

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 النَّجَادِ، لَيْسَ لِأَوَّلِيَّتِهِ ابْتِدَاءٌ، وَلَا لِآخِرِيَّتِهِ انْقِضَاءٌ، هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ لَمْ يَزَلْ، وَالْبَاقِي بِلا أَجَلٍ، خَرَّتْ لَهُ الْجِبَاهُ، وَوَحَّدَتْهُ الشِّفَاهُ، حَدَّ الْأَشْيَاءِ عِنْدَ خَلْقِهِ لَهَا إِبَانَةٌ لَهُ مِنْ شَبْهَتِهَا

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 تُقَدَّرُهُ الْأَوْهَامُ بِالْحُدُودِ وَالْحَرَكَاتِ، وَلَا بِالْجَوَارِحِ وَالْأَنْوَاتِ، لَا يُقَالُ لَهُ: «مَتَى»؟ وَلَا يُضْرَبُ لَهُ أَمَدٌ «بِحَتَّى»، الظَّاهِرُ

لَا يُقَالُ: «مِمَّ»؟ وَالْبَاطِنُ لَا يُقَالُ: «فِيمَ»؟، لَا شَبَحَ فَيُنْقَصَى، وَلَا مَحْجُوبٌ فَيُحَوَّى، لَمْ يَقْرُبْ مِنَ الْأَشْيَاءِ بِالتَّصَاقِ،
وَلَمْ يَبْعُدْ عَنْهَا بِافْتِرَاقِ،

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 شُخُوصُ لَحْظَةٍ، وَلَا كُرُورُ لَفْظَةٍ، وَلَا اِزْدِلَافُ رَبْوَةٍ، وَلَا انْبِسَاطُ خُطْوَةٍ فِي لَيْلٍ دَاجٍ، وَلَا غَسَقُ
سَاجٍ، يَتَفَيَّأُ عَلَيْهِ الْقَمَرُ الْمُنِيرُ، وَتَعْقُبُهُ الشَّمْسُ ذَاتُ النُّورِ فِي الْكُرُورِ وَالْأَفُولِ، وَتَقْلِبُ الْأَزْمِنَةَ 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 وَعِدَةٍ، تَعَالَى عَمَّا يَنْحُلُهُ الْمُحَدِّثُونَ مِنْ صِفَاتِ الْأَقْدَارِ وَنَهَايَاتِ الْأَقْطَارِ، وَتَأْتِلُ
الْمَسَاكِينِ، وَتَمَكِّنُ الْأَمَاكِينِ؛ فَالْحَدُّ لِخَلْقِهِ 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 أُصُولٍ أَرْزَلِيَّةٍ، 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 الْمَرْعَى، فِي ظُلُمَاتِ الْأَرْحَامِ، وَمُضَاعَفَاتِ الْأَسْتَارِ، بُدِئْتَ مِنْ سُلَالَةٍ مِنْ طِينٍ،
وَوُضِعْتَ فِي قَرَارٍ مَكِينٍ * إِلَى قَدَرٍ مَعْلُومٍ وَأَجَلٍ مَقْسُومٍ، تَمْوَرُّ 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!

ثُمَّ أُخْرِجْتَ مِنْ مَقَرِّكَ إِلَى دَارٍ لَمْ تَشْهَدْهَا، وَلَمْ تَعْرِفْ سُبُلَ مَنَافِعِهَا؛ فَمَنْ هَذَاكَ لِاجْتِرَارِ الْغِذَاءِ مِنْ تَدْيِ أُمِّكَ؟ وَعَرَفَكَ
عِنْدَ الْحَاجَةِ مَوَاضِعَ طَلَبِكَ وَإِرَادَتِكَ؟! هَيْهَاتَ، إِنَّ مَنْ يَعْجِزُ عَنْ صِفَاتِ ذِي الْهِبَةِ وَالْأَدَوَاتِ 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*.

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