

Sermon 185: Praise be to Allah. He is such that senses cannot perceive Him...

Praise of Allah and His wonderful creatures

(ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام

يحمد الله فيها ويثني على رسوله ويصف خلقاً من الحيوان

Praise be to Allah. He is such that senses cannot perceive Him, place cannot contain Him, eyes cannot see Him and veils cannot cover Him. He proves His eternity by the coming into existence of His creation, and (also) by originating His creation (He proves) His existence, and by their (mutual) similarity He proves that there is nothing similar to Him. He is true in His promise. He is too high to be unjust to His creatures. He stands by equity among His creation and practices justice over them in His commands. He provides evidence through the creation of things of His being from ever, through their marks of incapability of His power, and through their powerlessness against death of His eternity.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الشَّوَاهِدُ، وَلَا تَحْصِيهِ الْمَشَاهِدُ، وَلَا تَرَاهُ النَّوَظِرُ، وَلَا تَحْجُبُهُ السَّوَاتِرُ، الدَّالُّ عَلَى قِدَمِهِ بِحُدُوثِ خَلْقِهِ، وَبِحُدُوثِ خَلْقِهِ عَلَى وَجُودِهِ، وَبِاشْتِبَاهِهِمْ عَلَى أَنْ لَا شَبَهَ لَهُ، الَّذِي صَدَقَ فِي مِيعَادِهِ، وَارْتَفَعَ عَنْ ظُلْمِ عِبَادِهِ، وَقَامَ بِالْقِسْطِ فِي خَلْقِهِ، وَعَدَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ فِي حُكْمِهِ، مُسْتَشْهِدٌ بِحُدُوثِ الْأَشْيَاءِ عَلَى أَزَلِيَّتِهِ، وَبِمَا وَسَمَهَا بِهِ مِنَ الْعَجْزِ عَلَى قُدْرَتِهِ، وَبِمَا اضْطَرَّهَا إِلَيْهِ مِنَ الْفَنَاءِ عَلَى دَوَامِهِ

He is One, but not by counting. He is everlasting without any limit. He is existent without any support. Minds admit of Him without (any activity of the) senses. Things which can be seen stand witness to Him without confronting Him. Imagination cannot encompass Him. He manifests Himself to the imagination with his help for the imagination, and refuses to be imagined by the imagination. He has made imagination the arbiter (in this matter). He is not great in the sense that volume is vast and so His body

is also great. Nor is He mighty in the sense that His limits should extend to the utmost and so His frame be extensive. But He is great in position and mighty in authority.

وَاحِدٌ لَا يَبْعَدُ، وَدَائِمٌ لَا يَأْمَدُ، وَقَائِمٌ لَا يَبْعَدُ، تَتَلَقَّاهُ الْأَذْهَانُ لَا بِمُشَاعَرَةٍ، وَتَشْهَدُ لَهُ الْمَرَائِي لَا بِمُحَاضَرَةٍ، لَمْ تُحِطْ بِهِ الْأَوْهَامُ، بَلْ تَجَلَّى لَهَا بِهَا، وَبِهَا امْتَنَعَ مِنْهَا، وَإِلَيْهَا حَاكَمَهَا، لَيْسَ بِذِي كِبَرٍ امْتَدَّتْ بِهِ النَّهَايَاتُ فَكَبَّرَتْهُ تَجَسُّيماً، وَلَا بِذِي عِظَمٍ تَنَاهَتْ بِهِ الْغَايَاتُ فَعَظَّمَتْهُ تَجَسُّيداً بَلْ كِبَرُ شَأْنًا، وَعَظَمَ سُلْطَانًا.

About the Holy Prophet

الرسول الاعظم

I stand witness that Muhammad is His slave, His chosen Prophet and His responsible trustee -- may Allah bless him and his descendants. Allah sent him with undeniable proofs, a clear success and open paths. So he conveyed the message declaring the truth with it. He led the people on the (correct) highway, established signs of guidance and minarets of light, and made Islam's ropes strong and its knots firm.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ الصَّفِيُّ، وَأَمِينُهُ الرَّضِيُّ (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم) أَرْسَلَهُ بِجُودِ الْحُجَجِ، وَظُهُورِ الْفَلَاحِ، وَإِبْضَاحِ الْمَنْهَجِ، فَبَلَغَ الرِّسَالَةَ صَادِعاً بِهَا، وَحَمَلَ عَلَى الْمَحَجَّةِ دَالاً عَلَيْهَا، وَأَقَامَ أَعْلَامَ الْأَهْتِدَاءِ وَمَنَارَ الضِّيَاءِ، وَجَعَلَ أُمُرَاسَ الْأَسْلَامِ مَتِينَةً، وَعُرَا الْأَيْمَانِ وَثِيقَةً.

A part of the same sermon about the creation of animal species

منها: في صفة عجيب خلق أصناف من الحيوان

Had they pondered over the greatness of His power and the vastness of His bounty they would have returned to the right path and feared the punishment of the Fire; but hearts are sick and eyes are diseased. Do they not see the small things He has created, how He strengthened their system and opened for them hearing and sight and made for them bones and skins? Look at the ant with its small body and delicate form.

It can hardly be seen in the corner of the eye, nor by the perception of the imagination – how it moves on the earth and leaps at its livelihood. It carries the grain to its hole and deposits it in its place of stay. It collects during the summer for its winter, and during strength for the period of its weakness. Its livelihood is guaranteed, and it is fed according to fitness. Allah, the Kind, does not forget it and (Allah the Giver) does not deprive it, even though it may be in dry stone or fixed rocks.

وَلَوْ فَكَّرُوا فِي عَظِيمِ الْقُدْرَةِ، وَجَسِيمِ النِّعْمَةِ، لَرَجَعُوا إِلَى الطَّرِيقِ، وَخَافُوا عَذَابَ الْحَرِيقِ، وَلَكِنَّ الْقُلُوبَ عَلِيلَةٌ، وَالْأَبْصَارَ مَدْخُولَةٌ! أَلَا تَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى صَغِيرِ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ، كَيْفَ أَحْكَمَ خَلْقَهُ، وَأَتَقَنَ تَرْكِيبَهُ، وَفَلَقَ لَهُ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ، وَسَوَّى لَهُ الْعَظْمَ وَالْبَشَرَ! انْظُرُوا إِلَى النَّمْلَةِ فِي صِغَرِ جُنَّتِهَا، وَلَطَافَةِ هَيْئَتِهَا، لَا تَكَادُ تُنَالُ بِلَحْظِ الْبَصَرِ، وَلَا بِمُسْتَدْرَكِ الْفِكْرِ، كَيْفَ دَبَّتْ عَلَى أَرْضِهَا، وَصَبَّتْ عَلَى رِزْقِهَا، تَنْقُلُ الْحَبَّةَ إِلَى جُحْرِهَا، وَتُعِدُّهَا فِي مُسْتَقَرِّهَا. تَجْمَعُ فِي حَرِّهَا لِبَرْدِهَا، وَفِي وُرُودِهَا لِمَصْدَرِهَا، مَكْفُولٌ بِرِزْقِهَا، مَرْزُوقَةٌ بِوَفْقِهَا، لَا يُغْفِلُهَا الْمَنَانُ، وَلَا يَحْرِمُهَا الدِّيَانُ، وَلَوْ فِي الصَّفَا لِإِبْرَدِهَا، وَالْيَاسِ، وَالْحَجَرِ الْجَامِسِ!

If you have thought about its digestive tracts in its high and low parts, the carapace of its belly, and its eyes and its ears in its head you would be amazed at its creation and you would feel difficulty in describing it. Exalted is He who made it stand on its legs and erected it on its pillars (of limbs). No other originator took part with Him in its origination and no one having power assisted Him in its creation.

If you tread on the paths of your imagination and reach its extremity it will not lead you anywhere except that the Originator of the ant is the same as He who is the Originator of the date-palm, because everything has (the same) delicacy and detail, and every living being has little difference. In His creation, the big, the delicate, the heavy, the light, the strong, the weak are all equal. [1](#)

وَلَوْ فَكَّرْتَ فِي مَجَارِي أَكْلِهَا، وَفِي عُلوِّهَا وَسُفْلِهَا، وَمَا فِي الْجَوْفِ مِنْ شَرَّاسِيفِ بَطْنِهَا، وَمَا فِي الرَّأْسِ مِنْ عَيْنِهَا وَأُذُنِهَا، لَقَضَيْتَ مِنْ خَلْقِهَا عَجَبًا، وَلَقِيتَ مِنْ وَصْفِهَا تَعَبًا! فَتَعَالَى الَّذِي أَقَامَهَا عَلَى قَوَائِمِهَا، وَبَنَاهَا عَلَى دَعَائِمِهَا! لَمْ يَشْرِكْهُ فِي فِطْرَتِهَا فَاطِرٌ، وَلَمْ يُعْنِهِ عَلَى خَلْقِهَا قَادِرٌ. وَلَوْ ضَرَبْتَ فِي مَذَاهِبِ فِكْرِكَ لَتَبْلُغَ غَايَاتِهِ، مَا دَلَّتْكَ الدَّلَالَةُ إِلَّا عَلَى أَنَّ فَاطِرَ النَّمْلَةِ هُوَ فَاطِرُ النُّحْلَةِ، لِدَقِيقِ تَفْصِيلِ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ، وَغَامِضِ اخْتِلَافِ كُلِّ حَيٍّ، وَمَا الْجَلِيلُ وَاللَّطِيفُ، وَالتَّقْوِيلُ وَالْخَفِيفُ، وَالْقَوِيُّ وَالضَّعِيفُ، فِي خَلْقِهِ إِلَّا سَوَاءً.

The Creation of the Universe

خلقة السماء والكون

So is (the creation of) the sky, the air, the winds and the water. Therefore, you look at the sun and moon, the plants and trees, water and stone, the alternation of this night and day, the flowing out of these seas, the large number of mountains and the height of their peaks, the diversity of languages and the variety of tongues. Then woe be to him who disbelieves in the Ordainer and denies the Ruler. They claim that they are like grass for which there is no cultivator nor any maker for their diverse shapes. They have not relied on any argument for what they assert, nor on any research for what they have heard. Can there be any construction without a Constructor, or any offence without an offender.

وَكَذَلِكَ السَّمَاءُ وَالْهَوَاءُ، وَالرِّيَّاحُ وَالْمَاءُ. فَانْظُرْ إِلَى الشَّمْسِ وَالْقَمَرِ، وَالنَّبَاتِ وَالشَّجَرِ، وَالْمَاءِ وَالْحَجَرِ، وَاخْتِلَافِ هَذَا اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ، وَتَفَجُّرِ هَذِهِ الْبِحَارِ، وَكَثْرَةِ هَذِهِ الْجِبَالِ، وَطُولِ هَذِهِ الْقِلَالِ، وَتَفَرُّقِ هَذِهِ اللُّغَاتِ، وَالْأَلْسُنِ الْمُخْتَلِفَاتِ.

فَالْوَيْلُ لِمَنْ جَدَّ الْمُقَدَّرَ، وَأَنْكَرَ الْمُدَبِّرَ! زَعَمُوا أَنَّهُمْ كَالنَّبَاتِ مَا لَهُمْ زَارِعٌ، وَلَا لِاخْتِلَافِ صُورِهِمْ صَانِعٌ، وَلَمْ يَلْجَأُوا إِلَى حُجَّةٍ فِيمَا ادَّعَوْا، وَلَا تَحْقِيقٍ لِمَا أُوعُوا، وَهَلْ يَكُونُ بِنَاءٌ مِنْ غَيْرِ بَنٍ، أَوْ جِنَايَةٌ مِنْ غَيْرِ جَانٍ؟

The wonderful creation of the locust

خلقة الجراد

If you wish you can reflect on the locust (as well). Allah gave it two red eyes, lighted for them two moon-like pupils, made for it small ears, opened for it a suitable mouth and gave it keen sense, gave it two teeth to cut with and two sickle-like feet to grip with. The farmers are afraid of it in the matter of their crops since they cannot drive it away even though they may join together. The locust attacks the fields and satisfies its desires (of hunger) from them although its body is not equal to a thin finger.

وَأِنْ شِئْتَ قُلْتَ فِي الْجَرَادَةِ، إِذْ خُلِقَ لَهَا عَيْنَيْنِ حَمْرَ أَوْيْنِ، وَأَسْرَجَ لَهَا حَدَقَتَيْنِ قَمْرَاوَيْنِ، وَجَعَلَ لَهَا السَّمْعَ الْخَفِيَّ، وَفَتَحَ لَهَا الْفَمَ السَّوِيَّ، وَجَعَلَ لَهَا الْحِسَّ الْقَوِيَّ، وَتَابَعَيْنِ بِهِمَا تَقْرِضُ، وَمِنْجَلَيْنِ بِهِمَا تَقْبِضُ، يَرْهَبُهَا الزُّرَّاعُ فِي زَرْعِهِمْ، وَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ ذَبَّهَا، وَلَوْ أَجْلَبُوا بِجَمْعِهِمْ، حَتَّى تَرِدَ الْحَرْثَ فِي نَزَوَاتِهَا، وَتَقْضِي مِنْهُ شَهَوَاتِهَا، وَخَلَقَهَا كُلُّهُ لَا يَكُونُ إِصْبَعًا مُسْتَدَقَّةً.

About the Glory of Allah

Glorified is Allah before Whom bows in prostration “..**whoever there is in the heavens and the earth, willingly or unwillingly.**” (13:15), and submits to Him by placing his cheeks and face (in the dust), casts himself down before Him (in obedience) in health and weakness, and hands over to Him full control in fear and apprehension.

The birds are bound by His commands. He knows the number of their feathers and their breaths. He has made their feet to stand on water and on land. He has ordained their livelihoods. He knows their species: this is the crow, this is the eagle, this is the pigeon and this is the ostrich. He called out every bird with its name (while creating it) and provided it with its livelihood. He created “..**heavy clouds**” (13:12) and produced from them heavy rain and spread it on various lands. He drenched the earth after its dryness and grew vegetation from it after its barrenness.

فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي يَسْجُدُ لَهُ (مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ طَوْعًا وَكَرْهًا)، وَيُعَفِّرُ لَهُ خَدًّا وَوَجْهًا، وَيُلْقِي بِالطَّاعَةِ إِلَيْهِ سَلَامًا وَضَعْفًا، وَيُعْطِي الْقِيَادَ رَهْبَةً وَخَوْفًا! فَالطَّيْرُ مُسَخَّرَةٌ لِأَمْرِهِ، أَحْصَى عَدَدَ الرِّيشِ مِنْهَا وَالنَّفْسَ، وَأَرَسَى قَوَائِمَهَا عَلَى النَّدَى وَالْيَبَسِ، قَدَّرَ أَقْوَاتَهَا، وَأَحْصَى أَجْنَاسَهَا، فَهَذَا غُرَابٌ وَهَذَا عَقَابٌ، وَهَذَا حَمَامٌ وَهَذَا نَعَامٌ، دَعَا كُلَّ طَائِرٍ بِاسْمِهِ، وَكَفَّلَ لَهُ بِرِزْقِهِ. وَأَنْشَأَ السَّحَابَ الثَّقَالَ، فَأَهْطَلَ دِيمَهَا، وَعَدَدَ قِسَمَهَا، فَبَلَّ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ جُفُوفِهَا، وَأَخْرَجَ نَبْتَهَا بَعْدَ جُدُوبِهَا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 185

(1) Abu Talib Yahya ibn al-Husayn ibn Harun al-Husayni, *al-'Amali*, 192;

(2) al-Zamakhshari, *Rabi'*, *bab dawabb al-barr wa al-bahr*;

(3) al-Tabarsi, *al-'Ihtijaj*, I, 305.

1. The meaning is that if the smallest thing in creation is examined it will be found to contain all that which is found in the biggest creatures, and each will exhibit the same reflection of natures, workmanship and performance, and the ratio of each to Allah's might and power will be the same, whether it be as small as an ant or as big as a date palm. Is it not that making a small thing is easy for Him while the making of a big thing is difficult for Him, because the diversity of colour, volume and quantity is just based on the dictates of His sagacity and expediency, but as regards creation itself there is no difference among them. Therefore, this uniformity of creation is a proof of the oneness and unity of the Creator.

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