

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 الزَّاهِدِينَ فِيهَا، الصَّادِفِينَ عَنْهَا؛ فَإِنَّهَا وَاللَّهِ عَمَّا قَلِيلٍ تُزِيلُ الثَّأْوِي السَّاكِنَ، وَتَفْجَعُ الْمُتَرَفِّعَ الْأَمِنَ، لَا يَرْجِعُ مَا تَوَلَّى مِنْهَا فَأَدْبَرَ، وَلَا يُدْرَى مَا هُوَ آتٍ مِنْهَا فَيَنْتَظِرُ. سُرُورُهَا مَشُوبٌ بِالْحُزْنِ، وَجَلْدُ الرَّجَالِ فِيهَا إِلَى الضَّعْفِ وَالْوَهْنِ فَلَا يَغْرَتُكُمْ 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 فَاعْتَبَرَ، 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.

الْعَالِمُ مَنْ عَرَفَ قَدْرَهُ، وَكَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ جَهْلًا أَلَّا يَعْرِفَ قَدْرَهُ؛ وَإِنْ مِنْ أَبْغَضَ الرِّجَالِ إِلَى اللَّهِ لَعَبْدٌ وَكَلَّهُ اللَّهُ إِلَى نَفْسِهِ، جَائِرٌ عَنْ قَصْدِ السَّبِيلِ، سَائِرٌ بغيرِ دَلِيلٍ، إِنْ دُعِيَ إِلَى حَرْثِ الدُّنْيَا عَمِلَ، أَوْ إِلَى حَرْثِ الْآخِرَةِ كَسَلَ! 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 نَوْمَةٍ إِنْ شَهِدَ لَمْ يُعْرَفْ، وَإِنْ غَابَ لَمْ يُفْتَقَدْ، أُولَئِكَ مَصَابِيحُ الْهُدَى، وَأَعْلَامُ السُّرَى لَيْسُوا بِالْمَسَايِيحِ وَلَا الْمَذَابِيحِ الْبُذُرِ أُولَئِكَ 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 أَعَاذَكُمْ مِنْ أَنْ يَجُورَ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَلَمْ يُعَذِّبْكُمْ مِنْ أَنْ يَبْتَلِيَكُمْ، وَقَدْ قَالَ جَلَّ مِنْ قَائِلٍ: (إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ 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 نُومَةٌ» فإنما أراد به: الخامل الذكر القليل الشر. والمساييح: جمع مسياح، وهو: الذي يسيح بين الناس بالفساد والنمائم. والمذاييع: جمع مذياع، وهو: الذي إذا سمع لغيره بفاحشة أذاعها، ونوّه بها. والبُذُر: جمع بُذُور 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.

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