

Sermon 178: One condition does not prevent Him....

Praise of Allah, transience of this world, and causes of the decline of Allah's blessings. (Delivered at the beginning of his caliphate after the killing of 'Uthman)

(ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام

في الشهادة والتقوى

[وقيل: إنه خطبها بعد مقتل عثمان في أول خلافته]

One condition does not prevent Him from (getting into) another condition, time does not change Him, place does not locate him and the tongue does not describe Him. The number of drops of water, of stars in the sky, or of currents of winds in the air are not unknown to Him, nor the movements of ants on rocks, or the resting place of grubs in the dark night. He knows the places where leaves fall, and the secret movements of the pupils of the eyes.

لَا يَشْغَلُهُ شَأْنٌ، وَلَا يُغَيِّرُهُ زَمَانٌ، وَلَا يَحْوِيهِ مَكَانٌ، وَلَا يَصِفُهُ لِسَانٌ، وَلَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْهُ عَدَدُ قَطْرِ الْمَاءِ، وَلَا نُجُومِ السَّمَاءِ، وَلَا سَوَافِي الرِّيحِ فِي الْهَوَاءِ، وَلَا دَبِيبُ النَّمْلِ عَلَى الصَّفَا، وَلَا مَقِيلُ الذَّرِّ فِي اللَّيْلَةِ الظُّلُمَاءِ. يَعْلَمُ مَسَاقِطَ الْأَوْرَاقِ، وَخَفِيِّ طَرَفِ الْأَحْدَاقِ.

I stand witness that there is no god but Allah, Who has no parallel, Who is not doubted, Whose religion is not denied and Whose creativeness is not questioned. My witnessing is like that of a man whose intention is free, whose conscience is clear, whose belief is pure and whose loads (of good actions) are heavy. I also stand witness that Muhammad – the peace and blessings of Allah be upon him and his

progeny – is His slave and His Messenger, chosen from His creations, selected for detailing His realities, picked for His selected honours and chosen for His esteemed messages. Through him the signs of guidance have been lighted and the gloom of blindness (misguidance) has been dispelled.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ غَيْرَ مَعْدُولٍ بِهِ، وَلَا مَشْكُوكَ فِيهِ، وَلَا مَكْفُورَ دِينُهُ، وَلَا مَجْهُودَ تَكْوِينُهُ، شَهَادَةً مِنْ صِدَقَتِ نَبِيِّتِهِ، وَصَفَتْ دِخْلَتُهُ، وَخَلَصَ يَقِينُهُ، وَثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ. وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، الْمَجْتَبَى مِنْ خَلْقِهِ، وَالْمُعْتَمَدُ لِشَرْحِ حَقَائِقِهِ، وَالْمُخْتَصَّ بِعَقَائِلِ كَرَامَاتِهِ، وَالْمُصْطَفَى لِكِرَائِمِ رِسَالَاتِهِ، وَالْمَوْضَحَةُ بِهِ أَشْرَاطُ الْهُدَى، وَالْمَجْلُوبُ بِهِ غَرِيبُ الْعَمَى.

O people, surely this world deceives him who longs for it and who is attracted towards it. It does not behave niggardly with him who aspires for it and overpowers him who overpowers it. By Allah, no people are deprived of the lively pleasures of life after enjoying them, except as a result of sins committed by them, because certainly Allah is not unjust to His creatures. Even then, when calamities descend upon people and pleasures depart from them, they turn towards Allah with true intention and the feeling in their hearts that He will return them everything that has fled from them and cure all their ills.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّ الدُّنْيَا تَغُرُّ الْمُؤْمِلَ لَهَا وَالْمُخْلِذَ إِلَيْهَا، وَلَا تَنْفَسُ بِمَنْ نَافَسَ فِيهَا، وَتَغْلِبُ مَنْ غَلَبَ عَلَيْهَا. وَإِنَّمَا اللَّهُ، مَا كَانَ قَوْمٌ قَطُّ فِي غَضٍّ نِعْمَةٍ مِنْ عَيْشٍ فَزَالَ عَنْهُمْ إِلَّا يَذْنُوبُ اجْتَرَحُوهَا، لِأَنَّ (اللَّهَ لَيْسَ بِظَلَامٍ لِلْعَبِيدِ) وَلَوْ أَنَّ النَّاسَ حِينَ تَنْزِلُ بِهِمُ النِّقَمُ، وَتَزُولُ عَنْهُمْ النِّعَمُ، فَزِعُوا إِلَى رَبِّهِمْ بِصِدْقٍ مِنْ نِيَّاتِهِمْ، وَوَلَهُ مِنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ، لَرَدَّ عَلَيْهِمْ كُلَّ شَارِدٍ، وَأَصْلَحَ لَهُمْ كُلَّ فَاسِدٍ،

I fear about you lest you fall into ignorance (that prevailed before the appearance of the Prophet). In the past there were certain matters in which you were deflected, and in my view you were not worthy of admiration; but if your previous position could be returned to you then you would become virtuous. I can only strive; but if I were to speak I would (only) say may Allah forgive your past actions.

وَإِنِّي لَأَخْشَى عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْ تَكُونُوا فِي فِتْرَةٍ، وَقَدْ كَانَتْ أُمُورٌ مَضَتْ، مِلْتَمٌ فِيهَا مَيْلَةٌ، كُنْتُمْ فِيهَا عِنْدِي غَيْرَ مَحْمُودِينَ، وَلَكِنْ رَدَّ عَلَيْكُمْ أَمْرُكُمْ إِنَّكُمْ لَسُعْدَاءُ، وَمَا عَلَيَّ إِلَّا الْجُهْدُ، وَلَوْ أَشَاءُ أَنْ أَقُولَ لَقُلْتُ: عَفَا اللَّهُ عَمَّا سَلَفَ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 178

(1) Al-Wasiti, *‘Uyun al-hikam*, see al-Majlisi, *Bihar*, vol. 77, 307;

(2) al-Saduq, *al-Khisal*, II, 163;

(3) al-Zamakhshari, *Rabi’*, I, 162;

(4) Ibn al-‘Athir, *al-Nihayah*, III, 282 (‘a.q.l.).

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