

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?

وَأَحْذَرُكُمْ الدُّنْيَا، فَإِنَّهَا مَنْزِلٌ قُلْعَةٌ، وَلَيْسَتْ بِدَارٍ نُجْعَةٍ، قَدْ تَزَيَّنَتْ بِعُرُورِهَا، وَعَرَّتْ بِزِينَتِهَا، دَارُهَا هَانَتْ عَلَى رَبِّهَا، فَخَلَطَ حَالَهَا بِحَرَامِهَا، وَخَيْرَهَا بِشَرِّهَا، وَحَيَاتِهَا بِمَوْتِهَا، وَحُلُوهَا بِمُرِّهَا، لَمْ يُصِفْهَا اللَّهُ لِأَوْلِيَائِهِ، وَلَمْ يَضِنَّ بِهَا عَلَى أَعْدَائِهِ، خَيْرُهَا زَهِيدٌ، وَشَرُّهَا عَتِيدٌ، وَجَمْعُهَا يَنْفَدُ، وَمُلْكُهَا يُسَلَبُ، وَعَامِرُهَا يَخْرَبُ. فَمَا خَيْرُ دَارٍ تَنْقُضُ نَقْضَ الْبِنَاءِ، وَعُمُرُ يَفْنَى 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 طلبتكم، واسألوه من أداء حقه ما سألكم، وأسمعوا دعوة الموت أذانتكم قبل أن يدعى بكم. إن الزاهدين في الدنيا تبكي قلوبهم وإن ضحكوا، ويشتد حزنهم وإن فرحوا، ويكثر مقتهم أنفسهم وإن اغتبطوا بما رزقوا. قد غاب عن قلوبكم ذكر الأجل، وحضرتكم كواذب الأمال، فصارت الدنيا أملك بكم من الآخرة، والعاجلة أذهب بكم من الآجلة، وإنما أنتم إخوان على دين الله، ما فرق بينكم إلا خبث السرائر، وسوء الضمائر، فلا توازرون، ولا تناصحون، ولا تباذلون، ولا تؤادون.

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.

ما بالكم تفرحون باليسير من الدنيا تدركونه، ولا يحزنكم الكثير من الآخرة تحرمونه! ويقلقكم اليسير من الدنيا يفوتكم، حتى يتبين ذلك في وجوهكم، وقلّة صبركم عما زوي منها عنكم! كأنها دار مقامكم، وكان متاعها باق عليكم. وما يمنع أحدكم أن يستقبل أخاه بما يخاف من عيبه، إلا مخافة أن يستقبله بمثله، قد تصافيتم على رضى الأجل وحب العاجل، وصار دين أحدكم لعنة على لسانه، صنيع من قد فرغ من عمله، وأحرز رضى سيده.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 113

(1) Al-Zamakhshari, *Rabi'*, at the beginning;

(2) al-'Amidi, *Ghurar*, 86, 189.

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