

Sermon 157: Praise be to Allah who made praise the Key...

Urging people towards Piety (taqwa)

(ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام

بحث 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 لِلّٰهِ الَّذِي جَعَلَ الْحَمْدَ مِفْتَاحًا لِذِكْرِهِ، وَسَبِيلًا لِلْمَزِيدِ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ، وَدَلِيلًا عَلَى آلَئِهِ وَعَظَمَتِهِ.

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 اللّٰهِ، إِنَّ الدَّهْرَ يَجْرِي بِالْبَاقِينَ كَجَرْبِهِ بِالْمَاضِينَ، لَا يَعُودُ مَا قَدْ وَلَى مِنْهُ، وَلَا يَبْقَى سَرْمَدًا مَا فِيهِ. آخِرُ فَعَالِهِ كَأَوَّلِهِ، مُتَسَابِقَةً أُمُورُهُ، مُتَطَاهِرَةً أَعْلَامُهُ. فَكَانُوكُمْ بِالسَّاعَةِ تَحْدُوكُمْ حَدُولَ الزَّاجِرِ بِشَوْلِهِ، فَمَنْ شَغَلَ نَفْسَهُ بِعَيْرِ نَفْسِهِ تَحَيَّرَ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ، وَارْتَبَكَ فِي الْهَلَكَاتِ، وَمَدَّتْ بِهِ شَيَاطِينُهُ فِي طُغْيَايَهِ، وَزَيَّنَتْ لَهُ سَيِّئَهُ أَعْمَالِهِ، فَالْجَنَّةُ غَايَةُ

السَّابِقِينَ، وَالنَّارُ غَايَةُ الْمُفْرِطِينَ.

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 يَمْنَعُ أَهْلَهُ، وَلَا يُحْرِزُ مَنْ لَجَأَ إِلَيْهِ. أَلَا
وَبِالتَّقْوَى تُقطَعُ حُمْمُ الْخَطَايَا، وَبِالْيِقِينِ تُدْرَكُ الْغَايَا الْقُصُوفِيَّ.

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 أَعْزَى الْأَنْفُسِ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَأَحَبِبُوهَا إِلَيْكُمْ؛ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ قَدْ أَوْضَحَ سَبِيلَ الْحَقِّ وَأَنَارَ طُرُقَهُ، فَشِقْوَةً لَازِمَةً،
أَوْ سَعَادَةً دَائِمَةً! فَنَزَّلُوكُمْ فِي أَيَّامِ الْفَنَاءِ لِأَيَّامِ الْبَقَاءِ، قَدْ دُلِلْتُمْ عَلَى الرَّازَادِ، وَأُمْرِتُمْ بِالظُّلْمِ، وَحُثِّتُمْ عَلَى الْمَسِيرِ، فَإِنَّمَا
أَنْتُمْ كَرَكُبٌ قُوْفٌ، لَا يَدْرُونَ مَتَى يُوْمِرُونَ بِالسَّيِّئِ، أَلَا فَمَا يَصْنَعُ بِالدُّنْيَا مِنْ خُلُقٍ لِلآخرَةِ! وَمَا يَصْنَعُ بِالْمَالِ مِنْ عَمَّا
أَقْلَلَ يُسْلِبُهُ، وَتَبَقَّى عَلَيْهِ تَبَعَّتُهُ 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 مَتَرِكٌ، وَلَا فِيمَا تَهَى عَنْهُ مِنَ الشَّرِّ مَرْغَبٌ. عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، احْذَرُوكُمْ يَوْمًا تُفْحَصُونَ
فِيهِ الْأَعْمَالُ، وَيَكْثُرُ فِيهِ الرِّزْلَالُ، وَشَيْبٌ 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 رَصِدًا مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَعُيُونًا مِنْ جَوَارِ حِكْمٍ، وَحُفَاظٌ صِدْقٌ يَحْفَظُونَ أَعْمَالَكُمْ، وَعَدَدَ
أَنْفَاسِكُمْ، لَا تَسْتُرُوكُمْ مِنْهُمْ ظُلْمَةً لَيْلٌ دَاجٌ، وَلَا يُكْنِكُمْ مِنْهُمْ بَابٌ نُورٌ تَاجٌ، 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 الْغَدُّ لَا حِفَاً بِهِ، فَكَانَ كُلُّ امْرِئٍ مِنْكُمْ قَدْ بَلَغَ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ مَنْزِلَ وَحْدَتِهِ، وَمَخَطَ حُفْرَتِهِ،
فِيَالَّهُ مِنْ بَيْتٍ وَحْدَةٌ، وَمَنْزِلٌ وَحْشَةٌ، وَمُقْرَدٌ غُرْبَةٌ! وَكَانَ الصَّيْحَةَ قَدْ أَتَتُكُمْ، وَالسَّاعَةُ قَدْ عَشَيْتُكُمْ، وَبَرَزْتُمْ لَفَصْلِ
الْقَنَاءِ، قَدْ زَاحَتْ عَنْكُمُ الْأَبَاطِيلُ، وَاضْمَحَّلَتْ عَنْكُمُ الْعَلَى، وَاسْتَحَقَّتْ بِكُمُ الْحَقَائِقُ، وَصَدَرَتْ بِكُمُ الْأُمُورُ
مَصَادِرَهَا، فَاتَّعَظُوا بِالْعَيْرِ، وَاعْتَبِرُوا بِالْغَيْرِ، وَانْتَفِعُوا بِالنُّذرِ.

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.

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