه السلام: أَقَلُّ مَا يَلْزُمُكُمْ لَلَّهِ إِلَّا تَسْتَعِينُوا بِنِعْمِهِ عَلَى مَعَاصِيهِ.

Hadith n. 331

331. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: When the disabled fall short in performing acts of obedience to Allah, the Glorified, it is a good opportunity given by Allah for the intelligent to perform such acts.

331. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ جَعَلَ الطَّاعَةَ غَنِيمَةً الْأَكْيَاسِ عِنْدَ تَفْرِيطِ

الْعَجْزَةِ.

Hadith n. 332

332. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The sovereign is the watchman of Allah on earth.

332. وقال عليه السلام: السُّلْطَانُ وَرَعَةُ اللَّهِ فِي أَرْضِهِ.

Hadith n. 333

333. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said describing a believer: A believer has a cheerful face, a sorrowful heart, a very broad chest (full of generosity), and a very humble heart. He hates high position and dislikes renown. His grief is long, his courage is far-reaching, his silence is much and, his time is occupied. He is grateful, enduring, buried in his thoughts, sparing in his friendship (with others), of bright demeanour and of soft temperament. He is stronger than stone but humbler than a slave.

333. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فِي صِفَةِ الْمُؤْمِنِ: الْمُؤْمِنُ بِشْرُهُ فِي وَجْهِهِ وَحُزْنُهُ فِي قَلْبِهِ

أَوْسَعُ شَيْءٍ صَدْرًا وَأَذَلُّ شَيْءٍ نَفْسًا يَكْرَهُ الرِّفْعَةَ وَيَسْتَأْذِنُ السُّمُوعَةَ طَوِيلًا عَمُّهُ بَعِيدٌ هَمُّهُ كَثِيرٌ
صَمْتُهُ مَشْغُولٌ وَقَتُّهُ شَكُورٌ صَبُورٌ مَعْمُورٌ بِفِكْرَتِهِ ضَبِينٌ بِحَلَّتِهِ سَهْلٌ الْخَلِيقَةِ لَيْسَ الْعَرِيكَةَ نَفْسُهُ
أَصْلَبَ مِنَ الصَّلْدِ وَهُوَ أَدَلُّ مِنَ الْعَبْدِ.

Hadith n. 334

334. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If a man happens to see the end of (his) life and his final fate, he will begin hating desires and their deception.

334. وقال عليه السلام: لَوْ رَأَى الْعَبْدُ الْأَجَلَ وَمَسِيرَهُ لَأَبْغَضَ الْأَمَلَ وَعُثْرُورَهُ.

Hadith n. 335

335. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There are two sharers in the property of every person - successors and accidents.

335. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: لِكُلِّ امْرِئٍ فِي مَالِهِ شَرِيكَانِ الْوَارِثُ وَالْحَوَادِثُ.

Hadith n. 336

336. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The person who is approached with a request is free until he promises.

336. وقال عليه السلام: الْمَسْئُولُ حُرٌّ حَتَّى يَعِدَّ.

Hadith n. 337

337. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who prays but does not exert effort is like the one who shoots without a bow-string.

337. وقال عليه السلام: الدَّاعِي بِإِلَّا عَمَلٍ كَالرَّامِي بِإِلَّا وَتَرٍ.

Hadith n. 338

338. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Knowledge is of two kinds - that which is absorbed and that which is just heard. The one that is heard does not give benefit unless it is absorbed.

338. وقال عليه السلام: الْعِلْمُ عِلْمَانِ: مَطْبُوعٌ وَمَسْمُوعٌ وَلَا يَنْفَعُ الْمَسْمُوعُ إِذَا لَمْ يَكُنِ

الْمَطْبُوعُ.

Hadith n. 339

339. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Correctness of decision goes together with power. The one emerges with the other's emergence and disappears when the other disappears.⁸⁵

339. وقال عليه السلام: صَوَابُ الرَّأْيِ بِالذُّوْلِ: يُقْبَلُ بِإِقْبَالِهَا وَيَذْهَبُ بِذَهَابِهَا.

Hadith n. 340

340. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The beauty of destitution is chastity and the beauty of riches is gratefulness.

340. وقال عليه السلام: الْعِفَافُ زِينَةُ الْفَقْرِ، وَالشُّكْرُ زِينَةُ الْغِنَى.

Hadith n. 341

341. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The day of justice will be severer on the oppressor than the day of oppression on the oppressed.

341. وقال عليه السلام: يَوْمُ الْعَدْلِ عَلَى الظَّالِمِ أَشَدُّ مِنْ يَوْمِ الْجَوْرِ عَلَى الْمَظْلُومِ!

Hadith n. 342

342. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The biggest wealth is that one should not have an eye on what others possess.

342. الْغِنَى الْأَكْبَرُ الْيَأْسُ عَمَّا فِي أَيْدِي النَّاسِ.

Hadith n. 343

343. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Utterances are preserved and actions are to be tried. Every soul, for what it earned, is held in pledge! (Qur'an, 74:38). People are to be made deficient (as regards their bodies) and meddled with (as regards their minds) except those whom Allah protects. The questioner among them aims at confusing and the answerer creates hardship. It is possible that the man who has the best views among them will be deviated from the soundness of his thinking by pleasure or

displeasure, and it is possible that a single glance may affect even the man with the 'best wisdom among them or a single expression may transform him.

343. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: الْأَقَاوِيلُ مَحْفُوظَةٌ وَالسَّرَائِرُ مَبْلُوءَةٌ وَ (كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ) وَ النَّاسُ مَنْفُوضُونَ مَدْخُولُونَ إِلَّا مَنْ عَصَمَ اللَّهُ: سَأَلْتُهُمْ مُتَعَنِّتٌ وَ مُجِيبُهُمْ مُتَكَلِّفٌ يَكَادُ أَفْضَلُهُمْ رَأْيًا يَرُدُّهُ عَنِ فَضْلِ رَأْيِهِ الرِّضَى وَ السُّحْطُ، وَ يَكَادُ أَصْلَبُهُمْ عُودًا تَنْكَوُهُ اللَّحْظَةُ وَ تَسْتَحِيلُهُ الْكَلِمَةُ الْوَاحِدَةُ.

Hadith n. 344

344. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O groups of people, fear Allah, for there is many a man who aspires for what he does not get, many a builder of a house who does not live in it, and many a collector of that which he shall just leave behind. Possibly he may have collected it wrongfully or by denying a right. He acquired it unlawfully and had to bear the weight of sins on account of it. Consequently, he returned (from this world) with that weight and came before Allah with sorrow and grief. Loses he both this world and (also) the hereafter; that is a loss (which is) manifest. (Qur'an, 22:11)

344. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَعَاشِرَ النَّاسِ اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ فَكَمْ مِنْ مُؤْمِلٍ مَا لَا يَبْلُغُهُ وَ بَانٍ مَا لَا يَسْكُنُهُ وَ جَامِعٍ مَا سَوَفَ يَنْزِكُهُ وَ لَعْلَهُ مِنْ بَاطِلٍ جَمَعَهُ وَ مِنْ حَقٍّ مَنَعَهُ أَصَابَهُ حَرَامًا وَ اخْتَمَلَ بِهِ آثَامًا فَبَاءَ بِوِزْرِهِ وَ قَدِمَ عَلَى رَبِّهِ آسِفًا لَاهِفًا (قَدْ حَسِبَ الدُّنْيَا وَ الْآخِرَةَ ذَلِكَ هُوَ الْحُسْرَانُ الْمُبِينُ).

Hadith n. 345

345. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Lack of access to sins is also a kind of chastity.

345. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مِنَ الْعِصْمَةِ تَعَدُّرُ الْمَعَاصِي.

Hadith n. 346

346. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The dignity of your face is solid but begging dissolves it away: therefore, look carefully before whom you dissolve it.

346. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَاءٌ وَجْهِكَ جَامِدٌ يُفْطِرُهُ السُّؤَالُ، فَانظُرْ عِنْدَ مَنْ تُفْطِرُهُ.

Hadith n. 347

347. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: To praise more than what is due is sycophancy; to do it less is either because of inability to speak or of envy.

347. وَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: التَّنَاءُ بِأَكْثَرٍ مِنَ الْأَسْتِحْقَاقِ مَلَقٌ وَالتَّفْصِيرُ عَنِ الْأَسْتِحْقَاقِ عِيٌّ أَوْ حَسَدٌ.

Hadith n. 348

348. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The most serious sin is that which the doer considers light.⁸⁶

348. وقال عليه السلام: أشدُّ الذُّنُوبِ ما اسْتَهَانَ بِهِ صَاحِبُهُ.

Hadith n. 349

349. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who sees his own shortcomings abstains from looking into other's shortcomings. He who feels happy with the livelihood with which Allah provides him does not grieve over what he misses. He who draws out the sword of revolt gets killed with it. He who strives without means perishes. He who enters the depths gets drowned. He who visits places of ill-repute receives blame.

349. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ نَظَرَ فِي عَيْبِ نَفْسِهِ اسْتَعْلَعَ عَنْ عَيْبِ غَيْرِهِ، وَمَنْ رَضِيَ بِرِزْقِ اللَّهِ لَمْ يَحْزَنْ عَلَى مَا فَاتَهُ، وَمَنْ سَلَّ سَيْفَ الْبَغْيِ قُتِلَ بِهِ، وَمَنْ كَابَدَ الْأُمُورَ عَطِبَ وَمَنْ افْتَحَمَ اللَّجَجَ عَرِقَ، وَمَنْ دَخَلَ مَدَاخِلَ السُّوءِ أَهْمُ،

He who speaks more commits more errors. He who commits more errors becomes shameless. He who is shameless will have less fear of Allah. He whose fear of Allah is less, his heart dies. He whose heart dies enters the Fire.

وَمَنْ كَثَرَ كَلَامَهُ كَثَرَ خَطَاؤُهُ، وَمَنْ كَثَرَ خَطَاؤُهُ قَلَّ حَيَاؤُهُ، وَمَنْ قَلَّ حَيَاؤُهُ قَلَّ وَرَعُهُ، وَمَنْ قَلَّ وَرَعُهُ مَاتَ قَلْبُهُ، وَمَنْ مَاتَ قَلْبُهُ دَخَلَ النَّارَ،

He who observes the shortcomings of others and disapproves of them and then accepts them for himself is definitely a fool. Contentment is a capital that does not dwindle. He who remembers death much is satisfied with small favours in this world. He who knows that his speech is also a part of his action speaks less except where he has some purpose.

وَمَنْ نَظَرَ فِي عَيْبِ النَّاسِ فَأَنكَرَهَا ثُمَّ رَضِيَهَا لِنَفْسِهِ فَذَلِكَ الْأَحْمَقُ بِعَيْنِهِ. وَالْقَنَاعَةُ مَالٌ لَا يَنْقُدُ، وَمَنْ أَكْثَرَ مِنْ ذِكْرِ الْمَوْتِ رَضِيَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا بِالْيَسِيرِ، مَنْ عَلِمَ أَنَّ كَلَامَهُ مِنْ عَمَلِهِ قَلَّ كَلَامُهُ إِلَّا فِيمَا يَعْنيهِ.

Hadith n. 350

350. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The oppressor among the people has three signs: he oppresses his superior by disobeying him, and his junior by imposing his authority and he supports other oppressors.

350. وقال عليه السلام: لِلظَّالِمِ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ ثَلَاثُ عَلَامَاتٍ: يَظْلِمُ مَنْ فَوْقَهُ بِالْمَعْصِيَةِ، مَنْ دُونَهُ بِالْعَلْبَةِ وَ يُظَاهِرُ الْقَوْمَ الظَّالِمَةَ.

Hadith n. 351

351. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: At the extremity of hardship comes relief, and at the tightening of the chains of tribulation comes ease.

351. وقال عليه السلام: عِنْدَ تَنَاهِي الشَّدَّةِ تَكُونُ الْفَرْجَةُ، وَعِنْدَ تَضَائِقِ حَلْقِ الْبَلَاءِ يَكُونُ الرَّحَاءُ.

Hadith n. 352

352. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to one of his companions: Do not devote much of your activity to your wife and your children, because if your wife and children are lovers of Allah then He will not leave His lovers uncared for, and if they be enemies of Allah then why should you worry and keep yourself busy about the enemies of Allah.

352. وقال عليه السلام لبعض أصحابه: لَا تَجْعَلَنَّ أَكْثَرَ شَعْلِكَ بِأَهْلِكَ وَوَلَدِكَ: فَإِنْ يَكُنْ أَهْلُكَ وَوَلَدُكَ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضَيِّعُ أَوْلِيَاءَهُ، وَإِنْ يَكُونُوا أَعْدَاءَ اللَّهِ، فَمَا هَمُّكَ وَشَعْلُكَ بِأَعْدَاءِ اللَّهِ؟

Hadith n. 353

353. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The greatest defect is to regard that defect (in others) which is present in yourself.⁸⁷

353. وقال عليه السلام: أَكْبَرُ الْعَيْبِ أَنْ تَعِيبَ مَا فِيكَ مِثْلَهُ.

Hadith n. 354

354. Someone congratulated another person in the presence of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, on the birth of a son saying: Congratulations for getting a rider of horses. Then Amir al-mu'minin said: Do not say so; but say: You have occasion to be grateful to Allah, the Giver, and be blessed with what you have been given. May he attain full life and may you be blessed with his devotion.

354. وهنأ بحضرتة عليه السلام رجل رجلاً بغلام ولد له فقال له: لِيَهْنِئَكَ الْفَارِسُ. فقال عليه السلام: لَا تَقُلْ ذَلِكَ، وَلَكِنْ قُلْ: شَكَرْتَ الْوَاهِبَ، وَبُورِكَ لَكَ فِي الْمَوْهُوبِ، وَبَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ، وَرَزَقْتَ بِرَّهُ.

Hadith n. 355

355. One of the officers of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, built a stately house, about which Amir al-mu'minin said: This is silver coins showing forth their faces. Certainly, this house speaks of your riches.

355. وبنى رجل من عماله بناءً فخماً فقال عليه السلام: أَطْلَعَتِ الْوَرِقُ رُؤُوسَهَا! إِنَّ الْبِنَاءَ لَيَصِفُ عَنْكَ الْغِنَى.

Hadith n. 356

356. It was said to Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him: If a man is left in his house and the door is closed, from where will his livelihood reach him. And he replied: From whatever way his death reaches him.⁸⁸

356. وقيل له عليه السلام: لو سُدَّ على رجلٍ بابُ بيته، وتُركَ فيه، من أين كان يأتيه رزقه؟ فقال عليه السلام: من حيث كان يأتيه أجله.

Hadith n. 357

357. Condoling with people among whom one had died, Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: This thing has not started with you nor does it end with you. This fellow of yours was used to journeying and therefore it is better to think him still to be journeying. Either he will rejoin you or else you will rejoin him.

357. وعزى عليه السلام قوماً عن ميته فقال: إن هذا الأمر ليس بكم بدأ، ولا إليكم انتهى، وقد كان صاحبكم هذا يسافر، فعُدوه في بعض أسفاره، فإن قدم عليكم وإلا قدمتم عليه

Hadith n. 358

358. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O people, let Allah see you fearing at the time of happiness just as you fear Him at the time of distress. Certainly, he who is given ease (of life) and does not consider it as a means of slow approach towards tribulation (wrongly), considers himself safe against what is to be feared while he who is afflicted with straitened circumstances but does not perceive them to be a trial loses the coveted reward.

358. و قال عليه السلام: أيها الناس ليركُم الله من النعمة وجيلين كما يراكم من النعمة فرقين إنَّه من وسع عليه في ذات يده فلم ير ذلك استدراجاً فقد أمن محوفاً و من ضيق عليه في ذات يده فلم ير ذلك اختياراً فقد صيغ مأمولاً.

Hadith n. 359

359. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O slaves of desires, cut them short because he who leans on the world gets nothing out of it except the pain of hardships. O people, take charge of the training of your own souls and turn them away from the addiction to their habits.

359. و قال عليه السلام: يا أسرى الرغبة أقصروا فإنَّ المعرج على الدنيا لا يزوعه منها إلا صريف أنياب الحدان أيها الناس تولوا من أنفسكم تأديبها و اعدلوا بها عن ضراوة عادتها.

Hadith n. 360

360. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not regard an expression uttered by any person as evil if you can find it capable of bearing some good.

360. وقال عليه السلام: لا تظننَّ بكلمة خرجت من أحدٍ سوءاً، وأنت تجد لها في الخير محتملاً.

Hadith n. 361

361. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If you have a need from Allah, the Glorified, then begin by seeking Allah's blessing on His Messenger, may Allah bless him and his descendants, then ask your need, because Allah is too generous to accept one (seeking His blessing on His Messenger) of the two requests made to Him and deny the other.

361. وقال عليه السلام: إِذَا كَانَتْ لَكَ إِلَى اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ حَاجَةٌ فَأَبْدَأْ بِمَسْأَلَةِ الصَّلَاةِ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، ثُمَّ سَأَلْ حَاجَتَكَ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ أَكْرَمُ مِنْ أَنْ يُسْأَلَ حَاجَتَيْنِ فَيَقْضِي إِحْدَاهُمَا وَيَمْنَعُ الْآخَرَى.

Hadith n. 362

362. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: He who is jealous of his esteem should keep from quarrelling.

362. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ ضَنَّ بِعَرْضِهِ فَلْيَدَعْ الْمِرَاءَ.

Hadith n. 363

363. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: To make haste before the proper time or to delay after a proper opportunity, in either case is folly.

363. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ أَخْرَقَ الْمُعَاجِلَةَ قَبْلَ الْأَمْكَانِ، وَالْأُنَاةَ بَعْدَ الْفُرْصَةِ.

Hadith n. 364

364. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not ask about things which may not happen because you have enough to worry about with what happens.

364. وقال عليه السلام: لَا تَسْأَلْ عَمَّا لَا يَكُونُ، فَنَفِي الَّذِي قَدْ كَانَ لَكَ شُغْلًا.

Hadith n. 365

365. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Imagination is a clear mirror, and the taking of lessons (from things around) provides warning and counsel. It is enough for improving yourself that you should avoid what you consider bad in others.

365. وقال عليه السلام: الْفِكْرُ مِرَاةٌ صَافِيَةٌ، وَالْأَعْيَانُ مُنْذِرٌ نَاصِحٌ، وَكَفَى أَدْبَابًا لِنَفْسِكَ بَحْتُوبِكَ مَا كَرِهْتَهُ لِغَيْرِكَ.

Hadith n. 366

366. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Knowledge is associated with action. Therefore, he who knows should act, because knowledge calls for action; if there is a response well and good, otherwise it (i.e., knowledge) departs from him.

366. وقال عليه السلام: الْعِلْمُ مَقْرُونٌ بِالْعَمَلِ فَمَنْ عَمِلَ عَمَلًا، وَالْعِلْمُ يَهْتَفُ بِالْعَمَلِ فَإِنْ أَجَابَهُ وَإِلَّا ارْتَحَلَ.

Hadith n. 367

367. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O people, the wealth of this world is broken orts that brings an epidemic; therefore keep off this grazing land, leaving it is a greater favour than peacefully staying in it, and its part enough for subsistence is more blissful than its riches. Destitution has been ordained for those who are rich here, while comfort has been destined for those who keep away from it. If a person is attracted by its dazzle, it blinds both his eyes; and if a person acquires eagerness towards it, then it fills his heart with griefs which keep alternating in the black part of his heart, some grief worrying him and another giving him pain. This goes on till the suffocation of death overtakes him. He is flung onto the open ground while both his arteries are severed. It is easy for Allah to cause him to die and for his comrades to put him in the grave.

367. وقال عليه السلام: يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، مَتَاعُ الدُّنْيَا حُطَامٌ مُوبِقٌ فَتَجَنَّبُوا مَرَعَاهُ! فُلَعْتُهَا أَحْطَى مِنْ طُمَأْنِينَتِهَا وَبُلَعْتُهَا أَرْكَى مِنْ تَرَوُّهَا، حُكِمَ عَلَيَّ مُكْثِرٌ مِنْهَا بِالْفَاقَةِ وَأَعِينٌ مَنْ غَيَّبَتْ عَنْهَا بِالرَّاحَةِ، مَنْ رَاقَهُ زَبْرَجُهَا أَعْقَبَتْ نَاطِرُهُ كَمَهَا وَمَنْ اسْتَشَعَرَ الشَّعْفَ بِهَا مَلَاثَ ضَمِيرُهُ أَشْجَانًا، لَهَنَّ رَفْصٌ عَلَى سُؤْدَاءٍ قَلْبِهِ هَمٌّ يَشْعَلُهُ، وَعَمٌّ يَحْزُنُهُ، كَذَلِكَ حَتَّى يُؤْخَذَ بِكُظْمِهِ فَيُلْقَى بِالْفَضَاءِ، مُنْقَطِعًا أَبْهَرَاهُ، هَيِّنًا عَلَى اللَّهِ فَنَاؤُهُ، وَعَلَى الْأَخْوَانِ الْإِقَاؤُهُ.

The believer sees the world with eyes that derive instruction, and takes from it food enough for his barest needs. He hears in it with ears of hatred and enmity. If it is said (about someone) that he has become rich, it is also said that he has turned destitute; and if pleasure is felt on one's living, grief is felt over his death. This is the position, although the day has not yet approached when they will be disheartened.

وَأَمَّا يَنْظُرُ الْمُؤْمِنُ إِلَى الدُّنْيَا بَعَيْنِ الْأَعْتِبَارِ وَيَقْتَنُثُ مِنْهَا بِيَطْنِ الْأَضْطِرَارِ وَيَسْمَعُ فِيهَا بِأُذُنِ الْمَقْتِ وَالْأَبْعَاضِ، إِنَّ قِيلَ أَثْرَقِيلَ أَكْدَى! وَإِنْ فُرِحَ لَهُ بِالْبَقَاءِ حُزِنَ لَهُ بِالْفَنَاءِ! هَذَا وَلَمْ يَأْتِهِمْ يَوْمٌ فِيهِ يُبْلِسُونَ.

Hadith n. 368

368. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Allah, the Glorified, has laid down reward for obedience to Him and punishment for committing sins against Him in order to save men from His chastisement and to drive them towards Paradise.

368. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَضَعَ الثَّوَابَ عَلَى طَاعَتِهِ، وَالْعِقَابَ عَلَى مَعْصِيَتِهِ، ذِيَادَةً لِعِبَادِهِ عَنِ نِقْمَتِهِ، وَحِيَاثَةً لَهُمْ إِلَى جَنَّتِهِ.

Hadith n. 369

369. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A time will come when nothing will remain of the Qur'an except its writing, and nothing of Islam except its name. The mosques in those days will be busy with regards to construction but desolate with regard to guidance. Those staying in them and those visiting them will be the worst of all on earth. From them mischief

will spring up and towards them all wrong will turn. If anyone isolates himself from it (mischief) they will fling him back to it and if anyone steps back from it they will push him towards it. Says Allah, the Glorified, (in hadith qudsi -- i.e., the tradition in which Allah- Himself speaks): I swear by Myself that I shall send upon them an evil wherein the endurer would be bewildered, and He would do so. We seek Allah's pardon from stumbling through neglect.

369. وقال عليه السلام: يَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ لَا يَبْقَى فِيهِمْ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ إِلَّا رِسْمُهُ، وَمِنْ الْأَسْلَامِ إِلَّا اسْمُهُ، مَسَاجِدُهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ غَامِرَةٌ مِنَ الْبُئَى، حَرَابٌ مِنَ الْهُدَى، سُكَّانُهَا وَعُمَارُهَا شَرُّ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ، مِنْهُمْ تَخْرُجُ الْفِتْنَةُ، وَإِلَيْهِمْ تَأْوِي الْخَطِيئَةُ، يَرُدُّونَ مَنْ شَدَّ عَنْهَا فِيهَا، وَيَسُوقُونَ مَنْ تَأَخَّرَ عَنْهَا إِلَيْهَا، يَقُولُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى: فِي حَلْفَتِي لِابْتِعْتَنِّي عَلَى أَوْلِيكَ فِتْنَةً تَتْرَكَ الْحَلِيمَ فِيهَا حَيْرَانَ، وَقَدْ فَعَلَ، وَنَحْنُ نَسْتَقِيلُ اللَّهَ عَثْرَةَ الْعَمَلَةِ.

Hadith n. 370

370. It is related that it was seldom that Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, ascended the pulpit and did not utter the following before his sermon: O people, fear Allah for man has not been created for naught so that he may waste himself, nor has he been left uncared for so that he may commit nonsensical acts. This world which appears beautiful to him cannot be the replacement of the next world which appears bad in his eyes, nor is the vain person who is successful in this world through his high courage like him who is successful in the next world even to a small extent.

370. وروى أنه عليه السلام قلما اعتدل به المنبر إلا قال أَمَامَ خُطْبَتِهِ: أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ، فَمَا خُلِقَ امْرَأَةٌ عَبْتًا فَيَلْهَوْهُ وَلَا تُرِكَ سُدَى فَيَلْعُوهُ وَمَا دُنِيَاهُ الَّتِي تَحَسَّنَتْ لَهُ بِخَلْفٍ مِنْ الْأَخِرَةِ الَّتِي قَبَّحَهَا سُوءُ النَّظَرِ عِنْدَهُ، وَمَا الْمَعْرُورُ الَّذِي ظَفَرَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا بِأَعْلَى هَيْبَتِهِ كَمَا لَأَخَّرَ الَّذِي ظَفَرَ مِنَ الْأَخِرَةِ بِأَذَى سُهُمَتِهِ.

Hadith n. 371

371. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is no distinction higher than Islam; no honour more honourable than fear of Allah; no asylum better than self restraint; no intercessor more effective than repentance; no treasure more precious than contentment; and no wealth is a bigger remover of destitution than being satisfied with mere sustenance. He who confines himself to what is just enough for maintenance achieves comfort and prepares abode in ease. Desire is the key of grief and the conveyance of distress. Greed, vanity and jealousy are incentives to falling into sins and evil-doing is the collection of all bad habits.

371. وقال عليه السلام: لَا شَرَفَ أَعْلَى مِنَ الْأَسْلَامِ، وَلَا عِزَّ أَعَزَّ مِنَ التَّقْوَى، وَلَا مَعْقِلَ أَحْصَنَ مِنَ الْوَرَعِ، لَا شَفِيعَ أَجْحَحَ مِنَ التَّوْبَةِ، وَلَا كَنْزَ أَعْنَى مِنَ الْفَنَاعَةِ، وَلَا مَالَ أَذْهَبَ لِلْفَاقَةِ مِنَ الرِّضَى بِالْقُوتِ، وَمَنْ اقْتَصَرَ عَلَى بُلْغَةِ الْكِفَافِ فَقَدْ انْتَضَمَ الرَّاحَةَ وَتَبَوَّأَ حَفْضَ

الدُّعَاةِ وَالرَّغْبَةُ مِفْتَاحُ النَّصَبِ، وَمَطِيئَةُ التَّعَبِ، وَالْحِرْصُ وَالْكَبْرُ وَالْحَسَدُ دَوَاعٍ إِلَى التَّفَحُّمِ فِي الدُّنْيَا، وَالشَّرُّ جَامِعٌ مَسَاوِيءِ الْعُيُوبِ .

Hadith n. 372

372. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to Jabir ibn 'Abdullah al-Ansari': O Jabir, the mainstay of religion and the world are four persons: The scholar who acts on his knowledge; the ignorant who does not feel ashamed of learning; the generous who is not niggardly in his favours; and the destitute who does not sell his next life for his worldly benefits. Consequently, when the scholar wastes his knowledge, the ignorant feels shame in learning; and when the generous is niggardly with his favours, the destitute sells his next life for the worldly benefits.

372. وقال عليه السلام لجابر بن عبدالله الأنصاري: يَا جَابِرُ، قِوَامُ الدِّينِ وَالدُّنْيَا بِأَرْبَعَةٍ: عَالِمٌ مُسْتَعْمِلٌ عِلْمَهُ، وَجَاهِلٌ لَا يَسْتَنْكِفُ أَنْ يَتَعَلَّمَ، وَجَوَادٍ لَا يَبْخُلُ بِمَعْرُوفِهِ، وَفَقِيرٌ لَا يَبِيعُ آخِرَتَهُ بِدُنْيَاةٍ؛ فَإِذَا ضَيَّعَ الْعَالِمُ عِلْمَهُ اسْتَنْكَفَ الْجَاهِلُ أَنْ يَتَعَلَّمَ، وَإِذَا بَخِلَ الْغَنِيُّ بِمَعْرُوفِهِ بَاعَ الْفَقِيرُ آخِرَتَهُ بِدُنْيَاةٍ.

O Jabir, if favours of Allah abound on a person the people's needs towards him also abound. Therefore, he who fulfils for Allah all that is obligatory on him in this regard will preserve them (Allah's favours) in continuance and perpetuity, while he who does not fulfil those obligations will expose them to decay and destruction.

يَا جَابِرُ مَنْ كَثُرَتْ نِعْمُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ كَثُرَتْ حَوَائِجُ النَّاسِ إِلَيْهِ فَمَنْ قَامَ لِلَّهِ فِيهَا بِمَا يَجِبُ فِيهَا عَرَّضَهَا لِلدَّوَامِ وَالْبَقَاءِ وَ مَنْ لَمْ يَنْفُ فِيهَا بِمَا يَجِبُ عَرَّضَهَا لِلرُّوَالِ وَالْفَنَاءِ.

Hadith n. 373

373. Ibn Jarir at-Tabari has, in his history (vol.2, p.1086; also Ibn al-Athir in his history, vol.4, p.478), related from 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Layla, al-faqih (the theologian), who was one of those who had risen with ('Abd' ar-Rahman ibn Muhammad) Ibn al-Ash'ath to fight al-Hajjaj (ibn Yusuf ath-Thaqafi), that he (Ibn Abi Layla) was exhorting people to jihad by recalling: On the occasion of encounter with the people of Syria I heard Amir al-mu'minin, may Allah exalt his degree of rank among the righteous and may He reward him the reward of martyrs and men of truth, saying:

373. وروى ابن جرير الطبري في تاريخه عن عبدالرحمن بن أبي ليلى الفقيه. وكان ممن خرج لقتال الحجاج مع ابن الأشعث. أنه قال فيما كان يحضُّ به الناسَ على الجهاد: إني سمعتُ علياً رفع الله درجته في الصالحين، و أثنابه ثواب الشهداء و الصديقين، يقول يوم لقينا أهل الشام:

O believers, whoever observes excesses being committed and people being called towards evil and disapproves it with his heart is safe and free from responsibility for it, and whoever disapproves of it with his tongue would be rewarded and he is in a higher position than the former but

whoever disapproves it with his sword in order that the word of Allah may remain superior and the word of the oppressors may remain inferior, catches hold of the path of guidance and stands on the right way, while his heart is lighted with conviction.

أَيُّهَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ، إِنَّهُ مَنْ رَأَى عُذْوَانًا يُعْمَلُ بِهِ وَمُنْكَرًا يُدْعَى إِلَيْهِ، فَأَنْكَرَهُ بِقَلْبِهِ فَقَدْ سَلِمَ
وَبَرِيءٌ وَمَنْ أَنْكَرَهُ بِلِسَانِهِ فَقَدْ أُجِرَ وَهُوَ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ صَاحِبِهِ، وَمَنْ أَنْكَرَهُ بِالسَّيْفِ لِيَتَكُونَ كَلِمَةً
اللَّهِ هِيَ الْعُلْيَا وَكَلِمَةُ الظَّالِمِينَ السُّفْلَى، فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي أَصَابَ سَبِيلَ الْهُدَى، وَقَامَ عَلَى الطَّرِيقِ،
وَنَوَّرَ فِي قَلْبِهِ الْيَقِينَ.

Hadith n. 374

374. Another saying in the same strain runs as follows: So, among them (the Muslim community) there is he who disapproves evil with his hand, tongue and heart. This man has perfectly attained the virtuous habits. And among them there is he who disapproves evil with his tongue and heart but not with his hand. This man has attained only two virtuous habits but lacks one. And among them there is the third one who disapproves evil with his heart but not with his tongue and hand. This is the one who lacks the two better qualities out of three and holds only one. Then, among them there is also he who does not disapprove evil either with his tongue, heart or hand. He is just a dead man among the living.

374. وقد قال عليه السلام في كلام غير هذا يجري هذا المجرى: فَمِنْهُمْ الْمُنْكَرُ لِلْمُنْكَرِ
بِيَدِهِ وَلِسَانِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ فَذَلِكَ الْمُسْتَكْمِلُ لِحِصَالِ الْخَيْرِ، وَمِنْهُمْ الْمُنْكَرُ بِلِسَانِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَالتَّارِكُ بِيَدِهِ
فَذَلِكَ مُتَمَسِّكٌ بِحِصْلَتَيْنِ مِنْ حِصَالِ الْخَيْرِ وَمُضَيِّعٌ حِصْلَةً، وَمِنْهُمْ الْمُنْكَرُ بِقَلْبِهِ وَالتَّارِكُ بِيَدِهِ
وَلِسَانِهِ فَذَلِكَ الَّذِي ضَيَّعَ أَشْرَفَ الْحِصْلَتَيْنِ مِنَ الثَّلَاثِ وَتَمَسَّكَ بِوَاحِدَةٍ، وَمِنْهُمْ تَارِكٌ لِانْتِكَارِ
الْمُنْكَرِ بِلِسَانِهِ وَقَلْبِهِ وَبِيَدِهِ فَذَلِكَ مَيِّتٌ الْأَحْيَاءِ.

All the virtuous deeds including war in the way of Allah as compared to the persuasion to good and dissuasion from evil are just like spitting in the deep ocean. The persuasion for good and dissuasion from evil do not bring death nearer nor do they lessen the livelihood. And better than all this is to utter a just expression before a tyrannical ruler.

وَمَا أَعْمَالُ الْبِرِّ كُلُّهَا وَالْجِهَادُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، عِنْدَ الْأَمْرِ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيِ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، إِلَّا
كَنْفُتَةً فِي بَحْرِ الْحَيِّ وَإِنَّ الْأَمْرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ لَا يُقَرِّبَانِ مِنْ أَجْلِ، وَلَا يَنْقُصَانِ
مِنْ رِزْقِي، وَأَفْضَلُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ كَلِمَةٌ عَدْلٍ عِنْدَ إِمَامٍ جَائِرٍ.

Hadith n. 375

375. It is related from Abu Juhayfah who said: I heard Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, saying:

The first fighting with which you will be overpowered is the fighting with hands, thereafter with your tongues and then with your hearts. Consequently, he who does not recognize virtue with his heart or does not

disapprove evil will be turned upside down. Thus, his upside will be turned downwards and his lowside will be turned upwards.

375. وعن أبي جُحَيْفَةَ قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَقُولُ: أَوَّلُ مَا تُغْلَبُونَ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْجِهَادِ الْجِهَادُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ، ثُمَّ بِالسِّبْتِ كُمْ، ثُمَّ بِفُلُوبِكُمْ؛ فَمَنْ لَمْ يَعْرِفْ بِقَلْبِهِ مَعْرُوفًا، وَلَمْ يُنْكِرْ مُنْكَرًا، قَلْبٌ فَجَعَلَ أَعْلَاهُ أَسْفَلَهُ، وَأَسْفَلُهُ أَعْلَاهُ.

Hadith n. 376

376. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Certainly, right is weighty and wholesome while wrong is light and unwholesome.

376. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ الْحَقَّ ثَقِيلٌ مَرِيءٌ وَإِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ خَفِيفٌ وَبِيءٌ.

Hadith n. 377

377. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him said: Do not feel safe from the punishment of Allah even about the best man in the whole community because Allah, the Sublime, says: But no one feels secure against the plan of Allah save the people (who are the) losers. (Qur'an, 7:99). Again, do not lose hope even for the worst man of the community because Allah-, the Sublime says: Verily, despairs not of Allah's mercy but the disbelieving people. (Qur'an, 12:87).

377. وقال عليه السلام: لَا تَأْمَنَنَّ عَلَى خَيْرِ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ، لِقَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: (فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ) وَ لَا تَيْئَسَنَّ لِشَرِّ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ مِنْ رُوحِ اللَّهِ لِقَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى (إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْئَسُ مِنْ رُوحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ).

Hadith n. 378

378. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Miserliness contains all other evil vices and is the rein with which one can be led to every evil.

378. وقال عليه السلام: الْبُخْلُ جَامِعٌ لِمَسَاوِيءِ الْعُيُوبِ، وَهُوَ زِمَامٌ يُقَادُ بِهِ إِلَى كُلِّ

سُوءٍ.

Hadith n. 379

379. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: O son of Adam, livelihood is of two kinds: the livelihood which you seek and the livelihood which seeks you; if you do not reach it, it will come to you Therefore, do not turn your one day's worry into a year's worry. Whatever you get every day should be enough for you for the day. If you have a whole year of your life even then Allah, the Sublime, will give you every next day what He has destined as your share. If you do not have a year in your life then why should you worry for what is not for you. No seeker will reach your livelihood before you nor will anyone overpower you in the matter of livelihood. Similarly, whatever has been destined as your share will not be delayed for you.

379. وقال عليه السلام: الرِّزْقُ رِزْقَانِ: رِزْقٌ تَطْلُبُهُ، وَرِزْقٌ يَطْلُبُكَ، فَإِنْ لَمْ تَأْتِهِ أَتَاكَ، فَلَا تَحْمِلْ هَمَّ سَنَتِكَ عَلَى هَمِّ يَوْمِكَ! كَفَاكَ كُلُّ يَوْمٍ مَا فِيهِ، فَإِنْ تَكُنِ السَّنَةُ مِنْ عُمْرِكَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى سَيُؤْتِيكَ فِي كُلِّ غَدٍ جَدِيدٍ مَا قَسَمَ لَكَ، وَإِنْ لَمْ تَكُنِ السَّنَةُ مِنْ عُمْرِكَ فَمَا تَصْنَعُ بِالْهَمِّ لِمَا لَيْسَ لَكَ، وَلَنْ يَسْبِقَكَ إِلَى رِزْقِكَ طَالِبٌ، وَلَنْ يَغْلِبَكَ عَلَيْهِ عَالِبٌ، وَلَنْ يُبْطِئَ عَنْكَ مَا قَدَّ قُدِّرَ لَكَ.

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This saying has already appeared elsewhere in this chapter except that here it is clearer and more detailed. This is why we have repeated it according to the principle laid down in the beginning of the book.

قال الرضي: وقد مضى هذا الكلام فيما تقدم من هذا الباب، إلا أنه هنا أوضح وأشرح، فلذلك كررناه على القاعدة المقررة في أول هذا الكتاب.

Hadith n. 380

380. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Many a man faces a day after which he finds no day and many a man is in an enviable position in the earlier part of the night but is wept over by bewailing women in its later part.

380. وقال عليه السلام: رُبَّ مُسْتَقْبِلٍ يَوْمًا لَيْسَ بِمُسْتَدْبِرِهِ وَمَعْبُوطٍ فِي أَوَّلِ لَيْلِهِ قَامَتْ بَوَاكِيهِ فِي آخِرِهِ.

Hadith n. 381

381. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Words are in your control until you have not uttered them; but when you have spoken them out you are under their control. Therefore, guard your tongue as you guard your gold and silver, for often one expression snatches away a blessing and invites punishment.

381. وقال عليه السلام: الْكَلَامُ فِي وَثَاقِكَ مَا لَمْ تَتَكَلَّمْ بِهِ، فَإِذَا تَكَلَّمْتَ بِهِ صِرْتَ فِي وَثَاقِهِ، فَاحْزُنْ لِسَانَكَ كَمَا تَحْزُنُ ذَهَبَكَ وَوَرَقَكَ فَرُبَّ كَلِمَةٍ سَلَبَتْ نِعْمَةً وَجَلَبَتْ نِقْمَةً.

Hadith n. 382

382. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not say what you do not know; rather do not say all that you know, because Allah has laid down some obligations for all your limbs by means of which He will put forth arguments against you on the Day of Judgment.

382. وقال عليه السلام: لَا تَقُلْ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُ، بَلْ لَا تَقُلْ كُلَّ مَا تَعْلَمُ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَبَحَانَهُ قَدْ فَرَضَ عَلَى جَوَارِحِكَ كُلِّهَا فَرَائِضَ يَحْتَجُّ بِهَا عَلَيْكَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

Hadith n. 383

383. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fear lest Allah sees you while committing His sins or misses you when it is time to obey Him and as a result thereof you become a loser. Therefore, when you are strong be

strong in obeying Allah and when you are weak be weak in committing sins of Allah.

383. وقال عليه السلام: اخذِرْ أَنْ يَرَاكَ اللهُ عِنْدَ مَعْصِيَتِهِ، وَيَقْدَكَ عِنْدَ طَاعَتِهِ، فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ، وَإِذَا قَوَيْتَ فَاَقْوِ عَلَى طَاعَةِ اللهِ، وَإِذَا ضَعُفْتَ فَاصْغُرْ عَنِ مَعْصِيَةِ اللهِ.

Hadith n. 384

384. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Leaning towards this world despite what you see of it, is folly, and lagging behind in good deeds when you are convinced of good reward for them is obvious loss, while trusting in every one before trying is weakness.

384. وقال عليه السلام: الرُّكُوعُ إِلَى الدُّنْيَا مَعَ مَا تُعَايِنُ مِنْهَا جَهْلٌ، وَالتَّقْصِيرُ فِي حُسْنِ الْعَمَلِ إِذَا وَثِقْتَ بِالثَّوَابِ عَلَيْهِ غَبْنٌ وَالطَّمَأْنِينَةُ إِلَى كُلِّ أَحَدٍ قَبْلَ الْأَخْتِيَارِ عَجْزٌ.

Hadith n. 385

385. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: It is (the proof of the) baseness of the world before Allah that He is disobeyed only herein and His favours cannot be achieved except by abandoning it.

385. وقال عليه السلام: مِنْ هَوَانِ الدُّنْيَا عَلَى اللهِ أَنَّهُ لَا يُعْصَى إِلَّا فِيهَا، وَلَا يُنَالُ مَا عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا بِتَرْكِهَا.

Hadith n. 386

386. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: One who is in search of something will obtain it, or at least a part of it.

386. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ طَلَبَ شَيْئًا نَالَهُ أَوْ بَعْضَهُ.

Hadith n. 387

387. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: That good is no good after which there is the Fire, and that hardship is no hardship after which there is Paradise. Every bliss other than Paradise is inferior and every calamity other than the Fire is comfort.

387. وقال عليه السلام: مَا خَيْرٌ بِخَيْرٍ بَعْدَهُ النَّارُ، وَمَا شَرٌّ بِشَرٍّ بَعْدَهُ الْجَنَّةُ، وَكُلُّ نَعِيمٍ دُونَ الْجَنَّةِ مَحْفُورٌ كُلُّ بَلَاءٍ دُونَ النَّارِ عَاقِبَةٌ.

Hadith n. 388

388. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Beware that destitution is a calamity, but worse than destitution is ailment of the body, while worse than bodily ailment is the disease of the heart. Beware that plenty of wealth is a blessing, but better than plenty of wealth is the health of the body, while still better than the health of the body is the chastity of heart.

388. وقال عليه السلام: أَلَا وَإِنَّ مِنَ الْبَلَاءِ الْفَقَاةَ وَأَشَدُّ مِنَ الْفَقَاةِ مَرَضُ الْبَدَنِ، وَأَشَدُّ مِنْ مَرَضِ الْبَدَنِ مَرَضُ الْقَلْبِ. أَلَا وَإِنَّ مِنَ النِّعَمِ سَعَةِ الْمَالِ، وَأَفْضَلُ مِنْ سَعَةِ الْمَالِ صِحَّةُ الْبَدَنِ، وَأَفْضَلُ مِنْ صِحَّةِ الْبَدَنِ تَقْوَى الْقَلْبِ.

Hadith n. 389

389. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whomever his action .detains behind, his lineage cannot put him forward. In another version it is thus: Whoever misses personal attainment cannot be benefited by his forefathers' attainments.

389. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ أَبْطَأَ بِهِ عَمَلُهُ لَمْ يُسْرِعْ بِهِ نَسَبُهُ. وفي رواية أُخرى: مَنْ قَاتَهُ حَسَبَ نَفْسِهِ لَمْ يَنْفَعَهُ حَسَبُ آبَائِهِ.

Hadith n. 390

390. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The believer's time has three periods: The period when he is in communion with Allah; the period when he manages for his livelihood; and the period when he is free to enjoy what is lawful and pleasant. It does not behove a wise person to be away (from his house) save for three matters, namely for purposes of earning, or going for something for the next life or for enjoying what is not prohibited.

390. وقال عليه السلام: لِلْمُؤْمِنِ ثَلَاثُ سَاعَاتٍ: فَسَاعَةٌ يُنَاجِي فِيهَا رَبَّهُ، وَسَاعَةٌ يَرْمُ مَعَاشَهُ، وَسَاعَةٌ يُخَلِّي بَيْنَ نَفْسِهِ وَبَيْنَ لَدَّتْهَا فِيمَا يَحِلُّ وَيَجْمَلُ. وَلَيْسَ لِلْعَاقِلِ أَنْ يَكُونَ شَاخِصًا إِلَّا فِي ثَلَاثٍ: مَرَمَّةٍ لِمَعَاشٍ، أَوْ حُطْوَةٍ فِي مَعَادٍ، أَوْ لَدَّةٍ فِي غَيْرِ مُحَرَّمٍ .

Hadith n. 391

391. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Abstain from the world so that Allah may show you its real evils and do not be neglectful because (in any case) you will not be neglected.

391. وقال عليه السلام: ازهد في الدنيا يبصرك الله عوراتها، ولا تغفل فلست بمغفول عنك.

Hadith n. 392

392. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Speak so that you may be known, since man is hidden under his tongue.

392. وقال عليه السلام: تَكَلَّمُوا تُعْرَفُوا، فَإِنَّ الْمَرْءَ مُحَبُّوهُ تَحْتَ لِسَانِهِ.

Hadith n. 393

393. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Take off the favours of the world whatever comes to you and keep away from what keeps away from you. If you cannot do so be moderate in your seeking.

393. وقال عليه السلام: حُذِّ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا مَا أَتَاكَ، وَتَوَلَّ عَمَّا تَوَلَّى عَنْكَ، فَإِنْ أَنْتَ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَأَجْمَلْ فِي الطَّلَبِ.

Hadith n. 394

394. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Many an expression is more effective than an attack.

394. وقال عليه السلام: رُبَّ قَوْلٍ أَنْفَذَ مِنْ صَوْلٍ.

Hadith n. 395

395. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Every small thing that is contented upon, suffices.

395. وقال عليه السلام: كُلُّ مُقْتَصِرٍ عَلَيْهِ كَافٍ.

Hadith n. 396

396. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Let it be death but not humiliation. Let it be little but not through others. He who does not get while sitting will not get by standing either. The world has two days one for you and the other against you. When the day is for you, do not feel proud but when it is against you endure it.

396. وقال عليه السلام: الْمَيِّتَةُ وَلَا الدَّيِّتَةُ وَالتَّقَلُّ وَلَا التَّوَسُّلُ وَمَنْ لَمْ يُعْطَ قَاعِدًا لَمْ يُعْطَ قَائِمًا وَالذَّهْرُ يَوْمَانِ: يَوْمٌ لَكَ، وَيَوْمٌ عَلَيْكَ؛ فَإِذَا كَانَ لَكَ فَلَا تَبْتَظِرْ، وَإِذَا كَانَ عَلَيْكَ فَاصْبِرْ!

Hadith n. 397

397. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The best scent is musk; its weight is light while its odour is fragrant.

397. وقال عليه السلام: نِعَمَ الطَّيِّبِ الْمِسْكُ، خَفِيفٌ حَمَلُهُ، عَطِرٌ رِيحُهُ.

Hadith n. 398

398. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Put off boasting, give up self-conceit and remember your grave.

398. وقال عليه السلام: ضَعْ فَحْرَكَ، وَاحْطُطْ كِبْرَكَ، وَادْكُرْ قَبْرَكَ.

Hadith n. 399

399. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The child has a right on the father while the father too has a right on the child. The right of the father on the child is that the latter should obey the former in every matter save in committing sins of Allah, the Glorified, while the right of the child on the father is that he should give him a beautiful name, give him good training and teach him the Qur'an.

399. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ لِلْوَالِدِ عَلَى الْوَالِدِ حَقًّا، وَإِنَّ لِلْوَالِدِ عَلَى الْوَالِدِ حَقًّا: فَحَقُّ الْوَالِدِ عَلَى الْوَالِدِ أَنْ يُطِيعَهُ فِي كُلِّ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا فِي مَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ، وَحَقُّ الْوَالِدِ عَلَى الْوَالِدِ أَنْ يُحْسِنَ اسْمَهُ وَيُحْسِنَ أَدَبَهُ وَيُعَلِّمَهُ الْقُرْآنَ.

Hadith n. 400

400. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Evil effect of sight is right; charm is right; sorcery is right, and fa'l (auguring good) is right, while tiyarah (auguring evil) ⁸⁹ is not right, and spreading of a disease from one to the other is not right. Scent gives pleasure, honey gives pleasure, riding gives pleasure and looking at greenery gives pleasure.

400. وقال عليه السلام: الْعَيْنُ حَقٌّ، وَالرُّقَى حَقٌّ، وَالسِّحْرُ حَقٌّ، وَالْقَالُ حَقٌّ، وَالطَّيْرَةُ لَيْسَتْ بِحَقٍّ، وَالْعَدْوَى لَيْسَتْ بِحَقٍّ، وَالطَّيْبُ نُشْرَةٌ وَالْعَسَلُ نُشْرَةٌ، وَالرُّكُوبُ نُشْرَةٌ، وَالنَّظَرُ إِلَى الْحُضْرَةِ نُشْرَةٌ.

Hadith n. 401

401. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Nearness with people in their manners brings about safety from their evil.

401. وقال عليه السلام: مُقَارَبَةُ النَّاسِ فِي أَخْلَاقِهِمْ أَمْنٌ مِنْ غَوَائِلِهِمْ.

Hadith n. 402

402. Someone uttered an expression above his position, then Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to him: You have started flying soon after growing feathers (shakir) and commenced grumbling before attaining youth (saqb).

402. وقال عليه السلام لبعض مخاطبيه، وقد تكلم بكلمة يُسْتَصَعَّرُ مثله عن قول مثلها: لَقَدْ طَرَّتْ شَكِيرًا، وَهَدَرَتْ سَقْبًا.

Sayyid ar-Razi says: Here, "shakir" [in the original Arabic text] means the first feathers that grow on a bird before it is strong enough to fly. And "saqb" means the young camel who does not grumble unless it becomes mature.

قال الرضي: والشكير هاهنا: أول ما ينبت من ريش الطائر قبل أن يقوى ويستحصف، والسقب: الصغير من الإبل ولا يهدر إلا بعد أن يستفحل.

Hadith n. 403

403. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever hankers after contraries gets no means of success.

403. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ أَوْمَأَ إِلَى مُتَفَاوِتٍ حَدَلْتَهُ الْحَيْلُ.

Hadith n. 404

404. On being asked the meaning of the expression: "la hawla wala quwwata illa bi'llah" (there is no strength nor power but by means of Allah) . Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: We are not master of anything along with Allah, and we are not master of anything save what He makes us master of. So, when He makes us master of anything of which He is a superior Master over us, He also assigns some duties to us; and when He takes it away He will take away those duties as well.⁹⁰

404. وقال عليه السلام وَقَدْ سُئِلَ عَنْ مَعْنَى قَوْلِهِمْ: لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ: إِنَّا لَا مَمْلَكَةَ مَعَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا، وَلَا مَمْلَكَةَ إِلَّا مَا مَلَكْنَا، فَمَتَى مَلَكْنَا مَا هُوَ أَمْلَكُ بِهِ مِنَّا كَلَفْنَا، وَمَتَى أَخَذَهُ مِنَّا وَضَعَ تَكْلِيفَهُ عَنَّا.

Hadith n. 405

405. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, heard Ammar ibn Yasir (may Allah have mercy on him) conversing with al- Mughirah ibn Shu'bah and said: Let him alone O Ammar, for he has entered religion only to the extent of his deriving advantage of the world, and he has wilfully involved himself in misgivings in order to adopt them as cover for his shortcomings.

405. وقال عليه السلام لعمار بن ياسر رحمه الله، وقد سمعه يراجع المغيرة بن شعبة كلاماً: دَعُهُ يَا عَمَّارُ، فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَأْخُذْ مِنَ الدِّينِ إِلَّا مَا قَارَبْتَهُ الدُّنْيَا، وَعَلَى عَمَدٍ لَبَسَ عَلَي نَفْسِهِ لِيَجْعَلَ الشُّبُهَاتِ عَازِراً لِسَقَطَاتِهِ

Hadith n. 406

406. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: How good it is for the rich to show humility before the poor to seek reward from Allah, but better than that is the haughtiness of the poor towards the rich with trust in Allah.

406. وقال عليه السلام: مَا أَحْسَنَ تَوَاضُعِ الْأَعْيَانِ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ طَلَباً لِمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ! وَأَحْسَنُ مِنْهُ تَبَهُهُ الْفُقَرَاءِ عَلَى الْأَعْيَانِ اتِّكَالاً عَلَى اللَّهِ .

Hadith n. 407

407. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Allah does not grant wisdom to a person except that some day He will save him from ruin with its help.

407. وقال عليه السلام: مَا اسْتَوْدَعَ اللَّهُ امْرَأً عَقْلاً إِلَّا اسْتَنْقَدَهُ بِهِ يَوْمًا مَا .

Hadith n. 408

408. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever clashes with Truth would be knocked down by it.

408. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ صَارَعَ الْحَقَّ صَرَعَهُ.

Hadith n. 409

409. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The heart is the book of the eye.

409. وقال عليه السلام: الْقَلْبُ مُصْحَفُ الْبَصَرِ.

Hadith n. 410

410. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Fear of Allah is the chief trait of human character.

410. وقال عليه السلام: التَّقْيُ رَيْسُ الْأَخْلَاقِ.

Hadith n. 411

411. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do not try the sharpness of your tongue against Him Who gave you the power to speak, nor the eloquence of your speaking against Him Who set you on the right path.

411. وقال عليه السلام: لَا تَجْعَلَنَّ ذَرِيَّتَكَ عَلَى مَنْ أَنْطَقَكَ، وَبِلَاعَةَ قَوْلِكَ عَلَى مَنْ سَدَّدَكَ.

Hadith n. 412

412. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: It is enough for your own discipline that you abstain from what you dislike from others.

412. وقال عليه السلام: كَفَاكَ أَدَبًا لِنَفْسِكَ اجْتِنَابُ مَا تَكْرَهُهُ مِنْ غَيْرِكَ.

Hadith n. 413

413. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: One should endure like free people, otherwise one should keep quiet like the ignorant.

413. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ صَبَرَ صَبَرَ الْأَحْرَارَ، وَالْأَسْلَى سُلُو الْأَعْمَارِ.

Hadith n. 414

414. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: In another tradition it is related that Imam (A.S.) said to al-Ash'ath ibn Qays by way of condolence on the death of his son: Either endure like great people or else you will forget like animals.

414. وفي خبرٍ آخر أنه عليه السلام قال للأشعث بن قيس معزياً: إِنْ صَبَرْتَ صَبَرَ الْأَكْرَامِ، وَإِلَّا سَلَوْتَ سُلُو الْبَهَائِمِ.

Hadith n. 415

415. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said about the world: It deceives, it harms and it passes away. Allah, the Sublime, did not approve it as a reward for His lovers nor as a punishment for His enemies. In fact, the people of this world are like those riders that as soon as they alighted the driver called out to them and they marched off.

415. وقال عليه السلام في صفة الدنيا: تَعُرُّ وَتَضُرُّ وَتَمُرُّ، إِنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى لَمْ يَرْضَهَا ثَوَابًا لِأَوْلِيَائِهِ، وَلَا عِقَابًا لِأَعْدَائِهِ، وَإِنَّ أَهْلَ الدُّنْيَا كَرَكِبٍ بَيْنَا هُمْ حَلُّوا إِذْ صَاحَ بِهِمْ سَائِقُهُمْ فَارْتَحَلُوا.

Hadith n. 416

416. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to his son al-Hasan (peace be upon him): O my son, do not leave anything of this world behind you, because you will be leaving it for either of two sorts of persons: Either a person who uses it in obeying Allah, in this case he will acquire virtue through what was evil for you, or it will be a person who uses it in disobeying Allah and in that case he will be earning evil with what you collected for him, and so you will be assisting him in his sinfulness; and neither of these two deserves to be preferred by you over yourself.

416. وقال لابنه الحسن: يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُخَلِّفَنَّ وِرَاءَكَ شَيْئًا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا، فَإِنَّكَ تُخَلِّفُهُ لِأَحَدٍ رَجُلَيْنِ: إِمَّا رَجُلٍ عَمِلَ فِيهِ بِطَاعَةِ اللَّهِ فَسَعِدَ بِمَا شَقِيتَ بِهِ، وَإِمَّا رَجُلٍ عَمِلَ فِيهِ بِمَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ

فَشَقِي بِمَا جَمَعْتَ لَهُ فَكُنْتَ عَوْنًا لَهُ عَلَى مَعْصِيَتِهِ، وَلَيْسَ أَحَدٌ هَذَيْنِ حَقِيقًا أَنْ تُؤْزِرَهُ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ.

Sayyid ar-Razi says: This saying is also related in another version thus:

Whatever of this world is now with you was with others before you, and it will pass to some others after you. Thus, you are collecting things for either of two sorts of men: a man who uses whatever you collected in obedience of Allah and thus acquired virtues with what was evil for you, or a man who uses it in disobeying Allah, so you will be getting evil for what you collected. Neither of these two is such that you should prefer him over your own self, or you may burden yourself for his own sake. Therefore, hope for the mercy of Allah for him who has passed away and for Divine livelihood for him who survives.

و يروى هذا الكلام على وجه آخر، وهو: أَمَا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ الَّذِي فِي يَدِكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا قَدْ كَانَ لَهُ أَهْلٌ قَبْلَكَ، وَهُوَ صَائِرٌ إِلَى أَهْلِ بَعْدِكَ، وَإِنَّمَا أَنْتَ جَامِعٌ لِأَحَدِ رَجُلَيْنِ: رَجُلٍ عَمِلَ فِيمَا جَمَعْتَهُ بِطَاعَةِ اللَّهِ فَسَعِدَ بِمَا شَقِيَتْ بِهِ، أَوْ رَجُلٍ عَمِلَ فِيهِ بِمَعْصِيَةِ اللَّهِ فَشَقِيَتْ بِمَا جَمَعْتَ لَهُ، وَلَيْسَ أَحَدٌ هَذَيْنِ أَهْلًا أَنْ تُؤْزِرَهُ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ تَحْمِلَ لَهُ عَلَى ظَهْرِكَ، فَإِنِجْ لِمَنْ مَضَى رَحْمَةً اللَّهِ، وَ لِمَنْ بَقِيَ رِزْقَ اللَّهِ.

Hadith n. 417

417. Someone said before Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him: "Astaghfirullah" (I ask Allah's forgiveness), then Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Your mother may lose you! Do you know what "istighfar" (asking Allah's forgiveness) is? "Istighfar" is meant for people of a high position. It is a word that stands on six supports. The first is to repent over the past; the second is to make a firm determination never to revert to it; the third is to discharge all the rights of people so that you may meet Allah quite clean with nothing to account for; the fourth is to fulfil every obligation which you ignored (in the past) so that you may now do justice with it; the fifth is to aim at the flesh grown as a result of unlawful earning, so that you may melt it by grief (of repentance) till the skin touches the bone and a new flesh grows between them; and the sixth is to make the body taste the pain of obedience as you (previously) made it taste the sweetness of disobedience. On such an occasion you may say "astaghfirullah".

417. وقال عليه السلام لقاتل قال بحضرته: أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ. تُكَلِّتُكَ أُمَّكَ، أَتَدْرِي مَا الْأَسْتِغْفَارُ؟ إِنَّ الْأَسْتِغْفَارَ دَرَجَةُ الْعَلِيِّينَ، وَهُوَ اسْمٌ وَقَعَ عَلَى سِتَّةِ مَعَانٍ: أَوَّلُهَا: النَّدَمُ عَلَى مَا مَضَى. وَالثَّانِي: الْعَزْمُ عَلَى تَرْكِ الْعُودِ إِلَيْهِ أَبَدًا. وَالثَّلَاثُ: أَنْ تُؤَدِّيَ إِلَى الْمَخْلُوقِينَ حُقُوقَهُمْ حَتَّى تَلْقَى اللَّهَ عَرُوجًا أَمْلَسَ لَيْسَ عَلَيْكَ تَبِعَةٌ. وَالرَّابِعُ: أَنْ تَعْمِدَ إِلَى كُلِّ فَرِيضَةٍ عَلَيْكَ صَيَّعَتْهَا فَتُؤَدِّيَ حَقَّهَا. وَالخَامِسُ: أَنْ تَعْمِدَ إِلَى اللَّحْمِ الَّذِي نَبَتَ عَلَى السُّحْتِ فَتُنْذِيهَ

بِالْأَحْزَانِ، حَتَّى يَلْصِقَ الْجِلْدُ بِالْعَظْمِ، وَيَنْشَأُ بَيْنَهُمَا لَحْمٌ جَدِيدٌ. وَالسَّادِسُ: أَنْ تُذِيقَ الْجِسْمَ
أَلْمَ الطَّاعَةِ كَمَا أَدْفَتَهُ حَلَاوَةَ الْمَعْصِيَةِ. فَعِنْدَ ذَلِكَ تَقُولُ: أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ

Hadith n. 418

418. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Clemency is (like) a kinsfolk.

418. وقال عليه السلام: الحِلْمُ عَشِيرَةٌ.

Hadith n. 419

419. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: How wretched the son of Adam is! His death is hidden, his ailments are concealed, his actions are preserved, the bite of a mosquito pains him, choking causes his death and sweat gives him a bad smell.

419. وقال عليه السلام: مِسْكِينُ ابْنِ آدَمَ: مَكْتُومُ الْأَجْلِ، مَكْتُونُ الْعِلَالِ، مَحْفُوظُ الْعَمَلِ، تَوَلَّمُهُ الْبَقَّةُ، وَتَقْتُلُهُ الشَّرْقَةُ وَتُنْتِنُهُ الْعَرْقَةُ.

Hadith n. 420

420. It is related that Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was sitting with his companions when a beautiful woman passed by them and they began to look at her whereupon Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The eyes of these men are covetous and this glancing is the cause of their becoming covetous. Whenever anyone of you sees a woman who attracts him, he should meet his wife because she is a woman like his wife.

420. وروى أنه عليه السلام كان جالساً في أصحابه، فمرت بهم امرأة جميلة، فرمقها القوم بأبصارهم. فقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ أَبْصَارَ هَذِهِ الْفُحُولِ طَوَامِخٌ وَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ سَبَبٌ هَبَايَها فَإِذَا نَظَرَ أَحَدُكُمْ إِلَى امْرَأَةٍ تُعْجِبُهُ فَلْيَلَامِسْ أَهْلَهُ، فَإِنَّمَا هِيَ امْرَأَةٌ كَأَمْرَأَةٍ.

Then one of the Kharijites said: "May Allah kill this heretic! How logical he is!" People then leapt towards him to kill him, but Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: "Wait a bit. There should either be abuse [for an abuse] or else pardoning from the offence."

فقال رجل من الخوارج: قاتله الله كافراً ما أفقعه. فوثب القوم ليقتلوه. فقال عليه السلام: رُوِيْدًا إِنَّمَا هُوَ سَبٌّ بِسَبِّ، أَوْ عَقْفٌ عَن ذَنْبٍ.

Hadith n. 421

421. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: It is enough if your wisdom distinguishes for you the path of your going astray from the path of your guidance.

421. وقال عليه السلام: كَفَّاكَ مِنْ عَقْلِكَ مَا أَوْضَحَ لَكَ سَبِيلَ غَيِّكَ مِنْ رُشْدِكَ.

Hadith n. 422

422. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Do good and do not regard any part of it small because its small is big and its little is much. No one of you should say that another person is more deserving than I in doing

good. Otherwise, by Allah, it would really be so. There are people of good and evil. When you would leave either of the two, others will perform them.

422. وقال عليه السلام: افعلوا الخير ولا تحقرُوا منه شيئاً، فإنَّ صغيره كبيرٌ وقليله كثيرٌ، ولا يقولنَّ أحدكم: إنَّ أحداً أولى بفعل الخير مِنِّي فيكونَ والله كذالك، إنَّ للخيرِ والشَّرِّ أهلاً، فمهما تركتُموه مِنهما كفاكموه أهله.

Hadith n. 423

423. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever set right his inward self, Allah sets right his outward self. Whoever performs acts for his religion, Allah accomplishes his acts of this world. Whoever's dealings between himself and Allah are good, Allah turns the dealings between him and other people good.

423. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ أَصْلَحَ سِرِّيَّتَهُ أَصْلَحَ اللهُ عَلَانِيَتَهُ، وَمَنْ عَمِلَ لِدِينِهِ كَفَاهُ اللهُ أَمْرَ دُنْيَاهُ، وَمَنْ أَحْسَنَ فِيمَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ اللهِ كَفَاهُ اللهُ مَا بَيْنَهُ وَبَيْنَ النَّاسِ.

Hadith n. 424

424. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Forbearance is a curtain for covering, and wisdom is a sharp sword. Therefore, conceal the weaknesses in your conduct with forbearance and kill your desires with your wisdom.

424. وقال عليه السلام: الحِلْمُ غِطَاءٌ سَاتِرٌ، وَالْعَقْلُ حُسَامٌ قَاطِعٌ، فَاسْتُرْ خَلْلَ خُلُقِكَ بِحِلْمِكَ، وَقَاتِلْ هَوَاكَ بِعَقْلِكَ.

Hadith n. 425

425. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There are some creatures of Allah whom Allah particularizes with favours for the benefit of the people, therefore He places them in their hands so long as they give them to others; but when they deny them to others He takes away the favours from them and sends them to others.

425. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ لِلَّهِ عِبَاداً يَخْتَصُّهُمْ بِالنِّعَمِ لِمَنَافِعِ الْعِبَادِ، فَيَقْرِهَا فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ مَا بَدَّلُوهَا، فَإِذَا مَنَعُوهَا نَزَعَهَا مِنْهُمْ، ثُمَّ حَوَّلَهَا إِلَى غَيْرِهِمْ.

Hadith n. 426

426. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: It does not behove a man to have trust in two positions, health and riches, because there is many a man whom you see healthy but he soon falls sick and many a man whom you see rich but soon turns destitute.

426. وقال عليه السلام: لَا يَنْبَغِي لِلْعَبْدِ أَنْ يَتَّقِيَ بِحَصْنَتَيْنِ: الْعَافِيَةَ، وَالْغِنَى: بَيْنَا تَرَاهُ مُعَافٍ إِذْ سَقِمَ، وَعَنِياً إِذْ افْتَقَرَ.

Hadith n. 427

427. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever complains about a need to a believer, it is as though he has complained about it to

Allah; but whoever complains about it to an unbeliever it is as though he complained about Allah.

427. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ شَكَا الْحَاجَةَ إِلَى مُؤْمِنٍ فَكَأَنَّمَا شَكَاهَا إِلَى اللَّهِ، وَمَنْ شَكَاهَا إِلَى كَافِرٍ فَكَأَنَّمَا شَكَاهَا إِلَى اللَّهِ.

Hadith n. 428

428. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said on the occasion of an 'Id (Muslim feast day): It is an 'Id for him whose fasting Allah accepts and of whose prayers He is appreciative; and (in fact) every day wherein no sin of Allah is committed is an 'Id.⁹¹

428. وقال عليه السلام في بعض الأعياد: إِنَّمَا هُوَ عِيدٌ لِمَنْ قَبَلَ اللَّهُ صِيَامَهُ وَشَكَرَ قِيَامَهُ، وَكُلُّ يَوْمٍ لَا يُعْصَى اللَّهُ فِيهِ فَهُوَ يَوْمٌ عِيدٌ.

Hadith n. 429

429. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: On Judgement Day the greatest regret will be felt by man who earned wealth through sinful ways, although inherited by a person who spends it in obeying Allah, the Glorified, and will be awarded Paradise on that account while first one will go into Fire on account of it.

429. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ أَعْظَمَ الْحَسْرَاتِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَسْرَةُ رَجُلٍ كَسَبَ مَالاً فِي عَيْرِ طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ، فَوَرَّثَهُ رَجُلًا فَأَنْفَقَهُ فِي طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ، فَدَخَلَ بِهِ الْجَنَّةَ، وَدَخَلَ الْأَوَّلُ بِهِ النَّارَ.

Hadith n. 430

430. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The worst in (concluding a) transaction and the most unsuccessful in striving, is the man who exerts himself in seeking riches although fate does not help him in his aims and consequently he goes from this world in a sorrowful state while in the next world too he will face its ill consequences.⁹²

430. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ أَحْسَرَ النَّاسِ صَفْقَةً وَأَخْيَبَهُمْ سَعِيًّا، رَجُلٌ أَخْلَقَ بَدَنَهُ فِي طَلَبِ آمَالِهِ، وَلَمْ تُسَاعِدْهُ الْمَقَادِيرُ عَلَى إِرَادَتِهِ، فَخَرَجَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا بِحَسْرَتِهِ، وَقَدِمَ عَلَى الْآخِرَةِ بِتَبِعَتِهِ.

Hadith n. 431

431. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Livelihood is of two kinds: the seeker and the sought. Therefore, he who hankers after this world death traces him till it turns him out of it; but he who hankers after the next world, worldly ease itself seeks him till he receives his livelihood from it.

431. وقال عليه السلام: الرِّزْقُ رِزْقَانِ: طَالِبٌ، وَمَطْلُوبٌ، فَمَنْ طَلَبَ الدُّنْيَا طَلَبَتْهُ الْمَوْتُ حَتَّى يُخْرِجَهُ عَنْهَا، مَنْ طَلَبَ الْآخِرَةَ طَلَبَتْهُ الدُّنْيَا حَتَّى يَسْتَوْفِيَ رِزْقَهُ مِنْهَا.

Hadith n. 432

432. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Lovers of Allah are those who look at the inward side of the world while others look at its outward side, they busy themselves with remoter benefits while others busy themselves in immediate benefits. They kill those things which they feared would have killed them, and leave here in this world what they think would leave them. They took amassing of wealth by others as a small matter and regarded it like losing.

They are enemies of things others love while love things which others hate. Through them, Quran has been learnt and they have been given knowledge through Quran. Through them Quran is established while through the Quran they are established. They do not see any object of hope above what they hope and no object of fear above what they fear.

432. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ هُمُ الَّذِينَ نَظَرُوا إِلَى بَاطِنِ الدُّنْيَا إِذَا نَظَرَ النَّاسُ إِلَى ظَاهِرِهَا، وَاشْتَعَلُوا بِأَجْلِهَا إِذَا اشْتَعَلَ النَّاسُ بِعَاجِلِهَا، فَأَمَاتُوا مِنْهَا مَا حَشُوا أَنْ يُمِيتَهُمْ وَتَرَكُوا مِنْهَا مَا عَلِمُوا أَنَّهُ سَيَبْتَرُهُمْ، وَرَأَوْا اسْتِكْنَارَ غَيْرِهِمْ مِنْهَا اسْتِثْلَالًا، وَدَرَكَهُمْ لَهَا فَوْتًا، أَعْدَاءُ مَا سَلَّمَ النَّاسُ، وَسِلْمٌ مَا عَادَى النَّاسُ! بِهِمْ عِلْمُ الْكِتَابِ وَبِهِ عِلْمُوا وَبِهِمْ قَامَ الْكِتَابُ وَبِهِ قَامُوا، لَا يَرُونَ مَرْجُوًّا فَوْقَ مَا يَرْجُونَ، وَلَا مَخُوفًا فَوْقَ مَا يَخَافُونَ.

Hadith n. 433

433. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Remember pleasures will pass away while the consequences will stay.

433. وقال عليه السلام: اذْكُرُوا انْقِطَاعَ اللَّذَاتِ، وَتَبَقَاءَ النَّبِعَاتِ

Hadith n. 434

434. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Try (a man) and you will hate him.

434. وقال عليه السلام: اخْبُرْ تَقْلِيهِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Razi says: Some people say that this saying is of the Prophet (p.b.u.h.), but what confirms that it is the saying of Amir al-mu'minin (p.b.u.h.) is the statement related by Tha'lab from Ibn al-Arabi, that (caliph) al-Ma'mun said, "If Ali had not said 'ukhbur taqlihi' (try a man and you will hate him)," I would have said: 'aqlihi takhbur' (hate a man in order to try him)."

قال الرضي: ومن الناس من يروي هذا لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله، ومما يُقَوِّي أنه من كلام أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام ما حكاه ثعلب قال: حدثنا ابن الأعرابي قال: قال المأمون: لو لا أن علياً عليه السلام قال: «اخْبُرْ تَقْلِيهِ» لقلت أنا: أَقْلِيهِ تَخْبُرُ.

Hadith n. 435

435. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: It is not such that Allah, to Whom belongs Might and Majesty, keeps open the door of gratitude for a person and closes the door of plenty upon him, or that He opens the door of prayer to a person and closes the door of acceptance upon him, or that He

opens the door of repentance for a person and closes the door of forgiveness upon him.

435. وقال عليه السلام: مَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُفْتَحَ عَلَى عَبْدٍ بَابَ الشُّكْرِ وَيُعْلَقَ عَنْهُ بَابَ الرِّيَادَةِ، وَلَا لِيُفْتَحَ عَلَى عَبْدٍ بَابَ الدُّعَاءِ وَيُعْلَقَ عَنْهُ بَابَ الْأَجَابَةِ، وَلَا لِيُفْتَحَ عَلَى عَبْدٍ بَابَ التَّوْبَةِ وَيُعْلَقَ عَنْهُ بَابَ الْمَغْفِرَةِ.

Hadith n. 436

436. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The most appropriate person for an honourable position is he who descends from the people of honour.

436. وقال عليه السلام: أَوْلَى النَّاسِ بِالْكَرَمِ مَنْ عَرَقَتْ فِيهِ الْكِرَامُ.

Hadith n. 437

437. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked: Which of the two is better; justice or generosity? Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, replied: Justice puts things in their places while generosity takes them out from their directions; justice is the general caretaker while generosity is a particular benefit. Consequently, justice is superior and more distinguished of the two.

437. وسئل عليه السلام أيما أفضل: العدل، أو الجود؟ فقال: العدلُ يَضَعُ الْأُمُورَ مَوَاضِعَهَا، وَالْجُودُ يُخْرِجُهَا عَنْ جِهَتِهَا، وَالْعَدْلُ سَائِسٌ عَامٌّ، وَالْجُودُ عَارِضٌ خَاصٌّ، فَالْعَدْلُ أَشْرَفُهُمَا وَأَفْضَلُهُمَا.

Hadith n. 438

438. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: People are enemies of what they do not know.

438. وقال عليه السلام: النَّاسُ أَعْدَاءُ مَا جَهِلُوا.

Hadith n. 439

439. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The whole of asceticism is confined between two expressions of the Quran. Allah, the Glorified says:

Lest distress you yourselves for what escapes you, and be overjoyous for what He has granted you (Quran, 57:23).

Whoever does not grieve over what he misses and does not revel over what comes to him acquires asceticism from both its sides.

439. وقال عليه السلام: الرُّهْدُ كُلُّهُ بَيْنَ كَلِمَتَيْنِ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ: قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ: (لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَى مَا فَاتَكُمْ، وَ لَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ)، فَمَنْ لَمْ يَأْسَ عَلَى الْمَاضِي، وَلَمْ يَفْرَحْ بِالْآتِي، فَقَدْ أَخَذَ الرُّهْدَ بِطَرَفَيْهِ

Hadith n. 440

440. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: What a breaker is sleep for resolutions of the day!

440. وقال عليه السلام: ما أَنْقَضَ النَّوْمَ لِعَزَائِمِ الْيَوْمِ.

Hadith n. 441

441. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Governing power is the proving ground for people.

441. وقال عليه السلام: الْوَلَايَاتُ مَضَامِيرُ الرَّجَالِ.

Hadith n. 442

442. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: No town has greater right on you than the other. The best town for you is that which bears you.

442. وقال عليه السلام: لَيْسَ بَلَدٌ بِأَحَقَّ بِكَ مِنْ بَلَدٍ، خَيْرُ الْبِلَادِ مَا حَمَلَكَ.

Hadith n. 443

443. When the news of the death of (Malik) al-Ashtar (may Allah have mercy on him), reached Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, he said: Malik, what a man Malik was! By Allah, if he had been a mountain he would have been a great one (find), and if he had been a stone he would have been hard; no horseman could have reached it and no bird could have flown over it.

443. وقال عليه السلام: وقد جاءه نعي الأشتار رحمه الله: مَالِكٌ وَمَا مَالِكٌ! وَاللَّهِ لَوْ

كَانَ جَبَلًا لَكَانَ فَنَدًا، وَلَوْ كَانَ حَجْرًا لَكَانَ صَلْدًا، لَا يَرْتَقِيهِ الْحَافِرُ، وَلَا يُوفِي عَلَيْهِ الطَّائِرُ.

Sayyid ar-Razi says: "Find" means a lonely mountain (rising in height above the others in the range).

قال الرضي: الفند: المنفرد من الجبال.

Hadith n. 444

444. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A little that lasts is better than much that brings grief.

444. وقال عليه السلام: قَلِيلٌ مَدُومٌ عَلَيْهِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ كَثِيرٍ مَمْلُولٍ مِنْهُ.

Hadith n. 445

445. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If a man possesses a revealing quality wait and see his other qualities.⁹³

445. وقال عليه السلام: إِذَا كَانَ فِي رَجُلٍ حَلَّةٌ رَائِعَةٌ فَانْتَظِرْ أَخَوَاتَهَا .

Hadith n. 446

446. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said to Ghalib ibn Sa'sa'ah, father of Farazdaq (famous Arabic poet) during a conversation between them: What about the large number of your camels? The man replied: They have been swept away by (discharging of) obligations, O Amir al-mu'minin! Whereupon Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: That is the most praiseworthy way of (losing) them.

446. وقال عليه السلام لغالب بن صعصعة أبي الفرزدق، في كلام دار بينهما: مَا فَعَلْتَ إِبْلِكَ الْكَثِيرَةَ؟ قَالَ: دَعَدَعْتَهَا الْحُقُوقُ يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ. فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: ذَاكَ أَحْمَدُ سُبُلَهَا

Hadith n. 447

447. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever trades without knowing the rules of religious law will be involved in usury.

447. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ ابْتَدَعَ بَعْضَ بَعْضٍ فِيهِ ارْتِطَمَ فِي الرِّبَا.

Hadith n. 448

448. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever regards small distresses as big, Allah involves him in big ones.

448. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ عَظَّمَ صِغَارَ الْمَصَائِبِ ابْتَلَاهُ اللَّهُ بِكِبَارِهَا.

Hadith n. 449

449. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whoever maintains his own respect in view, his desires appear light to him.

449. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْ كَرَمَتْ عَلَيْهِ نَفْسُهُ هَانَتْ عَلَيْهِ شَهْوَتُهُ.

Hadith n. 450

450. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Whenever a man cuts a joke he separates away a bit from his wit.

450. وقال عليه السلام: مَا مَزَحَ امْرُؤٌ مَزْحَةً إِلَّا مَجَّ مِنْ عَقْلِهِ بَعْضٌ.

Hadith n. 451

451. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Your turning away from him who inclines towards you is a loss of your share of advantage while your inclining towards him who turns away from you is humiliation for yourself.

451. وقال عليه السلام: زُهْدُكَ فِي رَاغِبٍ فِيكَ نُقْصَانُ حَظِّكَ، وَرَغْبَتُكَ فِي زَاهِدٍ فِيكَ ذُلٌّ لِنَفْسِكَ.

Hadith n. 452

452. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Riches and destitution will follow presentation before Allah.

452. وقال عليه السلام: الْغِنَى وَالْفَقْرُ بَعْدَ الْعَرْضِ عَلَى اللَّهِ.

Hadith n. 453

453. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Az-Zubayr remained a man from our house till his wretched son 'Abdullah came forth.⁹⁴

453. وقال عليه السلام: مَا زَالَ الرَّبِيزُ رَجُلًا مِمَّا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ حَتَّى نَشَأَ ابْنُهُ الْمَشْهُومُ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ.

Hadith n. 454

454. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: What has a man to do with vanity. His origin is semen and his end is a carcass while he cannot feed himself nor ward off death.⁹⁵

454. وقال عليه السلام: مَا لِابْنِ آدَمَ وَالْفَحْرِ: أَوَّلُهُ نُطْفَةٌ، وَآخِرُهُ جِيفَةٌ، وَ لَا يَزُرُّ نَفْسَهُ، وَلَا يَدْفَعُ حَنْفَهُ.

Hadith n. 455

455. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked about the greatest poet and he said: The whole group of them did not proceed on the same lines in such a way that we can know the height of their glory; but if it has to be done then it is the "al-Malik ad-dillil" (the mislead king).

455. وسئل عليه السلام: من أشعر الشعراء؟ فقال: إِنَّ الْقَوْمَ لَمْ يَجْرُوا فِي حَلْبَةِ تُعْرَفُ الْعَايَةُ عِنْدَ فَصَّيْتِهَا فَإِنْ كَانَ وَلَا بُدَّ فَالْمَلِكُ الضَّيِّلُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Razi says: Amir al-mu'minin means Imru'l Qays.⁹⁶

قال الرضي: يريد امرأ القيس

Hadith n. 456

456. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Is there no free man who can leave this chewed morsel (of the world) to those who like it? Certainly, the only price for yourselves is Paradise. Therefore, do not sell yourself except for Paradise.

456. وقال عليه السلام: أَلَا حُرٌّ يَدْعُ هَذِهِ اللَّمَّاطَةَ لِأَهْلِهَا؟ إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ مِمَّنْ إِلَّا الْجَنَّةَ، فَلَا تَبِيعُوهَا إِلَّا بِهَا.

Hadith n. 457

457. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Two greedy persons never get satiated, the seeker of knowledge and the seeker of this world.

457. وقال عليه السلام: مَنْهُومَانِ لَا يَشْبَعَانِ: طَالِبُ عِلْمٍ، وَطَالِبُ دُنْيَا.

Hadith n. 458

458. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Belief means you should prefer truth when it harms you rather than falsehood when it benefits you; your words should not be more than your action and you should fear Allah when speaking about others.

458. وقال عليه السلام: عَلَامَةُ الْإِيمَانِ أَنْ تُؤَثِّرَ الصِّدْقُ حَيْثُ يَضُرُّكَ عَلَى الْكَذِبِ حَيْثُ يَنْفَعُكَ، أَنْ يَكُونَ فِي حَدِيثِكَ فَضْلٌ عَنْ عِلْمِكَ وَأَنْ تَتَّقِيَ اللَّهَ فِي حَدِيثِ غَيْرِكَ.

Hadith n. 459

459. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Destiny holds sway over (our) predetermination till effort itself brings about ruin.

459. وقال عليه السلام: يَغْلِبُ الْمَقْدَارُ عَلَى التَّقْدِيرِ حَتَّى تَكُونَ الْأَفْعُ فِي التَّدْبِيرِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Something of this meaning has already appeared earlier though in words different from these.

قال الرضي: وقد مضى هذا المعنى فيما تقدم برواية تخالف بعض هذه الألفاظ.

Hadith n. 460

460. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Forbearance and endurance are twins and they are the product of high courage.

460. وقال عليه السلام: الحِلْمُ وَالْأَنَاةُ تَوَآمَانِ يُنتِجُهُمَا غُلُوُّ الْهَمِّمَةِ.

Hadith n. 461

461. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Backbiting is the tool of the helpless.

461. وقال عليه السلام: الْغِيْبَةُ جُهْدُ الْعَاجِزِ.

Hadith n. 462

462. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Many a man gets into mischief because of being spoken well about.

462. وقال عليه السلام: رُبَّ مَفْتُونٍ بِحُسْنِ الْقَوْلِ فِيهِ.

Hadith n. 463

463. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: This world has been created for other than itself and has not been created for itself.

463. وقال عليه السلام: الدُّنْيَا خُلِقَتْ لِغَيْرِهَا، وَمَنْ خُلِقَ لِنَفْسِهَا.

Hadith n. 464

464. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The Banu Umayyah (Umayyids) have a fixed period (mirwad) wherein they are having their way. But when differences arise among them then even if the hyena attacks them it will overpower them.

464. وقال عليه السلام: إِنَّ لِبَنِي أُمَيَّةٍ مَرْوَدًا يَجْرُونَ فِيهِ، وَلَوْ قَدِ احْتَلَفُوا فِيمَا بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ

كَادَتْهُمْ الضَّبَاعُ لَعَلَبَتْهُمْ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Herein “mirward” is a form derived from “irwad” which means to allow time, to wait for. It is an extremely eloquent and wonderful expression. It is as though Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, has likened the period of Banu Umayyah to a limited area meant for the training of horses for racing where they are running towards the limit, so that when they reach its extremity their organization will be destroyed.⁹⁷

قال الرضي: وَالْمَرْوَدُ هَاهُنَا مَفْعَلٌ مِنَ الْإِرْوَادِ، وَهُوَ الْإِمْهَالُ وَالْإِنْظَارُ، وَهَذَا مِنْ أَفْصَحِ

الْكَلَامِ وَأَعْرَبِهِ، فَكَأَنَّهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ شَبَّهَ الْمَهْلَةَ الَّتِي هُمْ فِيهَا بِالْمُضْمَارِ الَّذِي يَجْرُونَ فِيهِ إِلَى الْغَايَةِ، فَإِذَا بَلَغُوا مُنْقَطِعَهَا انْتَقَضَ نِظَامُهُمْ بَعْدَهَا .

Hadith n. 465

465. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said eulogizing the Ansar: By Allah, they nurtured Islam with their generous hands and eloquent tongues as a year old calf is nurtured.

465. وقال عليه السلام في مدح الأنصار: هُم وَاللَّهِ رَبُّو الْأَسْلَامِ كَمَا يُرَبَّى الْفُلُوحُ مَعَ عَنَائِهِمْ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ السَّبَاطِ وَالسِّنْتِهِمْ السَّلَاطِ.

Hadith n. 466

466. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The eye is the strap of the rear.

466. وقال عليه السلام: الْعَيْنُ وَكَأُ السَّه.

as-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is a wonderful metaphor, it is as though Amir al-mu'minin has likened the rear part of the body with a bag and the eye with a strap. When the strap is let loose the bag cannot retain anything. According to the well-known and reputed view it is the saying of the Prophet but some people have stated it to be of Amir al-mu'minin. Al-Mubarrad has mentioned it in his book al-Muqtadab under the chapter 'Words of single letters'. We too have discussed this metaphor in our book named Majazat al-athar an-nabawiyyah.

قال الرضي: و هذه من الاستعارات العجيبة، كأنه شبه السَّه بالوعاء، والعين بالوكاء، فإذا أُطلق الوكاء لم ينضبِ الوعاء و هذا القول في الأشهر الأظهر من كلام النبي عليه السلام، وقد رواه قوم لأميرالمؤمنين عليه السلام، ذكر ذلك المبرد في كتاب المقتضب في باب اللفظ بالحروف. و قد تكلمنا على هذه الاستعارة في كتابنا الموسوم: بمجازات الآثار النبوية.

Hadith n. 467

467. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said in one of his speeches: A ruler came into position over them. He remained upright and made them upright till the entire religion put its bosom on the ground.

467. وقال عليه السلام في كلام له: وَوَلِيَّهُمْ وَإِلْ فَأَقَامَ وَاسْتَقَامَ، حَتَّى ضَرَبَ الدِّينُ

بِحِرَانِهِ.

Hadith n. 468

468. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: A severe time will come upon people wherein the rich will seize possessions with their teeth although not commanded to do so. Allah the Glorified, says:

Forget not generosity among yourselves (Quran, 2:237).

During this time wicked will rise up while virtuous will remain low and purchases will be made from helpless although the Prophet (S) has prohibited purchasing from the helpless.⁹⁸

468. وقال عليه السلام: يَأْتِي عَلَى النَّاسِ زَمَانٌ عَضُوضٌ يَعْضُ الْمُوسِرُ فِيهِ عَلَى مَا فِي

يَدَيْهِ وَمَ يُؤْمَرُ بِذَلِكَ، قَالَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ: (و لَا تَنْسُوا الْفَضْلَ بَيْنَكُمْ)، تَنْهَدُ فِيهِ الْأَشْرَارُ،

وَتُسْتَدَلُّ الْأَخْيَارُ، وَيُبَايِعُ الْمُضْطَرُونَ، وَقَدْ نَهَى رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ عَنْ
بَيْعِ الْمُضْطَرِينَ.

Hadith n. 469

469. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Two types of persons will fall into ruin over me: The one who loves exaggerates and the other who lays false and baseless blames.

469. وقال عليه السلام: يَهْلِكُ فِي رَجُلَانِ: مُحِبُّ مُفْرَطٍ، وَبَاهِتٌ مُفْتَرٍ .

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is on the lines of Amir al-mu'minin's own saying which runs as: "Two categories of persons will be ruined over me: the one who loves exaggeratingly and the hater and malice-bearer."⁹⁹

Hadith n. 470

470. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, was asked on the Unity of Allah and His justice, when he replied: Unity means that you do not subject Him to the limitations of your imagination and justice means that you do not lay any blame on Him.¹⁰⁰

470. وسئل عليه السلام عن التوحيد والعدل فقال: التَّوْحِيدُ أَنْ لَا تَتَّوَهَّمَهُ وَالْعَدْلُ أَلَّا

تَتَّهَمَهُ.

Hadith n. 471

471. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: There is no good in silence over matters involving wisdom just as there is no good in speaking with ignorance.

471. وقال عليه السلام: لَا خَيْرَ فِي الصَّمْتِ عَنِ الْحُكْمِ، كَمَا أَنَّهُ لَا خَيْرَ فِي الْقَوْلِ

بِالْجَهْلِ.

Hadith n. 472

472. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said in his prayer for seeking rain: O My God, send us rain by submissive clouds not by unruly ones.

472. وقال عليه السلام في دعاء استسقى به: اللَّهُمَّ اسْقِنَا ذُلَّ السَّحَابِ دُونَ صِعَابِهَا.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is an expression of wonderful eloquence, because Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, has likened the cloud which is accompanied by thunder, lighting, wind and flashes with unruly camels who throw away their saddles and throw down their riders, and likened the clouds free from these terrible things to the submissive camels which are easy to milk and obedient to ride.

قال الرضي: وهذا من الكلام العجيب الفصاحة، وذلك أنه عليه السلام شبه السحاب

ذوات الرعود والبوارق والرياح والصواعق بالإبل الصعاب التي تَقْمِصُ بِرِحَالِهَا وَتَقْصُ بِرِكْبَانِهَا،

وشبه السحاب خاليةً من تلك الروائع بالإبل الذلِّ التي تُخْتَلَبُ طَبِيعَةً وَتُقْتَعَدُ مُسْمِحَةً.

Hadith n. 473

473. It was said to Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him,: We wish you had changed your grey hair, O Amir al-Mu'minin. Then he said: Dye is a way of adornment while we are in a state of grief.

473. وقيل له عليه السلام: لو غيّرتَ شيبك يا أميرالمؤمنين. فقال عليه السلام:

الْحِضَابُ زِينَةٌ، وَتَحْنُ قَوْمٌ فِي مُصِيبَةٍ!

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, is referring to the death of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his descendants.

قال الرضي: يريد برسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله.

Hadith n. 474

474. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The fighter in the way of Allah who gets martyred would not get a greater reward than he who remains chaste despite means. It is possible that a chaste person may become one of the angels.

474. وقال عليه السلام: مَا الْمُجَاهِدُ الشَّهِيدُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا مِمَّنْ قَدَرَ

فَعَفَّ، لَكَادَ الْعَفِيفُ أَنْ يَكُونَ مَلَكًا مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ

Hadith n. 475

475. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Contentment is a wealth that does not exhaust.

475. وقال عليه السلام: الْقَنَاعَةُ مَالٌ لَا يَنْفَدُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Some people have related that this is the saying of the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his descendants.

قال الرضي: وقد روى بعضهم هذا الكلام عن النبي صلى الله عليه وآله.

Hadith n. 476

476. When Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, put Ziyad ibn Abih in place of Abdullah ibn Abbas over Fars (in Persia) and its revenues, he had a long conversation with him in which he prohibited him from advance recovery of revenue. Therein he said: Act on justice and keep aloof from violence and injustice because violence will lead them to forsake their abodes while injustice will prompt them to take up arms.

476. وقال عليه السلام لزياد بن أبيه. وقد استخلفه لعبد الله بن العباس على فارس

وأعمالها، في كلامٍ طويلٍ كان بينهما، نهاه فيه عن تقدم الحراج: اسْتَعْمِلِ الْعَدْلَ، وَاحْذَرِ الْعَسْفَ وَالْحَيْفَ فَإِنَّ الْعَسْفَ يَعُودُ بِالْجَلَاءِ، وَالْحَيْفَ يَدْعُو إِلَى السَّيْفِ.

Hadith n. 477

477. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The worst sin is that which the committer takes lightly.

477. وقال عليه السلام: أَشَدُّ الذُّنُوبِ مَا اسْتَحَفَّ بِهِ صَاحِبُهُ.

Hadith n. 478

478. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: Allah has not made it obligatory on the ignorant to learn till He has made it obligatory on the learned to teach.

478. وقال عليه السلام: مَا أَخَذَ اللَّهُ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْجُهْلِ أَنْ يَتَعَلَّمُوا حَتَّى أَخَذَ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْعِلْمِ أَنْ يُعَلِّمُوا.

Hadith n. 479

479. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: The worst comrade is he for whom formality has to be observed.¹⁰¹

479. وقال عليه السلام: شَرُّ الْأَخْوَانِ مَنْ تُكَلِّفَ لَهُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: This is because formality is inseparable from hardship and it is an evil that is caused by a comrade for whom formality is observed. Consequently, he is the worst of all comrades.

قال الرضي: لأن التكليف مستلزمٌ للمشقة، وهو شرٌ لازمٌ عن الأخ المتكلفٍ له، فهو شرُّ الإخوان.

Hadith n. 480

480. Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, said: If a believer enrages his brother, it means that he leaves him.

480. وقال عليه السلام: إِذَا احْتَشَمَ الْمُؤْمِنُ أَخَاهُ فَقَدْ فَارَقَهُ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: It is said “hashamahu” or “ahshamahu” to mean “He enraged him”. According to another view it means “He humiliated him”. While “ihtashamahu” means “He sought these for him”, and that is most likely to cause him to separate.

قال الرضي: يقال: حشمه وأحشمه: إذا أغضبه، وقيل: أخجله، واحتشمه: طلب ذلك له، وهو مَظِنَّةٌ مفارقتة.

This is the end of our selection of the utterances of Amir al-mu'minin, peace be upon him, We are praiseful to Allah, the Glorified, for having enabled us to collect the scattered utterances from various sides and to bring together from different places the material that was lying far away. We intend, as we stipulated in the beginning, to leave some blank pages at the end of every chapter for the insertion of whatever we may get and the addition of whatever comes to us, for it is possible that some material which is not in our view at present or which is not available may become known to us and fall in our hands. We have no ability save through Allah. In Him we trust, and He is Sufficient for us. He is the best Supporter.

This book was completed in the month of Rajab, in the year 400 A.H.

May Allah send blessings on our master Muhammad the last of the prophets who guided us towards the best path, and his chaste descendants and his companions who are the stars of conviction.

و هذا حين انتهاء الغاية بنا إلى قطع المختار من كلام أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام، حامدين لله سبحانه على ما منّ به من توفيقنا لضم ما انتشر من أطرافه، و تقريب ما بعد من أقطاره. و تقرر العزم كما شرطنا أولاً على تفضيل أوراق من البياض في آخر كل باب من الأبواب، ليكون لاقتناص الشارد، و استلحاق الوارد، و ما عسى أن يظهر لنا بعد الغموض، و يقع إلينا بعد الشدوذ، و ما توفيقنا إلا بالله عليه توكلنا، و هو حسبنا و نعم الوكيل.

و ذلك في رجب سنة أربع مائة من الهجرة،

و صلى الله على سيدنا محمد خاتم الرسل، و الهادي إلى خير السبل، و آله الطاهرين، و أصحابه نجوم اليقين

Notes

1. Labun" means a milch camel and "ibnu'l-labun" means its two year old young. In this age the young is neither suitable for riding nor does it has udders which could be milked. It is called "ibnu'l-labun" because in this period of two years its mother bears another young and begins yielding milk again.

The intention is that during civil disturbance or trouble a man should behave in such a manner that lie may be regarded of no consequence and ignored. No need should be felt for his participation in either party". This is because during mischief only dissociation can save from molestation. Of course, when the clash is between right and wrong it is not permissible to keep aloof nor can it be called civil disturbance: but on such occasions it is obligatory to rise up for the support of right and suppression of wrong. For example, (luring the battles of jamal and Siffin it was obligatory to support the right and to fight against the wrong.

2. In the last phrase, Amir al-mu'minin has described the consequences and effects resulting from self-admiration namely that it creates the feeling of hatred and humiliation-against others. Thus, the man who manifests his greatness by every pretext in order to make himself conspicuous is never regarded with esteem. People begin to despise him because of his mental condition in seeking self-conspicuity and are not prepared to accord him the worth which he really has, much less to regard him as he himself thinks to be.

3. This saying comprises of two phrases:-

The first sentence relates to charity and Amir al-mu'minin has described it as an effective cure, because when a man helps the poor and the destitute by alms they pray for his health and recovery from the depth of their hearts and therefore their prayer is granted and brings him cure. In this connection, there is the saying of the Holy Prophet that, "Cure your sick by charity."

The second sentence relates to the disclosure of actions on the Day of Judgement, namely that the good and bad deeds which a person performs in this world cannot be perceived by human senses because of the veil of material elements but on the Day of Judgement when material curtains will be lifted they will so appear before the eyes that there will be no possibility of denial by anyone. Thus, Allah has said:

On that day shall come out people (from their graves) in (scattered) groups, to be shown their own deeds. Then he who has done an atom-weight of good shall see it. And he who has done an atom-weight of evil shall see it. (Qur'an, 99:6-8)

4. The meaning is that when a man's fortune is helpful and the world is favourable to him then people describe his performances with exaggeration and give credit to him for others' actions as well, while if a man loses the favour of the world and the clouds of ill-luck and misfortune engulf him, they ignore his virtues and do not at all tolerate even to recall his name.

They are friends of him whom the world favours and the foes of him whom the world hits.

5. To the person who behaves with others with benignity and manner-liness, people extend their hand of cooperation, they honour and respect him and shed tears after his death. Therefore, a person should lead such an agreeable life that no one should have any complaint against him, nor should any harm be caused by him to anyone so that during life he should attract others and after death too he should be remembered in good words

6. The occasion for pardon and forgiveness is when there is power to take revenge. But when there is no such power, then pardon is just the result of helplessness, for which there is no credit. However, to practise pardon despite having power and the ability to avenge is the essence of human distinction and an expression of thanks to Allah for bestowing this power, because the feeling of gratefulness necessitates that man should bow before. Allah in humbleness and humiliation by which the delicate feeling of pity and kindness will arise in his heart and the rising flames of rage and anger will cool down after which there will be no urge to take revenge under the effect of which he would use his power and capability to satisfy his anger instead of using it properly.

7. It is not difficult to attract others by good manners and cheerfulness and to befriend them by sweet speech because no physical exertion or mental worry is required for this: and after making friends it is still easier to maintain the friendship and good relations because for making friends some effort or other is needed while for maintaining it no difficulty is to be surmounted. Therefore, no one can be more wretched than the man who cannot even retain a thing which could be retained just by keeping away a frown from the face.

The intention is that a man should meet everyone with good manners and cheerfulness so that people may like to associate with him and extend a hand of friendship towards him.

8. Amir al-mu'minin uttered this sentence when Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, Muhammad ibn Maslamah and 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar refused to support him against the people of Jamal. He means to say that these people are so against me that neither have my words any effect on them nor do I need to reprove, rebuke or correct them.

9. The intention is that since in the beginning of Islam the number of Muslims was limited it was necessary to keep them distinct from the Jews in order to maintain their collective entity, so the Prophet ordered the use of hair-dye which was not in use among the Jews. Besides, it was also the aim that when facing the enemy the people should not appear old in age and weak.

10. This saying is about those who claimed to be neutrals, such as 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, Abu Musa al-Ash'ari, al-Ahnaf ibn Qays, Muhammad ibn Maslamah, Usamah ibn Zayd and Anas ibn Malik, etc. No doubt these people did not openly support wrong but not to support right is also a kind of support of wrong. Therefore, they will be counted among the opponents of right.

11. However had a thing may be regarded among the people and however it may be looked down upon, if it is not really bad then to feel bashful about it is quite foolish, because it will often cause deprival from things which are the source of successes and achievements in this as well as the next world. For example, if a man fears lest people may regard him to be ignorant and therefore feels bashful in asking an important and necessary issue then this misplaced bashfulness would result in his being deprived of knowledge. Therefore, no sane person should feel bashful about making enquiries. Thus, an old man who was learning despite old age was asked whether he did not feel ashamed of learning in old age and he replied: "I do not feel shame for ignorance during old age, then how can I feel shame for learning in old age." Of course, to feel shame in doing things which are really bad and mischievous is the essence of humanity and nobility; for instance, those immoral acts which are bad according to religion, intelligence and ethics. In any case, the first kind of bashfulness is bad and the second one is good. In this connection, the Holy Prophet's saying is that:

Bashfulness is of two kinds, bashfulness of intelligence and bashfulness of foolishness. The bashfulness of intelligence is knowledge whereas the bashfulness of foolishness is ignorance.

12. The sense of the interpretation written by as-Sayyid ar- Radi is that Amir al-mu'minin intends to say that if our right, that lies with others in our position, as with the Imam whom it is obligatory to obey, is acknowledged and we are given the chance of

worldly rule well and good, otherwise, we will have to bear all sorts of hardships and ignominies and we shall be compelled to live this life of ignominy and humiliation for a long time.

Some commentators have stated a different meaning than this, namely that "If our position is belittled and put aside, and others are given precedence over us, we shall bear it patiently and agree to remain behind" and this is what is meant by riding on the hind part of the camel, because the person who rides on the hind part is on the rear while the person who sits on its back is in the fore. Some people take it to mean that if we are allowed our right we will accept it but if it is not given we shall not behave like the rider who gives over the rein of his animal into the hands of some other person who is free to take him wherever he likes but we shall stick to our right even though a long time may elapse and not surrender to the usurpers.

13. When a person goes on receiving favours despite sinfulness he develops the misunderstanding that Allah is pleased with him and that this is the result of His pleasure, because increase in favours arises out of gratefulness and in the event of ungratefulness the bestowal of favours stops, as Allah says:

And when declared your Lord: "If you be grateful I will increase (My favours) to you, and if you be ungrateful, verily My torment is indeed severe." (Qur'an, 14:7)

Nevertheless, continuous bestowal of favours, despite disobedience and ungratefulness, cannot be the result of Allah's pleasure, nor can it be said that in this way Allah has put him under the misconception that he should regard this exuberance of favours as the result of Allah's pleasure because when he knows that he is a sinner and disobedient and is committing sins and vices, knowing them to be sins and vices, then there are no grounds for misconception on his part by assuming Allah's pleasure and consent. He should rather think that this is a sort of trial and respite for when his sinfulness and high-handedness reaches its zenith he will be caught all at once. Therefore, in such a case he should keep waiting as to when Allah's favours are taken away from him and he is punished with deprivation and discomfiture.

14. The things which a man wants to conceal from others do come out through his tongue sometime or another, and his effort at concealment is unsuccessful. This is because although the far-sighted mind desires to keep them concealed yet sometimes it gets entangled in some more important matter and becomes careless on this score when the concealed thing comes out in words through his tongue. When the mind becomes attentive, it is not possible to undo the matter just as an arrow cannot be got back after shooting. Even if this is not the case and mind is fully cautious and attentive, the thing cannot remain concealed because the lines of the face are indicative of mental feelings and reflect the heart's emotions, and consequently redness of face can easily point out to the sense of shame, and its yellowness fear.

15. The intention is that as long as sickness does not become serious do not give it importance, because by giving importance the feelings get affected and the illness increases. Therefore, continued activity and regarding oneself well dispels sickness and also prevents the power of resistance from getting weak, and keeps up its psychological power, while the psychological power curbs small ailments by itself, provided it is not forced to give up resistance by the surrendering the imagination to the ailment.

16. Khabbab ibn al-Aratt was a distinguished companion of the Holy Prophet and was one of the early muhajirun (immigrants). He suffered various sorts of hardships at the hands of the Quraysh. He was made to stand in the scorching sun, and to lie on fire but he did not for any reason abandon the side of the Holy Prophet. He accompanied the Holy Prophet in Badr and other battles. He supported Amir al-mu'minin in Siffin and Nahrawan. He had left Medina and settled in Kufah. Thus, he died here in 39 A.H. at the age of 73, Amir al-mu'minin led his funeral prayer and he was buried outside Kufah. Amir al-mu'minin uttered these mercy-invoking words standing on his grave.

17. This is one of the authentic traditions (ahadith) of the Holy Prophet whose authenticity the scholars of traditions had never doubted. It was narrated by certain companions of the Holy Prophet such as 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas, 'Imran ibn al-Husayn, Umm al-mu'minin Umm Salamah and others, such as Amir al-mu'minin himself, also narrated that:

By Him Who split the seed and created the soul, verily the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his progeny, gave me a promise that no one but a (true) believer will love me, and none but a hypocrite will hate me. (as-Sahih., Muslim, vol.1, p.60; [Muslim, in his book, regards the love of 'Ali as an ingredient of iman or faith and one of its signs; and the hatred of 'Ali as the sign of dissemblance] al-Jami' as-sahih, vol.5, pp.635,643; as-Sunan, Ibn Majah, VOL.1, p.55; as-Sunan, an-Nasa'i, vol.8, pp.115- 116,117; al-Musnad, Ah mad ibn Hanbal, vol.1, pp.84,95,128; vol.6, p.292; ' Ilal al-hadith, Abu Hatim, vol.2, p.400; Hilyah al-awlya', Abu Nu'aym, vol4, p.185; Jami' al-usul, Ibn al-Athir, vol.9, p.473; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, p.133; Manaqib 'Ah ibn Abi Talib, Ibn al-Maghazili, pp.190-195; al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1100; Usd al-ghabah, vol.4, p.26; al-Isabah, vol.2, p.509; Tarikh Baghdad, vol.2, p.255; vol.8, p.417; vol.14, p.426; at-Tarikh, Ibn Kathir, vol.7, p.354)

It was in this way that the companions of the Holy Prophet used to test the faith (iman) or hypocrisy (nifaq) of the Muslims through their love or hatred towards Amir al-mu'minin, as is related from Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri, 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud and Jabir ibn 'Abdullah that:

We (the companions of the Holy prophet) used to distinguish the hypocrites by their hatred of 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. (at-Tirmidhi, vol.5, p.635; al-Mustadrak, vol.3, p. 129; Hilyah al-awliya', vol.6, p.294; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, pp.132 133; Jami' al-usul, vol.9, p. p.473; ad-Durr al-manthur, vol.6, pp.66-67; Tarikh Baghdad, vol.13, p. 153; ar-Riyad an-nadira, vol. 2, pp.214, 215; al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p. 1110; Usd al-ghabah, vol.4, pp.29-30)

18. The person who feels ashamed and repentant after committing sin and offers repentance before Allah remains safe from the penalty of that sin and deserves the reward of repentance: while the person who after doing a virtuous deed begins to feel superiority over others, and being proud of his virtues thinks that he has no apprehension whatever, destroys his virtue and remains deprived of the reward of the virtuous deed. Obviously, he who has erased the blot of his sin by repentance will be better than he who has ruined his action by being proud of it, and having not repented of it either.

19. The meaning is that a man of prestige and esteem never tolerates humiliation or disgrace. If his honour is assailed he will leap like a hungry lion and break away the shackles of humiliation. If a low and narrow minded person is raised beyond his name he would not be able to contain himself but, regarding himself very high, will assail other's position.

20. This saying confirms the theory that by nature human hearts love wildness and that the feeling of love and affection in them is an acquired attribute. Consequently, when the factors and causes of love and affection crop up they get tamed but when these factors disappear or the feelings of hatred are created against them, the people return to wildness, and thereafter they return to the path of love and affection with great difficulty.

Do not tease the heart because it is a wild bird. If once it flies away from the roof it would come down with great difficulty.

21. A person who has wealth and riches will get friends and acquaintances wherever he may be and therefore he will not feel strange in a foreign land; but if he is poor and destitute he will have no friends even in his homeland because people do not like to make friends with the poor and the destitute, or to extend relations with them. He is therefore, a stranger even at home and has no friends or well-wishers.

He who has no worldly successor remains unknown as a stranger even in his homeland.

22. Contentment means that a man should remain satisfied with what he gets and should not complain if he gets less. if he is not so contented he will try to satisfy his greed by committing social crimes like misappropriation, cheating and deceiving others, because greed compels one to satisfy one's wants by any means whatever. Then the satisfaction Of one's want opens the way for another want and as a man's wants get satisfied his craving increases and he can never get rid of his needs or of dissatisfaction. This increasing dissatisfaction can be stopped only by contentment which makes a man carefree from all wants except the most essential ones. This is that everlasting wealth that gives satisfaction for good.

23. The shame that is faced in putting a request before an inappropriate person gives more mental pain than the grief in not obtaining its fulfilment. That is why non-fulfilment of a request can be tolerated but the obligation to a low and base person is intolerable. Every self-respecting person would therefore prefer deprivation to being under obligation to

an inappropriate man, and would not tolerate placing his request before a low and base person.

24. Talkativeness is the result of diffused thinking while diffusion of thought is the result of the unripeness of wisdom. When wisdom attains perfection and understanding ripens one's mind, and thoughts are balanced, and wisdom acquires power and control over the tongue, as over other parts of the body, the tongue does not act without thinking or outside the dictates of wisdom. Obviously, uttering after thinking is short and free from extras.

As a man's intelligence increases his speaking decreases and he does not speak save at the opportune moment.

25. That is just as each step makes way for the other and this exercise by steps is the means of nearing the goal, similarly every breath of life serves as, death-knell for the previous one and carries life towards death, as if the breath whose motion is regarded as a sign of life is in fact the sign of the passing away of one moment of life and a means of nearing the goal of death, because each breath is death for the previous one, and life is the name of those very death-carrying breaths.

Every breath is the dead body of the life that passed by. Life is the name of living by facing successive deaths.

26. By looking at a seed a cultivator can say what plant will come out of it, what fruits, flowers or leaves it will have and what will be its expanse. In the same way, a guess can be made about the success of a student by looking at his labour and effort or about the failure of some other student by looking at his leisureliness and idleness, because the beginning is indicative of the end and the premises of the conclusion. Therefore, if the end of any matter is not visible then its beginning should be looked at. If its beginning is bad the end too would be bad and if its beginning is good the end too would be good.

An auspicious river begins from the very spring.

27. Dirar ibn Damrah was one of the companions of Amir al-mu'minin. After the death of Amir al-mu'minin, he went to Syria (ash-Shim) where he met Mu'awiyah. Mu'awiyah asked him, "Describe 'Ah to me." He replied, "Would you please excuse me from answering this?" But Mu'awiyah insisted, "You must describe him." Whereupon Dirar said:

If there is no alternative, then you should know that 'Ali was a man whose personality knew no limits, terrible in power, his speech was decisive, his judgements based on justice, his knowledge spread out in all directions and wisdom was manifest in all his behaviour. Among the food he liked most was the coarse kind and among the clothes, the short (and humble) ones. By Allah, he was among us as one of us. He used to respond to our questions and fulfil all our requests. By Allah, although he used to let us get close to him and he himself was close to us, we did not dare address him due to our feeling of awe towards him nor did we dare to speak first due to his greatness in our hearts. His smile displayed a row of pearls. He used to honour the pious; to be kind to the needy, to feed the orphan, the near of kin or the needy man in misery on the day of hunger; to clothe the bare ones and to help the undefended person. He used to detest the world and its flowering. I stand witness that. . . (and so forth, as quoted above by as-Sayyid ar-Radi).

When Mu'awiyah heard this from Dirar his eyes filled with tears and he said, "May Allah have mercy on Abu'l-Hasan. He really was so." Then, turning to Dirar he said, "How do you feel in his absence, O' Dirar!" Dirar replied, "My grief is like that of a woman whose only child is butchered in her arms." (al Isti'ib, vol.3, pp.1107-1108; Hilyah al-awlya', vol.2, p.84; Sifat-us-Safwah, Ibn al-Jawzi, vol.1, p.121; al-Amali; Abu 'Ali al-Qali, vol.2, p.147; Zahr al-adab, al-Husri, vol.1, pp.40-41; Muruj adh-dhahab, vol.2, p.421; ar-Riyad an-nadirah, al-Muhibb at-Tabari, vol.2, p.212; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.18, pp.225 -226)

28. The end of this story is that after this the man enquired, "What kind of destiny it was by which we had to go?" and Amir al-mu'minin said, "qada' (destiny)" means command of Allah. For example, He has said, "wa qada rabbuka alla ta'budu illa iyyihu" (And commanded your Lord has that you shall worship not [any one] but Him" [Qur'an, 17: 23]). Here "qada' " stands for commanded.

29. The real value of a person is his knowledge (and perfection of attainments), his worth and position would be in accordance with the position of knowledge and attainment he holds. Eyes that are conscious of real values do not look at the face, features, tallness of stature, size or worldly pomp and position but look at the attainments of a person and assess

his worth according to these attainments. The conclusion is that a man should strive to acquire distinction and knowledge.

The worth of every person is according to the extent of his knowledge.

30. As Allah says:

. . . , Verily, Allah do accept (an offering only) from those who guard (themselves against evil). (Qur'an, 5:27)

31. Perhaps the other meaning of this saying is that: "Whoever loves us should not hanker after worldly matters even though in consequence he may have to face destitution and poverty; but he should rather remain content and avoid seeking worldly benefits."

32. During autumn, protection from cold is necessary because with the change of weather the temperature of the body also changes and ailments such as flue, catarrh, cough etc., occur. This is because bodies are accustomed to hot weather and when suddenly cold comes on tissues become contracted and cold dryness increases in the body. Thus, bathing with cold water soon after bathing with hot water is harmful for this very reason that with hot water the tissues expand and so they at once admit the effect of cold water, and in consequence the natural heat of the body is affected. On the other hand, there is no need of protection from cold during spring season nor is it harmful for the health, because the body is already accustomed to cold. Thus, the temperate cold of the spring is not unpleasant to the body. Rather, with the decline of cold there is an increase of heat and dampness in the body as a result of which growth gets impetus, natural heat rises, the body grows, the temperament feels pleasant and the spirit is joyful.

Similarly, there is the same effect in the plant world. Thus, during autumn due to the prevalence of coldness and dryness, the leaves wither, the vegetative power decreases, the freshness of the plants fades and there is a death-like effect on the green areas. Spring brings the message of life for them. Then with the blowing of healthy winds the blossoms begin to sprout, plants become fresh and healthy, and forests and wildernesses acquire a green hue.

33. Every speaker and preacher manifests the force of his speaking in subjects in which he is well-versed. If he has to change the subject neither will his mind move nor will his tongue be able to speak out. But he whose intellect has the capability of adaptation and whose mind has the power of imagination can turn round his utterances in whatever manner he likes, and can show the excellence of speaking on whatever subject he desires. Consequently, when the tongue which had for so long been abusing the world and unveiling its deceitfulness starts praising the world it shows the same mastery of speaking and power of arguing that had ever been its chief distinction. And then, the use of commendatory words does not alter the principle and although the ways are different the object remains the same.

34. Kumayl ibn Ziyad an-Nakha`i was the holder of the secrets of the Imamate and one of the chief companions of Amir al-mu'minin. He held a great position in knowledge and attainment and a chief place in abstinence and Godliness. He was Amir al-mu'minin's Governor of Hit for sometime. He was killed by al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf ath-Thaqafi in the year 83 A.H. at the age of ninety years and was buried outside Kufah.

35. The meaning is that a man's worth can be known by his speech because the speech of every person is indicative of his mind and manners, and by virtue of it his feelings and temperament can be very easily assessed. Therefore, so long as he is silent his weaknesses as well as attainments are concealed but when he speaks his real self manifests itself.

A man is hidden under his tongue; unless he speaks you cannot know his worth and value.

36. Just as Allah sent down a series of prophets by way of His Justice and Mercy to guide and direct towards religion, in the same way He laid down the system of the Imamate to protect religion from alteration and change so that every Imam may in his time save the Divine teachings from the onslaught of personal desires and give directions about the correct precepts of Islam. And just as it is obligatory to know the originator of the religion (i.e., the Prophet) in the same way it is necessary to know the protector of the religion and lie who remains ignorant of him cannot be excused because the issue of Imamate is supported by so many proofs and testimonies that no intelligent person can find any way to deny it. Thus, the holy Prophet has said:

Whoever dies without knowing the Imam of his time dies a pre-Islamic (jahiliyyah) death. (Sharh al-maqasid, at-Taftazini ash-Shafi'i, vol. 2, p.275; al-Jawahir al-mudhiyyah, al-Khatib al-Hanafi, vol.2, pp. 457,509).

It has also been narrated by `Abdullah ibn `Umar, Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan and `Abdullah ibn al-`Abbas that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his descendants, said that:

One who dies without (knowing his) Imam and binding himself by an oath of allegiance to him will die the death of one belonging to the days of jahiliyyah, and one who withdraws his hand from obedience (to the Imam) will find no argument (in his Defence) when he stands before Allah on the Day of Judgement. (al-Musnad, at'l'ayliisi, p.259; as-Sahih, Muslim, vol.6, p.22; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.4, p.96; as-Sunan al-kubra, al-Bayhaqi, vol.8, p.156; at-Tafsir, Ibn Kathir, vol. 1, p.517; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.5, pp.218, 224, 225)

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid also agrees that the personality about whom no one's ignorance can be excused is that of Amir al-mu'minin. He also acknowledges the obligation to obey him and holds that he who does not believe in the issue of Imamate will not achieve deliverance. In this connection he writes:

He who is ignorant of the position of 'Ali, peace be upon him, as Imam and denies its veracity or obligatory character would, according to our associates, remain in Hell for ever, his fasting or prayers being of no avail to him, because the knowledge of this matter is among the basic principles which constitute the foundations of religion. However, we do not regard one who denies his Imamate as an unbeliever but only a sinner, a transgressor or a deviator, etc. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.18, p.373)

37. If evil is done in return for evil, and abuse in return for abuse, the door for animosity and quarrel is opened. But if an evil-doer is met with kindness and gentleness he too would be compelled to change his behaviour. Thus, once Imam Hasan was passing through the market place of Medina when a Syrian noticing his majestic personality enquired from the people who he was and on being told that he was Hasan son of 'Ali (peace be upon him) he was exasperated and coming close to him began to abuse him. The Imam heard him quietly. When he finished the Imam said, "You seem to be a stranger here". He acknowledged this and the Imam continued, "Then you had better come with me and stay with me. If you have any need I shall fulfil it, and if you need financial assistance I shall render it." When he saw this kindness and fine manners in return for his harsh and hard words he was extremely ashamed, and admitting his fault sought his forgiveness. When he left the Imam, he did not have better regard for anyone else on the surface of the globe. (al-Kamil, al-Mubarrad, v61. 1, p.235; vol.2, p.63; Nihayah al-irab, an-Nuwayri, vol.6, p.52; Matalib as-sa'ul, Ibn Talhah ash-Shafi'i, vol. 2, pp.11 -12; al-Manaqib, Ibn Shahrashub, vol.4, p.19; al-Bihar, al-Majlisi, vol.43, p.344)

If you are a proper human being do good to the evil-doer.

38. A person who seeks perfection and believes that he is still in need of it can be expected to attain the aim of perfection, but a person who is under the illusion that he has reached the zenith of progress and perfection will not feel the need to strive to attain it, but according to his own view he has already traversed all the stages of perfection and now he has no stage in sight to strive for. Thus, this vain and illusioned man will always remain deprived of perfection and this vanity will end all possibility of his rise.

39. It is not as difficult to keep aloof from sin the first time as it is after becoming familiar with it and tasting it, because a man does not feel difficulty in doing a thing to which he has become habituated, but it is really hard to give it up. As habits become confirmed, the conscience becomes weaker and difficulties crop up in the way of repentance. To console the heart by postponing repentance is therefore usually with out avail. Surely, when there is difficulty in keeping off sin even in the beginning the lengthening of the period of sins will make repentance still more difficult.

40. This is a proverb which is used when a man runs after one advantage so vehemently that he has to give up several other advantages, like the man who eats too much or against his appetite and has to go subsequently without several meals.

41. A man attaches great importance to the science and art which he knows and regards that science of no importance which he does not know, and belittles it. This is because whenever such a matter is discussed he is regarded not worthy of attention and is ignored,

and thereby he feels slighted. This slight pains him, and a man naturally dislikes a thing that pains him and hates it. In this connection, Plato was asked, "What is the reason that he who does not know hates him who does know, but he who knows does not bear malice or hatred towards him who does not know?" Here plied, "He who does not know realizes that he suffers from a defect and thinks that he who knows must regard him low and humble on account of this defect, so he hates him. On the other hand he who knows does not have the idea that he who does not know should regard him low and so there is no reason why he should hate him."

42. The person who rises to face wrong for the sake of Allah is afforded support and assistance from Allah and, despite lack of power and means, the forces of wrong cannot shake his determination or create a tremor in his steady feet. But if there is a tinge of personal benefit in his action he can be very easily prevented from his aim.

43. This means that the giving of full reward to the virtuous for their good actions and appreciating them puts the evil-doers also on the right path. This is more effective than ethical preaching, warning and rebuke. This is because by temperament man inclines towards things from which benefits accrue to him, and his ears (yearn to) resound with eulogies in praise and admiration of him.

44. This sentence can be interpreted in two ways. One is that if you bear malice against anyone, he too will bear malice against you. Therefore, destroy the malice from his heart by removing it from your heart, since your heart is the index of other's heart. If your heart will have no malice there will remain no malice in his heart too. That is why a man assesses the purity of another person's heart by the purity of his own heart. Thus, a man asked his friend, "How much do you love me?" and the reply was: "your own heart." That is, "I love you as much as you love me."

The second interpretation is that if you want to dissuade another person from evil, first you should refrain yourself from that evil. In this way, your advice can be effective on others, otherwise it will remain ineffective.

45. Ibn Abi'l-Hadid ('Izzu'd-Din 'Abd al-Hamid ibn Hibatul'llah al-Mu'tazili [586/1190-655/1257]) says:

"The saying of Amir al-mu'minin in the form of prose and poetry was intended for Abu Bakr and 'Umar. In his prose he addressed 'Umar, because when Abu Bakr asked 'Umar (on the day of Saqifah): 'Give me your hand so that I may swear allegiance to you.' 'Umar replied, 'You are the companion of the Messenger of Allah in all circumstances -- comfort and hardship. So, give me your hand.'

"Ali, peace be upon him, says (with regard to the claim of 'Umar) that:

If you give arguments in favour of the Abu Bakr's deserving the caliphate on the basis of his being the companion of the Holy Prophet in all circumstances, then why did you not hand over the caliphate to one (i.e., Amir al-mu'minin) who shares with him (Abu Bakr) in this matter, and who had superiority over him by having a relation of kinship with the Holy Prophet?

"In his poetry, Amir al-mu'minin addressed Abu Bakr, because he argued with the ansar at Saqifah saying; "We (the Quraysh) are the kin of the Messenger of Allah and the seed from which he sprung, (therefore, we are the most deserving people to succeed him).'

"After allegiance was sworn to Abu Bakr (by a small group at Saqifah) he used to argue with the Muslims that they must accept his caliphate since it had been accepted by the ahlu'l-halli Wa'l-'aqd (the group who can tie and untie a matter -- i.e., those who were present at Saqifah).

"Ali, peace be upon him, says (with regard to the claim of Abu Bakr) that:

Regarding your argument with the ansar that you are from the seed from which the Messenger of Allah sprung, and one of his tribe, there is other one (i.e. Amir al-mu'minin himself) who has the nearest relation of kinship to the Holy Prophet. And concerning your argument that you have been accepted by the consultation of the companions of the Holy Prophet (whom you mean by ahlu'l-halli wa'l-'aqd), how did it happen that most of the companions were absent (on the day of Saqifah) and did not swear allegiance to you." (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.18, p.416)

46. The person who gains a lesson and experience by spending money and wealth should not lament its loss but should deem the experience more valuable than the wealth because wealth is in any case wasted away while the experience will protect him against the

dangers of the future. Thus, a scholar who had become destitute after having been wealthy was asked what had happened to his wealth and he replied: "I have purchased experiences with it and they have proved more useful than the wealth. After losing all that I had, I have not been in the loss."

47. It means that if a person is not temperamentally forbearing he should try to be so in the sense that he should put up a show of forbearance against his temperament. Although he may feel some difficulty in curbing his temperament, the result will be that by and by forbearance will become his temperamental trait and then no need to feign will remain, because habit slowly develops into second nature.

48. This saying is about the awaited Imam who is the last of the series of Imams. On his emergence all states and governments will come to an end, and the complete picture referred to in the verse will appear before the eyes.

Whoever wants to may rule in this world but in the end the rule will be in the hands of the descendants of 'Ali (peace be upon them).

49. It means that just as an envious person cannot appreciate any good in him whom he envies, similarly, vanity cannot tolerate the emergence of intelligence or the prominence of good qualities as a result of which the envious person remains devoid of those qualities which are deemed to be good by human intellect.

50. Every individual has some shortcomings or other. If a person keeps aloof from others because of their faults and weakness, he will, by and by, lose all his friends and become lonely and forlorn in this world and thus his life will become bitter and his worries will multiply. At such a moment he should realize that in this society he cannot get angels with whom he may never have any cause of complaint, that he has to live among these very people and to pass his life with them. Therefore, as far as possible he should ignore their shortcomings and pay no regard to the troubles inflicted by them.

51. The person who is haughty and ill-tempered can never succeed in making his surroundings pleasant. His acquaintances will feel wretched and sick of him. But if a person is good-tempered and sweet-tongued people will like to get close to him and befriend him. At the time of need they will prove to be his helpers and supporters whereby he can make his life a success.

52. When a man falls into greed and avarice, he gets entangled in evils like bribery, theft, misappropriation, usury and other immoral acts of this type, while the mind is so dazzled with the brilliance of the evil desires that it fails to see the ill effects and consequences of those bad deeds and to prevent him from them or awaken him from his slumber of unmindfulness. Nevertheless, when he prepares to depart from this world and finds that whatever he had amassed was for this world only and that he cannot take it with him, then, and only then his eyes get opened.

53. If a person adorns himself with the quality of modesty then it prevents him from committing evil acts. Therefore, he has no evil for the people to find in him. Even if a bad act is ever committed by him he does not commit it openly because of his feeling of modesty lest the people notice him.

54. A jealous person feels jealous of the property and position of others but not of their health and physical power, although this blessing is the best of all others. The reason is that the effects of wealth and riches remain before the eyes through external pageantry and means of ease and comfort, whereas health is the victim of disregard for being a routine matter, and it is regarded so unimportant that a jealous person does not consider it worth his feeling of jealousy.

Thus, if he sees a labourer carrying a burden on his head all day he does not feel envious, as if health and energy is not an object of envy. Nevertheless, when he himself falls ill he realizes the value and worth of healthiness. It is now that he realizes that it was this health which till now carried no importance in his eyes but was the most deserving of envy. The intention is that one should regard health as a highly valuable blessing and remain attentive towards its protection and care.

55. The reason for calling goodness of moral character a blessing is that just as blessing brings forth pleasure, in the same way a man can make his environment pleasant by endearing others' hearts through goodness of moral character and can thus succeed in procuring ways for his happiness and ease. And contentment has been regarded as capital and estate for the reason that just as the estate and area under sway dispels need in the same

way when a man adopts contentment and feels happy over his livelihood he becomes free of turning to others in the time of need.

Whoever is contented with the morsel he gets, dry or wet, is the king of all the land and sea.

56. The meaning of this is that if the enemy aims at fighting and takes the initiative in it, then one should advance to face him, but one should not initiate the attack because this would be clear high-handedness and excess, and whoever commits high-handedness and excess will be disgracefully vanquished and thrown down. That is why Amir al-mu'minin always entered the battlefield on being challenged by the enemy. He never offered the challenge from his side. In this connection, Ibn Abil'-Hadid writes:

We have never heard that Amir al-mu'minin ever challenged anyone for confrontation. Rather, when either he was particularly challenged or the enemy flung a general challenge, then alone he would go out to meet the enemy and would kill him. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.19, p.60)

57. It is easy to bear oppression in this world but it is not easy to face its punishment in the next world, because the period of hearing oppression even though life-long is after all limited; but the punishment for oppression is Hell whose most fearful aspect is that life there will last for ever and death will not save from punishment. That is why, if an oppressor kills someone then with that killing the oppression comes to an end, and there is no further scope for any further oppression on the same person; but its punishment is that he is thrown in Hell where he suffers his punishment.

The Persian couplet says:

The effect of the oppression on us has passed away, but it will ever remain on the oppressor.

58. If replies to a question begin to be given from all sides, every reply will raise another question and thus open the door for arguing, and as the number of replies will further necessitate search for the real truth, detection of the correct reply will become more and more arduous, because everyone will try to have his reply accepted as correct as a result of which he will try to collect arguments from here and there to have his reply accepted as correct as a result of which the whole matter will become confused and this dream will turn into an aimless one because of the multiplicity of interpretations.

59. The breaking of determinations and losing of courage can be argued to prove the existence of Allah in this way that, for example, a man determines to do a thing but before the determination is transformed into action, it changes and some other idea takes its place. This alteration of ideas and determinations and the emergence of change therein is a proof that there is some higher controlling power over us which has the capacity to bring them from non-existence to existence and again from existence into non-existence, and this is what is beyond human power. Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge a super authority who effects change and alteration in determinations.

60. Before describing some of the aims and good points of the commands of the shari'ah (i.e., religious law), Amir al-mu'minin has begun with the aims and objects of Belief (iman), because iman serves as the basis of religious commands, and without it no need is felt for any religious code or jurisprudence. iman is the name of acknowledging the existence of the Creator and admission of His Singularity. When this iman takes root in the heart of a man then he does not agree to bow before any other being, nor is he over-awed or affected by any power or authority. Rather, getting mentally freed of all ties he regards himself a devotee of Allah and the result of this adherence to the Unity is that he is saved from the pollution of polytheism.

Prayer (salat) is the most important of all forms of worship. It consists of standing, sitting, bending and prostration, and these postures are a successful way of destroying the feeling of vanity and pride, erasing self-conceit and egotism and creating humility and submissiveness, because the actions and movements of a vain person produce pride and haughtiness while humble actions engender the quality of submissiveness and humbleness in the mind. With the exercise of these acts a man, by and by, acquires a humble temperament. This is how the Arabs who were so vain that if their whip fell off during riding they would not bend down to pick it up or if the strap of the shoe gave way they thought it insulting to bend down to mend it, began to rub their faces on dust during prostration in prayers, and place their foreheads in the position of others' feet during the

congregational prayer, and in this way acquired the true spirit of Islam after abandoning the pre-Islamic vanity and partisanship.

Zakat, namely that a person who is able to do so should pay annually out of his money or property a fixed share for those who are either destitute or do not have means of livelihood for a year, is an obligatory command of Islam, the purpose behind which is that no individual in the community should remain poor and they should remain safe from the evils that result from need and poverty. Besides, another objective is that wealth should keep rotating from one individual to another and should not be centred in a few persons.

Fasting (siyam) is a form of worship in which there is not an iota of show, and no motive is active in it except that of pure intention. As a result, even in seclusion when hunger perturbs a man or thirst makes him uneasy he does not extend his hand for eating, nor does the longing for water make him lose his control although if something is eaten or drunk no one is to peep into his stomach, but the purity of conscience prevents his will from deflecting. This is the greatest good of fasting that it engenders purity of will in action.

The purpose of hajj (pilgrimage to the House of Allah) is that Muslims from all corners of the globe should assemble at one place so that this world assembly should prove to be an occasion for the manifestation of Islam's greatness, the renewal of the passion for worship and the creation of bonds of mutual brotherhood.

The purpose of jihad (fighting in the way of Allah) is to fight with all possible 'flight those forces which oppose Islam, so that Islam may achieve stability and progress. Although there are dangers for life in this course and difficulties crop up at every step, yet the tidings for eternal ease and everlasting life produce the courage to bear all these hardships.

The persuasion for good and dissuasion from evil are effective ways of showing others the correct path and preventing them from wrong; If a community has no persons to perform these duties nothing can save it from ruin and it falls to an extreme depth morally and socially. That is why Islam has laid great stress on it as compared to other matters, and held disregard to it as an unpardonable sin.

Doing good for kinship means that a man should do favours to his relatives and at least should not stop mutual accosting and speaking with them so that spirits may become clean and family ties may develop, and the scattered individuals may render strength to one another.

Seeking vengeance is a right given to the survivors of the person killed. They can demand a life for a life so that for fear of punishment no one would dare kill any person, and at the same time the survivor's passion for revenge should not result in the killing of more than one person. No doubt forgiveness or pardon does carry weight in its own place but where it means trampling of an individual's right or a danger to world peace it cannot be regarded as good. Rather, on such an occasion revenge is the sole way of stopping bloodshed and killing for the safety of human life. Thus, Allah says:

And for you there is (security of) Retaliation O' you men of understanding, so that you may guard yourself (against evil). (Qur'an, 2:179)

The purpose behind the awarding of penalties is to make the offender appreciate the seriousness of violating the prohibitions of Allah so that he may keep off the prohibitions for fear of punishments.

Wine causes diffusion of thinking, dispersion of senses and weakness of understanding. As a result, a man commits such actions which would not be expected of him in the state of being in his senses. Besides, it ruins health and renders the body liable to catch infectious diseases while, sleeplessness, nervous weakness and rheumatism are its chief effects. The shari'ah has prohibited it in view of these ill-effects.

Theft, that is, taking over someone else's property is an evil habit which is produced by the sway of greed and evil passions and since bringing down evil passions from the position of excess to the bounds of moderation means chastity the abstinence from theft by curbing greed and evil passions would produce chastity.

Adultery and sodomy have been prohibited in order that lineage may be regulated and the human race may continue and prosper, because the issues by adultery are not regarded legitimate for the purposes of lineage and consequently they are not entitled to inheritance, while there is no question of issues in the case of unnatural practices. Besides, as a

consequence of these evil practices one contracts such diseases which cause ruination of life in addition to discontinuity of progeny.

The law of evidence is needed because if one party denies the right of another party the latter may establish it through evidence and safeguard it thereby.

Abstention from lies and falsehood has been commanded so that the standing and importance of its contrary namely truth may become prominent and in observing the benefits and advantages of truth the moral weakness of falsehood may be avoided.

Salam means peace and peace-loving and it is obvious that peaceful attitude is a successful way of protection from dangers and prevention of war and fighting. Generally, commentators have taken the word salam to mean mutual greetings and well-wishing but the context and the fact that it has been mentioned in the series of obligations does not support this interpretation. However, according to this interpretation salam is a means of safety from dangers because it is regarded as a way of peace and peace-loving. When two Muslims meet each other they offer salam one to the other, it means that they announce the wishes of each for the welfare of the other whereafter each feels safe with the other.

Imamate (imamah): This word has appeared in the same form in the correct copies of Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah as well as in its commentaries like Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.19, p.90; Ibn Maytham, vol.5, pp.367-368; Minhaj al-Bara'ah, vol.21, p.318; and other sources besides Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah such as Nihayah al-irab by an-Nuwayri ash-Shafi'i, vol.8, p.183 and al-Bihar by al-Majlisi, vol.6, p.111.

In fact, this word of "imamah" has been distorted to "amanah" (trust) or "amanat" (trusts) in some copies such as those printed in Egypt. It is very surprising to note that the word has appeared as amanah in the text of Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah printed with the commentary of Ibn Abi'l-Hadid in Egypt in the first edition vol.4, p.350 as well as in the second edition edited by Muhammad Abu'l-Fadl Ibrahim, vol.19, p.86; while he himself (Ibn Abi'l-Hadid) based his commentary on its correct reading namely imamah as did other commentators.

However, in explanation of this sentence, "Imamate for the orderliness of the community," as the theological scholars say:

Whoever has known dark experiences and has examined political principles knows, of necessity, that whenever men have among them a chief and a guide whom they obey, who restrains the oppressor from his oppression and the unjust man from his injustice and avenges the oppressed of his oppressor, and along with that leads them to rational principles and religious duties, and restrains them from the corruptions which cause the destruction of order in their worldly affairs, and from the evils which result in wretchedness in the world to come, so that every individual might fear that punishment, then because of this they will draw near to soundness and depart from corruption. (al-Babu'l-hadi 'ashar, EngI. transl. p. 63)

The institution of Imamate is intended to cater for the unification of the nation and to protect the commandments of Islam from alteration and change, because if there is no head of the nation and no protector of religion neither can the order of the nation be maintained nor can the commandments of Islam remain safe from interference by others. This object can be achieved only when obedience to him is obligatory on the people, because if he is not obeyed and followed as an obligation he will neither be able to maintain justice and equity, nor secure the rights of the oppressed from the oppressor, nor issue and enforce the laws of the shari'ah and consequently the extinction of evil and mischief from the world cannot be expected.

61. It is narrated that someone levied some charges against Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq before the 'Abbaside Caliph 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Mansur. al-Mansur sent for the Imam and told him that such and such a person had told him such and such about him. The Imam said it was all wrong and there was not an iota of truth therein, and desired the man to be sent for and questioned before him. Consequently, he was sent for and questioned. He said that whatever he had said was true and correct. The Imam said to him, "if you are speaking the truth then you swear as I ask you to swear." Thereafter, the Imam made him swear by saying, "I am out of Allah's might and power and I rely on my own might and power." Soon after swearing like this he got an attack of paralysis and he became motionless. The Imam, returned with full honour and prestige. (al-Kafi, al-Kulayni, vol.6, pp. 445--446; al-Bihar, vol.47, pp.164 -- 165, 172-175, 203 -- 204; al-Fusul al-muhimmah, Ibn as-Sabbagh al-

Maliki, pp.225 --226; as-sawa`iq al-muhriqah, Ibn Hajar ash-Shafi'i, p. 120; Jami' karamat al-awliya', an-Nabhani ash-Shafi'i, vol.2, p.4).

Such an event took place again during the reign of Harun ar-Rashid (149/766 - 193/809 - the grandson of al-Mansur) when 'Abdullah ibn Mus'ab (the grandson of 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr -- the well-known enemy of Ahlu'l-bayt of the Holy Prophet) slandered Yahya ibn 'Abdillah ibn al-Hasan ibn (al-Imam) al-Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib before Harun ar-Rashid by saying that he was plotting a revolution against him (Harun). Then, Yahya made 'Abdullah swear before Harun in the same manner as the Imam had done. When 'Abdullah swore as he was required to, the symptom of leprosy soon appeared in him in the presence of Harun and he died after three days, while every part of his flesh cracked open and all the hair of his body fell out. After this, Harun used to say, "How soon Allah took revenge on 'Abdullah for Yahya!" (Maqatil at-talibiyyin, Abu'l-Faraj al-Isfahani, pp.472-478; Muruj adh-dhahab, al-Mas'udi, vol.3, pp.340-- 342; Tarikh Baghdad, al-Khatib, vol.14, pp.110-112; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.19, pp.91-94; at- Tarikh, Ibn Kathir, vol.10, pp.167-168; Tarikh al-khulafa', as-Suyuti., p.287).

62. The meaning of it is that if a person desires that after his death a portion of his property should be spent on charity, he should not wait for his death but spend it wherever he desires even during his lifetime; for it is possible that after his death his successors may not act upon his will or he may not get an opportunity to will.

A Persian couplet says:

Give away money and property while you are living as after you it would be out of your control.

63. Envy produces such a poisonous matter in the body which destroys the natural heat of the body as a result of which the body weakens and the spirit withers. That is why an envious person never prospers and melts away in the heat of envy

64. "Ya'sub" is the name given to the queen bee, and the saying of Amir al-mu'minin is: "fa idha kana dhalika daraba ya'sub u'd-din bi dhanabihi". The word "daraba" means to beat, strike, hit, etc.; "ya'sub u'd-din" means "the head of religion and the shari'ah", and "dhanab" means tail, end, adherent or flower. In this sentence "ya'subu'd-u 'd-din" stands for the present Imam (al-Imam al-Mahdi). Although this title was given by the Holy Prophet to Amir al-mu'minin specially, as he said:

O' `Ali, you are the ya'sub (bead) of the believers while wealth is the ya'sub of the hypocrites. (al-Isti`ab, vol. 4, p. 1744; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, p.287; al-Isabah, vol.4, p.171; ar-Riyad an-nadira, vol.2, p.155; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, p.102; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.1, p. 12; vol.19, p.224).

Also the Holy Prophet said to 'Ali:

You are the ya'sub of the religion. (ar-Riyad an-nadira, vol.2, p. 177; Taj al-'arus, vol.1, p.381; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.1, p. 12; vol.19, p.224)

Also the Holy Prophet said to 'Ali:

You are the ya'sub of the Muslims (Yanabi' al-mawaddah, al-Qunduzi, p.62)

Again the Holy Prophet said:

You are the ya'sub of the Quraysh (al-Maqasid al-hasanah, as-Sakhawi, p.94).

Therefore, the reason for giving the Imam this name is that just as the queen bee is pure alone and in the society of other bees, and she collects her nectar from the blossoms and flowers keeping away from pollution, in the same way the present Imam is free from all pollutions and is perfectly clean and pure. This saying has been interpreted in several ways:

Firstly, it means that "when the present Imam settles at his seat after his tour and rotation round the world people will gather around him."

Secondly, it means that "when the Imam moves about on the earth along with his friends and associates..." In this case the word "daraba" would mean moving about and the word "dhanab" would mean helpers and associates.

Thirdly, it means that "when the Imam rises with a sword in hand ." In this case the word "dhanab" would mean stinging by the bee.

Fourthly, it means that "when the Imam rises for the propagation of true faith with full fervour. . ." In this case the sentence is suggestive of the state of anger and the posture for attack.

65. The reference by the versatile speaker is to Sa'sa'ah ibn Suhan al-'Abdi who was among the chief companions of Amir al-mu'minin. This saying throws light on the

greatness of his speaking quality and the force of his utterances. In this connection, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written:

It is enough for Sa'sa'ah's greatness that a personality like 'Ali, peace be upon him, has praised him for versatility and eloquence of speech. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.19, p.106)

66. Sa'd ibn Malik (i.e. Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, the father of 'Umar ibn Sa'd who killed Imam Husayn) and 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar were among those who were keeping themselves away from Amir al-mu'minin's help and support. As for Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, after the killing of 'Uthman he retired to some wilderness and passed his life there, but did not agree to swear allegiance to Amir al-mu'minin (as Caliph). But after the death of Amir al-mu'minin he used to express his repentance, saying, "I held an opinion but it was a wrong opinion." (al-Mustadrak, al-Hakim, vol.3, p. 116). And when Mu'awiyah blamed him for not supporting him in his fight with Amir al-mu'minin, Sa'd said:

I only repent for not having fought against the rebellious group (i.e. Mu'awiyah and his people). (Ahkam al-Qur'an, al-Jassas al-Hanafi, vol.2, pp.224,225; al-Furu', Ibn Muflih al-Hanbali, vol.3, p.542)

As for 'Abdullah ibn 'Umar, although he had sworn allegiance, he refused to help Amir al-mu'minin in the battles putting forth the excuse: "I have sought seclusion to devote myself to worship and do not therefore want to involve myself in war and fighting."

A Persian couplet says: Intelligence regards such excuses worse than the offence itself.

'Abdullah ibn 'Umar also frequently used to express his repentance, even up to the last moments of his life, saying:

I do not find anything in myself to be distressed about in this world, except my not having fought alongside Ali ibn Abi Talib against the rebellious group as Allah, to Whom belongs Might and Majesty, had commanded me. (al-Mustadrak, vol.3, pp.115 - 116; as-Sunan al-kubra, al-Bayhaqi, vol.8, p.172; at-Tabaqat, Ibn Sa'd, vol.4, part 1, pp.136, 137; aljst1.'ab, vol.3, p.953; Usd al-ghabah, vol.3, p.229; vol.4, p.33; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.3, p.182; vol.7, p.242; al-Furu', vol.3, p.543; Ruh al-ma'ani; al-Alusi, vol.26, p.151).

67. The intention is that if a person holds high position in the royal court people look at his rank and position and honour and prestige with envy, but he himself has always the fear lest the royal pleasure turns against him and he falls in the pit of disgrace and dishonour or death and destruction, like the rider on a lion with by whom people are awed, but he himself is ever facing the danger lest the lion devours him, or throws him in some fatal pit.

68. The group of the learned and reformers is responsible for improvement as well as deterioration because the common people are under their influence, and regard their words and action as correct and standard, rely on them and act upon them. In this way, If their teaching caters for improvement then thousands of individuals will acquire improvement and betterment thereby; but if there be evil in it then thousands of individuals will get involved in misguidance and get astrayed. That is why it is said: "When a scholar gets into evil the whole world gets into evil."

69. Among the first three Caliphs, 'Umar ibn al-Khattab often used to call upon Amir al-mu'minin for the solution of many unsolved problems and so as to benefit from his vast knowledge. But Abu Bakr, due to the short period of his caliphate, and 'Uthman, due to the special circumstances of his caliphate and his entourage, seldom used to call on Amir al-mu'minin and benefit from his advice. 'Umar used to praise Amir al-mu'minin very much for his vast knowledge, saying:

The most knowledgeable person among us in jurisprudence and judgement is 'Ali. (as-Sahih, al-Bukhari, vol.6, p.23; al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.5, p.113; al-Mustadrak, al-Hakim, vol.3, p.305; at-Tabaqat, Ibn Sa'd, vol.2, part 2, p.102; al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1102)

Certainly, there is no need for the evidence of 'Umar and others in this field when 'Umar himself and a group of the Companions confess that the Holy Prophet used to say:

'Ali is the most knowledgeable in jurisprudence and judgement among my ummah (Muslim community). (Akhbar al-qudat, Waki', vol.1, p.78; Masabih, as-sunnah, al-Baghawi, vol.2, p.203; al-Isti'ab, vol. 1, pp.16- 17; vol.3, p.1102; ar-Riyad-an-nadirah, vol.2, p.108; as-Sunan, Ibn Majah, vol.1, p.55)

In this connection, Ahmad ibn Hanbal narrates from Abu Hazim that a certain man approached Mu'awiyah and put to him some questions on religion. Mu'awiyah said, "Refer this question to 'All who possesses better knowledge." The man said, "But I would rather

have your reply than that of `Ali." Mu'awiyah silenced him and said, "It is the worst thing I have heard from you. You have expressed hate towards the person whom the Messenger of Allah' used to coach and tutor as a mother bird feeds a nestling by putting grain after grain into the mouth of the nestling with its beak and to whom the Messenger of Allah said:

You hold the same position in relation to me as Harun held in relation to Musa except that there shall, in all certainty, be no prophet after me;

and to whom 'Umar used to turn for the solution of unsolved problems." (Fayd al-qadir, al-Munawi, vol.3, p.46; ar-Riyad, an-nadirah, vol.2, p.195; as-Sawa'iq al-muhriqah, p. 107; Fath al-bari, vol.17, p.105)

Also 'Umar used to say frequently:

Women lack the ability to give birth to such as 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. Had it not been for 'Ali, 'Umar would have been finished. (Ta'wil mukhtalaf al-hadith, Ibn Qutaybah, p.202; al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1103; Qudat al-Undulus, al-Maliqi, p.73; ar-Riyad an-nadirah, vol.2, p. 194; al-Manaqib, al-Khwarazmi, p.39; Yanabi' al-mawaddah, pp.75, 373; Fayd al-qadir, vol.4, p.356)

He also used to say:

I seek the protection of Allah from the problems in which Abu'l-Hasan ('Ali) is not present! (al-Isti'ab, vol.3, pp.1102-1103; a;-Tabaqat, vol.2, part 2, p.102; Sifatuh 's-safwah, Ibn al-Jawzi, vol.1, p.121; Usd al-ghabah, vol.4, pp.22-23; al-Isabah, vol.2, p.509; at-Tarikh, Ibn Kathir, vol.7, p.360)

'Umar often addressed Amir al-mu'minin, thus:

O Abu'l-Hasan, I seek the protection of Allah from being in a community among which you are not found. (al-Mustadrak, vol.1, pp. 457-458; at-Tafsir, Fakhr ad-Din ar-Razi, vol.32, p.10; ad-Durr al-manthur, as-Suyuti, vol.3, p.144; ar-Riyad an-nadirah, vol.2, p. 197; Fayd al-qadir, vol.3, p.46; vol.4, p. 356; as-Sawa'iq al-muhriqah, p. 107)

Above all these confessions is the acknowledgement by the Holy Prophet of Amir al-mu'minin as narrated by 'Umar ibn al-Khatib himself, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri and Mu'adh ibn Jabal that the Holy Prophet said:

O 'Ali, I have exceeded you in prophethood, for there will be no prophet after me, and you exceed others in seven noble qualities. You are: i) the first who believed in Allah, ii) the best fulfiller of the promise made to Allah, iii) the best adherer to the commandments of Allah, iv) the most equitable distributor among the people, v) the best dispenser of justice (or the most clement) to the (Muslims) subjects, vi) the one who has the best insight into controversial cases, (or the most learned in judgement), and vii) the most conspicuous in virtue and honour before Allah. (Hilyah al-awliya', vol.1, pp.65, 66; ar-Riyad an-nadirah, vol.2, p.198; al-Manaqib, al-Khwarazmi, p.61; Kanz al-'ummal vol.12, p.214; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.13, p.230)

It is also narrated by Amir al-mu'minin, Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, Ma'qil ibn Yasir and Buraydah ibn Husayb that the Messenger of Allah (p.b.u.h.a. h.p.) said to Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) that:

Are you not satisfied? Surely, I have married you to the foremost of my ummah who believes in Islam, and the most knowledgeable among them and superior among them in clemency. (al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.5, p.26; al-Musannaf, as -San'ani, vol.5, p.490; al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1099; Usd al-ghabah, vol.5, p.520; Kanzal-'ummal vol .12, p.205; vol.15, p.99; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, pp.101, 114; as-Sirah al-halabiyyah, vol.1, p.285)

After we read the following saying of the Holy Prophet, it is no surprise for us to note that the above acknowledgements of the vast knowledge of Amir al-mu'minin and his efficiency in the field of jurisprudence and judgement were made.

I am the city of knowledge and 'Ali is its gate; he who wants to acquire (my) knowledge must come through the gate. (al-Mustadrak, vol.3, pp.126,127; al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1102; Usd al-ghabah, vol.4, p.22; Tahdhib at-tahdhib, vol.6, pp.320-321; vol.7, p.337; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, p.114; Kanz al-'ummal, vol.12, pp.201, 212; vol.15, pp.129-130)

Also, the Holy Prophet said:

I am the store-house of wisdom and 'Ali is its gate. He who wants to acquire wisdom must come through the gate. (al-Jami' as-sahih, at- Tirmidhi, vol.5, pp.637-638; Hilyah al-awliya', vol-i, p-64; Masabih. as-sunnah, al-Baghawi, vol.2, p.275; ar-Riyad an-nadirah, vol.2, p.193; Kanz al-'ummal, vol.12, p.201)

70. It cannot be denied that after the Prophet of Islam changes came into existence in the religion when some people acting upon their imagination, amended or altered the commands of the shari'ah, although no one has the right to make alteration in the shari'ah, namely to ignore the clear commands of the Qur'an and the sunnah and enforce commands produced by his own imagination and thinking. Thus, the Qur'an contains this clear method of divorce that "(Revokable) Divorce (i.e. divorce in which resumption of conjugal relations is permissible without a marriage to another man taking place) may be twice" (Qur'an, 2:229). But in view of certain supposed advantages the Caliph 'Umar ordered three divorces to be pronounced on a single occasion. Similarly, he introduced the system of 'awl in inheritance and introduced four takbir in the funeral prayer. In the same way the Caliph 'Uthman added an adhan to the Friday prayer, ordered the offering of full prayers in place of qasr (shortened) ones, and allowed the sermon to precede the 'id prayer. In fact, hundreds of commands of this type were fabricated, as a result of which even correct commands got mixed with the wrong ones and lost their authenticity. (For changes made see: al-Ghadir, al-Amini [by Abu Bakr], vol.7, pp.74-236; [by 'Umar], vol.6, pp.83- 325; [by 'Uthman], vol.8, pp.98-387; an-Nass wa'l-ijthad, Sharafu'd-Din [by Abu Bakr], pp.76-154; [by 'Umar], pp.155-276. [by 'Uth man], pp.284-289. See also Muqaddamah mir'atu 'l-'uqul, al-'Askari, vol.1 & 2).

Amir al-mu'minin, who was the greatest scholar of the shari'ah, used to protest against these commands and had his own views as against the Companions. In this connection, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes:

There is no possibility for us to deny that Amir al-mu'minin had views on the commands of the shari'ah and opinions at variance with those of the Companions. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.19, p.161)

When Amir al-mu'minin assumed charge of the formal caliphate, revolts soon cropped up on all sides and he did not get rid of these troubles up to the last moment. Consequently, the altered commands could not be fully corrected and many wrong or doubtful commands gained currency in areas far removed from the centre. Nevertheless, the group of people who were associated with Amir al-mu'minin used to enquire about the commands of the shad 'ah from him and recorded them, as a result of which the correct commands did not disappear and the wrong ones did not become unanimously accepted.

71. Knowledge and conviction require that they should be acted upon. If they are not acted upon they cannot be called knowledge and conviction. Consequently, if a man says he knows the dangers that exist on particular path but he adopts that very path for his journey instead of the path that has no dangers, then who can say that this man had full certainty about the dangers of that path, because the consequence of such certainty should have been that he would have avoided going on that path. Similarly, the person who has belief in the resurrection and revival of life or in chastisement and reward cannot be overpowered by those things of this world that make a man neglectful to the extent of disregarding the next life, nor can he fall short in good actions for fear of chastisement and evil consequences.

72. As-Sayyid ar-Radi has not written what it was that did not happen, leaving us only with the first part of the sentence.

73. The man whom Amir al-mu'minin has referred to as his brother and whose qualities he has stated, has been taken by some commentators to be Abu Dharr al-Ghifari by some 'Uthman ibn Maz'un al-Jumahi and by some al-Miqdad ibn al-Aswad al-Kindi; but it is not unlikely that no particular individual is referred to at all, because it is customary with Arabs for them to speak of a brother or a comrade although they have no particular individual in mind.

74. A fool considers his ways of action appropriate, and wants his friend also to adopt the same ways, so that he should become as he himself is. This does not mean that he desires that his friend should become as foolish as he is. He cannot be thinking like this, because he does not consider himself foolish. If he in fact considered himself foolish, then he would not have been foolish. Instead, he considers his ways of action as correct, and desires his friend to be equally "wise". That is why he presents his view before him in an embellished form and desires him to act upon it. It is possible his friend may be influenced by his advice and tread on the same path. Therefore, it is better to keep away from him.

75. If the vicissitudes and changes of this world are observed, the circumstances and condition of the people attended to and their histories noted, then from every corner

edifying stories can be heard which are fully capable of arousing the mind out of its forgetful slumber, of providing instruction and of imparting teaching and clear mindedness. Thus, the creation and dissolution of every thing in this world, the blossoming of flowers and their withering, the thriving of vegetation and its withering away and the subjugation of every atom to change are such instructive lessons that they are enough to curb any hope of attaining eternity in this deceitful life as long as the eyes and ears are not closed to these instructive events.

A Persian couplet says:

The world is full of stories of folk gone by, but unless one lends an ear to it, its call is weak.

76. The idea here is that lighting may flash a hundred thousand times, tempests may rise, the earth may quake and mountains may collide with each other, but as long as the fixed period of life has yet to run its course no occurrence can cause any harm, nor the typhoon of death put out the flame of life; for there is a fixed hour for death, and nothing can cut it short before that time. In this way, obviously death itself is the watchman and guardian of life.

The hemistich of a verse says: What is known as death is the watchman of life.

77. The occasion and circumstances surrounding this saying as related by as-Sayyid ar-Radi were that when at the time of the Battle of Jamal Amir al-mu'minin sent Anas ibn Malik to Talhah and az-Zubayr with the purpose that he should recall them the Prophet's saying to the effect that: "You two will fight 'Ali and will commit excess over him", he came back and stated that he had forgotten to mention it. Then, Amir al-mu'minin uttered these words about him. However, it is said that Amir al-mu'minin said the sentence on the occasion when he wanted Anas to confirm the Prophet's saying. "Whosoever master I am, 'Ali is his master. O My God, love him who loves 'Ali and hate him who hates 'Ali". Consequently, numerous persons have testified to this saying but Arias kept quiet. Then, Amir al-mu'minin, said to him, "You too were present at Ghadir Khum, what is keeping you silent on this occasion?" and he said, "I have grown old and my memory does not serve me well". Then, Amir al-mu'minin, pronounced this curse. (Ansab al-ashraf, al-Baladhuri, [concerning the biography of Amir al-mu'minin], pp.156-157; al-A'laq an-nafisah, Ibn Rustah, p.221; Altai's al-ma'arif, ath-Tha'alibi, pp. 105 - 106; Muhadarat al-udaba', ar-Raghib, vol.3, p.293; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.4, p.74; Arjah al-matalib, ash-Shaykh 'Ubaydullah al-Hanafi, pp. 578, 579, 580).

In this connection, Ibn Qutaybah ('Abdullah ibn Muslim ad-Dinawari [213/828 - 276/889] writes:

People have related that Amir al-mu'minin asked Anas ibn Malik about the Prophet's saying: "O My God, love him who loves 'Ali and hate him who hates 'Ali," and he replied, "I have grown old and I have forgotten it." Then 'Ali said: "If you are a liar, Allah may afflict you with white spots which even the turban may not cover. (al-Ma'arif, p. 580)

Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has also supported this view and, denying the incident mentioned by as-Sayyid ar-Radi, writes:

The incident mentioned by as-Sayyid ar-Radi that Amir al-mu'minin sent Anas ibn Malik to Talhah and az-Zubayr is an unrecorded event. If Amir al-mu'minin had sent him particularly to recall to them the the Prophet's saying concerning them, then he could hardly have come back and said that he had forgotten it because when he left Amir al-mu'minin and went to these two persons he should have admitted and remembered the saying, and therefore how could he, on his return after an hour or a day, plead that he had forgotten it and deny it. This is something that cannot happen. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.19, pp.217 - 218)

78. We have already explained the meaning of the word "ya'sub" in the foot-note of saying No.262-I, and pointed out that this title was given to Amir al-mu'minin by the Holy Prophet himself and we quoted some of his different utterances on this subject.

Here we quote one of the traditons in which this title appears. It is narrated by Abu Layla al-Ghifari, Abu Dharr, Salman, Ibn 'Abbas and Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman that the Holy Prophet used to say:

Soon after my death there will be discord. When it occurs, adhere to 'Ali ibn Abi Talib since he will be the first person to see me and the first person to shake hands with me on the Day of Judgement. He is the greatest man of truth (as-siddiq al-akbar), and he is the

discriminator (faruq) from among this ummah who discriminates between right and wrong, and he is the ya'sub (leader) of the believers while wealth is the ya'sub of the hypocrites. (In addition to the references given in the above-mentioned foot-note, see also Fayd al-qadir, vol.4, p.358; Kanz al-ummal, vol.12, p.214; Muntakhab al-kanz, vol.5, p.33; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.13, p.228; Tarikh ash-Sham, Ibn 'Asakir, (on the biography of Amir al-mu'minin), vol.1, pp. 74 - 78; as-Sirah al-halabiyah, vol.1, p.380; Dhakha'ir al-'uqba, p.56; Yanabi' al-mawaddah, p. 62, 82, 201 and 251).

79. The purpose behind this criticism by the Jews was to show that the prophethood of the Prophet Muhammad was a controversial matter, but Amir al-mu'minin clarified the exact focus of controversy by using the word "after him" as against "about him", namely that the controversy was not about his prophethood but about his succession and vicegerency. Then, commenting on the position of the Jews he pointed out that those who were today criticising the mutual differences among Muslims after the Prophet were of the same kind as those who had begun to waver about belief in the Unity of Allah even in the lifetime of Moses. Thus, when, on becoming free of the slavery of the Egyptians they reached the other side of the river and saw the figure of a calf in a temple in Sina', they asked Moses to get a similar figure for them, whereupon Moses rebuked them for being still as stubborn as they were in Egypt. This meant that a people who were so immersed in desire for idol-worship that even after being initiated into the belief in the Unity of Allah they became restless on seeing an idol and made the request for a similar idol to be made for themselves had no right to criticise any difference among Muslims.

80. The man who is over-awed by his adversary is sure to be defeated because in facing a foe physical prowess is not enough but steadfastness of heart and strength of courage is also necessary. When the adversary loses courage and feels sure that he will be defeated then he will certainly be defeated. This is what happened to the adversary of Amir al-mu'minin; he was so affected by his acknowledged reputation that he was sure of death, in consequence of which his spiritual power and self confidence came to an end and eventually this mental state dragged him to his death.

81. 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas had advised Amir al-mu'minin to issue a letter of appointment to Talhah and az-Zubayr as the Governors of Kufah and to retain Mu'awiyah as the Governor of Syria till such time as his position became stabilized and the government gained strength. In reply to which Amir al-mu'minin said that he could not expose his own religion to danger for the sake of the worldly benefit of others, adding that "therefore instead of insisting on your own point you should listen to me and obey me.

82. In the year 38 A.H. Mu'awiyah sent 'Amr ibn al-'As to Egypt with a large force. 'Amr ibn al-'As called Mu'awiyah ibn Hudayj for assistance. They brought together the supporters of 'Uthman and waged a war against Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr and captured him. Mu'awiyah ibn Hudayj beheaded him and stitching his body into the belly of a dead ass, burnt it. Muhammad was at that time twenty-eight years old. It is reported that when the news of the tragedy reached his mother, she fell into a great rage and indignation. And 'A'ishah, his paternal sister, took a vow that, as long as she was alive, she would never eat roasted meat. She cursed Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan, 'Amr ibn al-'As and Mu'awiyah ibn Hudayj after every prayer.

When Amir al-mu'minin heard the news of Muhammad's martyrdom he became immensely sad. He wrote in very grieved language to Ibn 'Abbas who was at Basrah about the tragic death of Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr.

Hearing the news of Muhammad's martyrdom Ibn 'Abbas came from Basrah to Kufah to offer his condolences to Amir al-mu'minin.

One of the spies of Amir al-mu'minin came from Syria and said:

O' Amir al-mu'minin! When the news of Muhammad's murder reached Mu'awiyah, he went to the pulpit and praised the group who took part in his martyrdom. The people of Syria rejoiced so much at hearing the news that I had never seen them in such delight before.

Then, Amir al-mu'minin uttered the above saying. He further said that although Muhammad was his stepson, he was like his own son. (at-Tabari, vol.1, pp.3400-3414; Ibn al-Athir, vol.3, pp.352-359; Ibn Kathir, vol.7, pp.313-317; Abu'l-Fida', vol.1, p.179; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.6, pp.82-100; Ibn Khaldun, vol.2, part2, pp.181-182; al-Isti'ab, vol.3,

pp.1366-1367; al-Isabah, vol.3, ppA72-473; al-Gharat, ath-Thaqafi, vol.1, pp.276-322; Tarikh al-khamis, vol.2, pp.238 239)

We have written before (in the footnote to Sermon No.67) concerning the biography of Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr.

83. The meaning is that obligations should be so discharged that there is no occasion for putting forth excuses, because after all in making excuse there is a hint of shortcoming and humbleness, even though it may be true and correct.

84. There are a few grades of denial of favours and ingratitude. The first is that a person may not be able to appreciate (the real significance of) a favour; for example, the sight of the eyes, the speech of the tongue, the hearing of the ears and the movements of the hands and feet. These are all favours bestowed by Allah but many people do not realize them to be favours, and do not entertain feelings of gratitude. The second grade is that a person may see a favour and appreciate it but may not feel grateful for it. The third grade is that a person may oppose the Bestower of the favours. The fourth grade is that instead of using the favours granted by Him a person may use them in committing sins against Allah. This is the highest grade of denial of favours.

85. When anyone's star is auspicious and his luck is good, he steps automatically towards the goal in view, and his mind confronts no perplexity in determining the correct way of approach; but the person whose luck is about to ebb stumbles even in the light and his mental faculties become paralysed. Consequently, when the downfall of the Barmakids began, ten persons from among them assembled for consultation about a matter but were not able to take a decision even after long discussion. Seeing this Yahya said, "By Allah, it is a forerunner of our decline and a sign of our downfall that even ten of us have not been able to settle a matter, although while when we were in ascendancy one of us used to solve ten problems easily.

86. The result of lack of restraint and care in respect of small sins is that a man becomes rather careless in the matter of sins, and, by and by, this habit produces boldness for larger sins. Then, he begins to commit them without hesitation. Therefore, one should regard small sins as a harbinger of bigger sins, and avoid them, so that the stage for committing big sins does not come.

87. What worse defect can there be than that a man should criticise those defects in others which exist in himself. The requirement of justice is that before casting one's eye on the defects of others one should look at his own defects and realize that a defect is a defect whether it be in others or in oneself.

A Persian couplet says: Looking at other's defects is neither property nor manliness. Better look at your own self since you are full of defects.

88. If Allah considers it appropriate to keep a man living while he is confined to a closed house, then He is certainly powerful enough to provide the means of living to him, and just as a closed door cannot prevent death in the same way it cannot prevent the entry of livelihood, because the Might of Allah, the Almighty is equally capable of either.

The meaning is that a man should be content in the matter of livelihood because whatever is destined for him will in any case reach him wherever he may be.

A Persian couplet says: Livelihood like death will reach a man even if the door be closed, but greed keeps people (unnecessarily) anxious.

89. "Fa'l" means something from which one augurs well while "tiyarah" means something from which one augurs evil. From the point of view of religious law auguring evil from anything has no basis and it is just the product of whim.

However, auguring well is not objectionable. For example, when after the immigration of the Prophet (from Mecca to Medina), the Quraysh announced that whoever apprehended the Prophet would be given one hundred camels as prize. Thereupon, Buraydah ibn al-Husayb al-Aslami set off in his search with seventy of his men and when they met at a halting place the Prophet asked him who he was and he said he was Buraydah ibn al-Husayb al-Aslami. Buraydah said: "The Holy Prophet was not auguring evil instead he used to augur good." On hearing this, the Prophet remarked: "barada amruna wa salaha" (our consequence will be wholesome). Then he asked him what tribe he came from and on his replying that he was from Aslam, the Prophet remarked: "salimna" (we would be safe). Then he asked from which scion he was and when he replied that he was from Banu Sahm, the Prophet remarked: "kharaja sahmuka" (your arrow has missed the aim). Buraydah was

much impressed by this pleasing conversation and inquired from the Prophet who he was. The Prophet replied, "Muhammad ibn 'Abdillah". Hearing this, he spontaneously exclaimed, "I do stand witness that you are the Messenger of Allah", and forsaking the prize announced by the Quraysh acquired the wealth of Belief. (al-Isti'ab, vol.1, pp.185-186; Usd al-ghabah, vol. 1, pp.175-176).

90. What Amir al-mu'minin means is that man does not enjoy regular mastery over anything, but such mastery as he is assigned by Allah, and so long as this mastery lasts the obligations of the shari'ah also continue, whereas when the mastery is taken away the obligations too are lifted off, since in such a case the laying of obligations would mean placing of responsibility beyond capacity which cannot be allowed by any wise or prudent person. This is why Allah has placed the responsibility of performing various acts after having conferred the necessary energy in the limbs. It follows that this responsibility would remain only so long as the energy subsists and that on the disappearance of the energy the responsibility for action would also disappear. For example, the obligation to pay Zakat (tax) applies only when there is wealth; but when Allah would take away the wealth He would lift off the liability to pay Zakat because in such a case the laying of obligation is against prudence.

91. If feeling and conscience is alive even the remembrance of a sin destroys peace of mind because tranquility and happiness are achieved only when the spirit is free from the burden of sin and one's robe is not polluted with disobedience. And this real happiness is not bound by time but on whatever day a man desires he can avoid sin and enjoy this happiness, and this very happiness will be the real happiness and the harbinger of 'Id.

92. Despite efforts throughout life a man does not always achieve all the successes of life. If on some occasions he succeeds as a result of effort and seeking, on many others he has to face defeat and to give up his objectives admitting defeat before fate. A little thinking can lead to the conclusion that when things of this world cannot be achieved despite effort and seeking, how can the success of the next world be achieved without striving and seeking.

A Persian couplet says: You hankered after the world but did not attain the objective. O Allah, what would be the result when the good of the next world has not even been sought.

93. The good or bad quality that is found in man springs from his natural temperament. If the temperament produces one quality, his other qualities will also be akin to this one because the dictates of temperament will be equally effective in either. This, if a man pays zakat and khums it means that his temperament is not miserly. Therefore it is expected that he would not be niggardly in spending on other items of charity as well. Similarly if a man speaks a lie it can be expected that he will indulge in backbiting too, because these two habits are similar to each other.

94. 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwam (1/622-73/692), whose mother was Asma', sister of 'A'ishah (daughter of Abu Bakr), had grown in his dislike of the Banu Hashim especially towards Amir al-mu'minin to such a stage that he was able to change the opinion of his father, az-Zubayr, against Amir al-mu'minin although the latter was the son of his father's aunt. That is why Amir al-mu'minin said:

az-Zubayr had always been from us the Ahlul Bayt (our household), until his ill-owned son 'Abdullah grew up. (al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.906; Usd al-ghabah, vol.3, pp.162-163; Ibn 'Asakir, vol.7, p.363; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.2, p.167; vol.4, p.79; vol.20, p.104)

'Abdullah was one of the instigators of the battle of Jamal. His aunt 'A'ishah, his father, az-Zubayr, and the son of his mother's uncle Talhah, had fought against Amir al-mu'minin.

Thus, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid writes:

It was 'Abdullah who urged az-Zubayr to fight (in the battle of Jamal), and made the march to Basrah seem attractive to 'A'ishah. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah al-balaghah, vol.4 p.79)

'A'ishah loved her nephew 'Abdullah very much. To her he was like the only child of a mother, and none in those days was more beloved to her than him. (al-Aghani, Abu'l-Faraj, vol.9, p.142, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.20, p.120; Ibn Kathir, vol.8, p.336).

Hisham ibn 'Urwah relates:

I have not heard her ('A'ishah) praying for anyone as she used to pray for him ('Abdullah). She gave ten thousand Dirhams (as a gift) to the one who informed her of 'Abdullah's safety from getting killed (by al-Ashtar in the fight of the battle of Jamal), and

prostrated to Allah in thanks-giving for his safety. (Ibn 'Asakir, vol.7, adid, vol.20, p.111) □ pp.400,402; Ibn Abi'l-H

This was the reason of 'Abdullah's authority over her and his complete command over her affairs. He was the one who directed and guided her in the direction he wished.

However, 'Abdullah's hatred against the Banu Hashim had reach such a stage that according to the narrations of a group of historians:

During his ('Abdullah's) Caliphate (in Mecca) he did not send blessings on the Holy Prophet in his Friday prayer speech (khutbah) for forty Fridays. He used to say: "Nothing prevents me from mentioning the Prophet's name except that there are a certain men (i.e. Banu Hashim) who become proud (when his name is mentioned).

In another interpretation:

Nothing prevents . . . except that the Prophet has a bad household who will shake their heads on the mention of his name (Maqatil at-talibiyyin, p.474; Muruj adh-dhahab, vol.3, p.79; at-Tarikh, al-Ya'qubi, vol.2, p.261; al-'Iqd al-farid, vol.4, p.413; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.4, p.62; vol.19, pp.91-92; vol.20, pp.127-129)

'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr said to 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas:

I have been concealing my hatred toward you, the people of this house (i.e. the Household of the Prophet) for the last forty years. (al-Mas'udi, vol.3, p.80; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.4, p.62; vol.20, p.148)

He also used to hate Amir al-mu'minin in particular, defame his honour, abuse and curse him. (al-Ya'qubi, vol.2, pp.261 - 262; al-Mas'udi, vol.3, p.80; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.4, pp.61, 62 - 63, 79)

He gathered Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyah (the son of Amir al-mu'minin) and 'Abdullah ibn al-'Abbas with seventeen men from the Banu Hashim including al-Hasan ibn al-Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn Abi Talib and imprisoned them in the shi'b (a small mountain valley) of 'Arim. He intended to burn them with fire, so he placed plenty of wood at the entrance of the shi'b. Meanwhile, al-Mukhtar ibn Abi 'Ubayd ath-Thaqafi dispatched four thousand soldiers to Mecca. On their arrival, they attacked 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr unexpectedly and rescued the Banu Hashim. 'Urwah ibn az-Zubayr made an excuse for his brother's ('Abdullah) deed saying that this action of his brother's was a result of the Banu Hashim's refusal to swear allegiance to him ('Abdullah), like the action of 'Umar ibn al-Khattab towards the Banu Hashim when they gathered in the house of Fatimah and refused to swear allegiance to Abu Bakr. So, 'Umar brought wood and intended to burn the house on them. (Maqatil at-talibiyyin, p.474; al-Mas'udi, vol.3, pp.76 - 77; al-Ya'qubi, vol.2, p.261; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.19, p.91; vol.20, pp.123 - 126, 146 - 148; Ibn 'Asakir, vol.7, p.408; al-'Iqd al-farid, vol.4, p.413; Ibn Sa'd, vol.5, pp.73 - 81; at-Tabari, vol.2, pp.693 - 695; Ibn al-Athir, vol.4, pp.249 - 254; Ibn Khaldun, vol.3, pp.26 - 28)

In this connection, Abu'l-Faraj al-Isfahani writes:

'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr always instigated others against the Banu Hashim and pursued them (in his aim) by every worst method; he inspired against them and spoke against them on the pulpits; and remonstrated against them. Sometime Ibn 'Abbas or someone else from them (Banu Hashim) raised an objection against him. But afterwards, he changed his way and imprisoned Ibn al-Hanafiyah in a prison at the shi'b 'Arim. Then, he gathered Ibn al-Hanafiyah along with other members of the Banu Hashim who were present (in Mecca) in a prison and collected wood to set fire to it. This was because of the news that had reached him that Abu 'Abdillah al-Jadali and other followers of Ibn al-Hanafiyah had arrived (in Mecca) to support Ibn al-Hanafiyah and fight 'Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr. Therefore, he hastened to do away with the prisoners. But when this news reached Abu 'Abdillah al-Jadali, he came there at the time when the fire was already set on them, then he put out the fire and rescued them. (al-Aghani, p.15)

So, all these prove the word of Amir al-mu'minin about him.

95. If a man ponders over his original condition and the eventual breaking up and ruining of his body he will be compelled to admit his lowliness and humble position instead of being proud and vain, because he will see that there was a time when he did not exist and Allah originated his existence with a humble drop of semen which took the shape of a piece of flesh in the mother's womb and continued feeding and growing on thick blood. When on completion of the body he set foot on the earth he was so helpless and incapable that he had neither control over his hunger and thirst nor on sickness and health, nor any command

over benefit or harm, or any authority over life and death, not knowing when the energy of limbs may exhaust, feeling and sense may leave, eyesight may be taken away, power of hearing may be snatched and when death may separate the spirit from the body and leave the latter to be cut into pieces by vultures and kites or for worms to eat it in the grave.

An Arabic couplet says: How does one whose origin is semen and whose end is a carcass dare be vain?

96. This means that a comparison can be made among the poets when their imagination runs in the same field; but when the expression of one differs from the other, and the style of one varies from that of the other it is difficult to decide who is defeated and who has won the field. Consequently, from various considerations one is preferred over the other and someone is considered greater for one consideration and the other for other consideration, as the famous saying goes:

The greatest poet of Arabia is Imriu'l-Qays when he rides; al-A'sha when he is eager for something and an-Nabighah when he is afraid.

Nevertheless, despite this categorization Imriu'l-Qays is regarded to be in a high position among poets of the first era because of the beauty of his imagination, the excellence of his description, his inimitable similes and rare metaphors, although many of his couplets are below moral standards and speak about obscene subjects. But in spite of this obscenity the greatness of his art cannot be denied, because an artist looks at a poetic production from the point of view of art ignoring the other factors which do not affect art.

97. This is the prophecy about the decline and fall of the Umayyads that proved true, word for word. This rule was founded by Mu'awiyah ibn Abi Sufyan and ended with Marwan ibn Muhammad al-Himar in 132 A.H. after a life of ninety years, eleven months and thirteen days. The Umayyads period was second to none in tyranny, oppression, harshness and despotism. The despotic rulers of this period perpetrated such tyranny that it put blots on Islam, blackened the pages of history and injured the spirit of humanity. They allowed every kind of ruin and destruction only to retain their own personal authority. They led armies to Mecca, hurled fire on the Ka'bah, made Medina the victim of their brute passions, and shed streams of Muslim blood. At last, this bloodshed and ruthlessness resulted in revolts and conspiracies from all sides and their internal strife and agitation and their mutual fighting paved the way for their ruin. Although political unrest had set in among them earlier yet during the days of al-Walid ibn Yazid open disturbances began to occur. On the other side Banu al-'Abbas (the 'Abbasids) also started preparations and during the reign of Marwan al-Himar they started a movement under the name of "al-khilafah al-Ilahiyyah" (the Caliphate of Allah). For successful piloting of this movement they got a martial leader Abu Muslim al-Khurasani who, in addition to his knowledge of political events and occurrences, was also an expert in the art of warfare. Making Khurasan as the base he spread a whole net against the Umayyads and succeeded in bringing the 'Abbasids to power.

In the beginning this man was quite unknown and it is for this unknownness and low position that Amir al-mu'minin likened him and his associates to the hyena as this simile is used for low and humble people.

98. Generally purchases are made from helpless people in such a way that taking advantage of their need and necessity, things are purchased from them at cheap rates and are sold to them at high prices. No religion allows taking advantage of such helplessness and extreme need, nor is it permissible in ethics that profiteering should be resorted to at the time of others' helplessness.

99. The Holy Prophet used often to urge and order the ummah to love Amir al-mu'minin and forbid them to bear any hatred against him. Moreover, the Holy Prophet used to regard the love of Amir al-mu'minin as the sign of Faith (iman) and the hatred of him as the sign of hypocrisy (nifaq) (as we have already mentioned on the foot-note of No.45).

Now, we quote one of the traditions of the Holy Prophet with regard to this subject. It has been narrated through fourteen companions that the Holy Prophet said:

Whoever loves 'Ali, he surely loves me; and whoever loves me, he surely loves Allah, and whoever loves Allah, He will cause him to enter Paradise.

Whoever hates 'Ali, he surely hates me; and whoever hates me, he surely hates Allah, and whoever hates Allah, He will cause him to enter the Fire.

And whoever hurts 'Ali, he surely hurts me, and whoever hurts me, he surely hurts Allah, (surely, those who hurt Allah and His Messenger, Allah has cursed them in the present world and the world to come, and has prepared for them a humbling chastisement [Qur'an, 33:57]). (al-Mustadrak, vol.3, pp.127 - 128; 130; Hilyah al-awliya', vol.1, pp.66-67; al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1101; Usd al-ghabah, vol.4, p. 383; al-Isabah, vol.3, pp.496-497; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, pp. 108 - 109, 129, 131, 132, 133; Kanz al-'ummal, vol.12, pp.202, 209, 218 - 219; vol.15, pp.95 - 96; vol.17, p.70; ar-Riyad an-nadirah, vol.2, pp.166, 167, 209, 214; al-Manaqib, Ibn al-Maghazili, pp.103,196, 382)

At the same time, the Holy Prophet used to caution the ummah against exaggeration in (Amir al-mu'minin's) love of him in exceeding the bounds of Islam in love for him. One who does so is called ghali, i.e. he who believes that the Holy Prophet or Amir al-mu'minin or any of the Shi'ite Imams is god, or attributes to them the special attributes of Allah, or believes that the twelve Imams are prophets, or makes any claim which they (the Holy Prophet and Imams) did not make about themselves.

On the contrary, the Holy Prophet had also forbidden any offence or denigration concerning them (Imams); and he used to blame those who lay false and baseless accusations against them as well as those who hate and bear malice.

It was for this reason that the Holy Prophet sometimes used to refrain from mentioning some of the excellent qualities of Amir al-mu'minin as Jabir ibn 'Abdillah al-Ansari narrates:

When Amir al-mu'minin approached the Holy Prophet with the news of the conquering of Khaybar by himself (Amir al-mu'minin), the Holy Prophet said to him: "'O' 'Ali, had it not been for some groups of my ummah who may say about you, what the Christians say about 'Isa, son of Maryam. I would have said (something) about you so that you would not pass before any Muslim but that he would seize the dust from the tracks of your feet demanding blessing from it. But it suffices to say that you hold the same position in relation to me as Harun held in relation to Musa except that there shall, in all certainty, be no prophet after me.'" (Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, p. 131; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.5, p.4; vol.9, p.168; vol.18, p.282; Manaqib 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, Ibn al-Maghazili, pp.237 - 239; Manaqib 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, al-Khwarazmi, pp.75 - 76, 96, 220; Kifayah at-talib fi manaqib 'Ali ibn Abi Talib, al-Ganji, pp.264 - 265; Arjah al-matalib, pp.448, 454; Yanabi' al-mawaddah, pp.63 - 64, 130 - 131)

The Holy Prophet had also informed the Muslim ummah that there will appear two types of deviated groups among the Muslims who will exceed the bounds of Islamic principles towards understanding Amir al-mu'minin, as he himself has related:

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him and his descendants, called upon me and said: "'O' 'Ali, there is a resemblance between you and 'Isa son of Maryam, whom the Jews hated so much that they laid a false accusation against his mother, and whom the Christians loved so much that they assigned to him the position which is not for him.'"

(Then, Amir al-mu'minin continues) Beware ! two types of persons will fall into ruin over me: The one who loves (me) who will eulogize me for what is not in me; and the one who hates (me) whose detestation against me will lead him to lay false and baseless accusations on me. Beware ! I am not a prophet, and nothing has been revealed to me. But I act according to the Book of Allah and the sunnah of His Prophet as far as I can. (al-Musnad, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol.1, p.160; al-Mustadrak, al-Hakim, vol.3, p.123; Mishkat al-masabih, vol.3, pp.245 - 246; Majma' az-zawa'id, vol.9, p.133 ; Kanz al-'ummal, vol.12, p.219; vol.15, p.110; Ibn Kathir, vol.7, p.356)

The above mentioned sayings of Amir al-mu'minin (in this foot-note) as well as in the text have been reported from the Holy Prophet when he said to Amir al-mu'minin:

O' 'Ali, two types of persons will fall into ruin over you: The one who loves exaggeratingly and the liar who lays false accusation. (al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1101)

Also, he said to him:

Two categories will be ruined over you: The one who loves exaggeratingly and the hater who bears malice. (Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol.5, p.6)

The famous scholar of tradition 'Amir ibn Sharahil ash-Sha'bi (19/ 640 - 103/721) has confirmed this saying that these two categories appeared and both became disbelievers and were ruined. (al-Isti'ab, vol.3, p.1130; al-'Iqd al-farid, vol.4, p.312)

100. The belief in the Unity of Allah is not complete unless it is supported by belief in freedom of Allah from all imperfection; that is, one should regard Him above the limitations of body, shape, place or time and should not subject Him to one's own imagination and whims, because the being who is contained within imagination and whims cannot be Allah, but a creation of the human mind, while the field of mental activity remains confined to things which are seen and observed. Consequently, the greater man would try to appreciate Him through illustrations connected by the human mind or his imaginative efforts and the remoter he would get from reality. In this connection, al-Imam Muhammad al-Baqir says:

Whenever you contain Him in your imagination and whim he will not be Allah but a creation like yourself and revertable towards you.

Justice means that whatever the form of injustice and inequity it should be denied about Allah and He should not be given such attributes which are evil and useless and which the mind can in no way agree to attribute to Him. In this connection, Allah says:

And perfect is the word of your Lord in truth and justice; There is none who can change His words, and He is the All-hearing and the All-knowing. (Qur'an, 6:115)

101. The friendship that is based on love and sincerity makes a man free from ceremonial formalities, but the friendship for which formalism is necessary is unstable and such a friend is not a true friend, because true friendship requires that a friend should not be a cause of trouble for the friend. If he is a cause of trouble he will prove tedious and harmful and this harmfulness is a sign of his being the worst friend.

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