

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 مُهْلَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ يَهْوِي مَعَ الْغَافِلِينَ، وَيَعْدُو مَعَ الْمُذْنِبِينَ، بِلا 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 كُشِفَ لَهُمْ عَنْ جَزَاءِ مَعْصِيَتِهِمْ، وَاسْتَخْرِجَهُمْ مِنْ جَلَابِيبِ غَفْلَتِهِمْ، اسْتَقْبَلُوا مُدْبِرًا، وَاسْتَدْبَرُوا مُقْبِلًا، فَلَمْ يَنْتَفِعُوا بِمَا أَدْرَكُوا مِنْ طَلِبَتِهِمْ، وَلَا بِمَا قَضَوْا 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 أَحَذِّرُكُمْ، وَنَفْسِي، هَذِهِ الْمَنْزِلَةَ، فَلْيَنْتَفِعْ امْرُؤٌ بِنَفْسِهِ، فَإِنَّمَا الْبَصِيرُ مَنْ سَمِعَ فَتَفَكَّرَ، وَنَظَرَ فَأَبْصَرَ، وَانْتَفَعَ بِالْعِبَرِ، ثُمَّ سَلَكَ جَدًّا وَاضِحًا يَتَجَنَّبُ فِيهِ الصَّرْعَةَ فِي الْمَهَاوِي، وَالضَّلَالَ فِي الْمَعَاوِي، وَلَا يُعِينُ عَلَى نَفْسِهِ الْغَوَاةَ بِتَعَسُّفٍ فِي حَقٍّ، 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 *Umami* ¹ 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).***

فَأَفِيقْ أَيُّهَا السَّامِعُ مِنْ سَكْرَتِكَ، وَاسْتَيْقِظْ مِنْ غَفْلَتِكَ، وَاخْتَصِرْ مِنْ عَجَلَتِكَ، وَأَنْعِمِ الْفِكْرَ فِيمَا جَاءَكَ عَلَى لِسَانِ النَّبِيِّ الْأَمِيِّ (صلى الله عليه وآله) مِمَّا لَا بُدَّ مِنْهُ وَلَا مَحِيصَ عَنْهُ، وَخَالَفَ مَنْ خَالَفَ ذَلِكَ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ، وَدَعَا وَمَا رَضِيَ لِنَفْسِهِ، وَضَعَ فَخْرَكَ، وَاحْطُطْ كِبْرَكَ، وَادْكُرْ قَبْرَكَ، فَإِنَّ عَلَيْهِ مَمْرَكَ، وَكَمَا تَدِينُ تُدَانُ، وَكَمَا تَزْرَعُ تَحْصُدُ، وَمَا قَدَّمْتَ الْيَوْمَ تَقْدِمُ عَلَيْهِ غَدًا، فَاْمْهَدْ لِقَدَمِكَ، وَقَدِّمْ لِيَوْمِكَ. فَالْحَذَرَ الْحَذَرَ أَيُّهَا الْمُسْتَمِعُ! وَالْجِدَّ الْجِدَّ أَيُّهَا الْغَافِلُ! (وَلَا يُنْبِتُكَ). (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 الذِّكْرِ الْحَكِيمِ، الَّتِي عَلَيْهَا يُثِيبُ وَيُعَاقِبُ، وَلَهَا يَرْضَى وَيَسْخَطُ، أَنَّهُ لَا يَنْفَعُ عَبْدًا - وَإِنْ أَجْهَدَ نَفْسَهُ، وَأَخْلَصَ فِعْلَهُ - أَنْ يَخْرُجَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا، لِأَقْبَى رَبِّهِ بِخَصْلَةٍ مِنْ هَذِهِ الْخِصَالِ لَمْ يَتَّبِعْ مِنْهَا: أَنْ يُشْرِكَ بِاللَّهِ فِيمَا افْتَرَضَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ عِبَادَتِهِ، أَوْ يَشْفِيَ غَيْظَهُ بِهَلَاكِ نَفْسِهِ، أَوْ يُقِرَّ بِأَمْرِ فَعَلَهُ غَيْرُهُ، أَوْ يَسْتَنْجِحَ حَاجَةً إِلَى النَّاسِ بِإِظْهَارِ بَدْعَةٍ فِي دِينِهِ، أَوْ يَلْقَى النَّاسَ بَوَجْهِينَ، أَوْ يَمْشِيَ فِيهِمْ بِلِسَانَيْنِ. اِعْقِلْ ذَلِكَ فَإِنَّ الْمِثْلَ دَلِيلٌ عَلَى شَبِهِهِ.

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 هُمُّهَا بَطُونُهَا، وَإِنَّ السِّبَاعَ هُمُّهَا الْعُدْوَانُ عَلَى غَيْرِهَا، وَإِنَّ النِّسَاءَ هُمُّهُنَّ 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.

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.

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