

Sermon 187: May my father and my mother be sacrificed for those....

Regarding the vicissitudes of time (The mischiefs that are to occur and the absence of lawful ways of livelihood)

(ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام

تختصّ بذكر الملاحم

May my father and my mother be sacrificed for those few whose names are well-known in the sky and not known on the earth. Beware, you should expect what is to befall you such as adversity in your affairs, severance of relations and the rising up of inferior people. This will happen when the blow of a sword will be easier for a believer than to secure one Dirham lawfully.

This will happen ¹ when the reward of the beggar is more than that of the giver. This will be when you are intoxicated, not by drinking, but with wealth and plenty, you are swearing without compulsion and are speaking lies without compulsion. This will be when troubles hurt you as the saddle hurts the hump of the camel. How long will these tribulations be and how distant the hope (for deliverance from them)?

أَلَا يَا أَبِي وَأُمِّي، هُمْ مِنْ عِدَّةِ أَسْمَاءُ هُمْ فِي السَّمَاءِ مَعْرُوفَةٌ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ مَجْهُولَةٌ. أَلَا فَتَوَقَّعُوا مَا يَكُونُ مِنْ إِنْبَارِ أُمُورِكُمْ، وَانْقِطَاعِ وَصَلِكُمْ، وَاسْتِعْمَالِ صِغَارِكُمْ: ذَاكَ حَيْثُ تَكُونُ ضَرْبَةُ السَّيْفِ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِ أَهْوَنَ مِنَ الدَّرْهِمِ مِنْ حِلِّهِ! ذَاكَ حَيْثُ يَكُونُ الْمُعْطَى أَكْبَرَ مِنْ الْمُعْطَى! ذَاكَ حَيْثُ تَسْكُرُونَ مِنْ غَيْرِ شَرَابٍ، بَلْ مِنَ النَّعْمَةِ وَالنَّعِيمِ، وَتَحْلِفُونَ مِنْ غَيْرِ اضْطِرَارٍ، وَتَكْذِبُونَ مِنْ غَيْرِ إِحْرَاجٍ. ذَاكَ إِذَا عَضَّكُمْ الْبَلَاءُ كَمَا يَعْضُ الْقَتَبُ غَارِبَ الْبَعِيرِ. مَا أَطْوَلَ هَذَا! النِّعَاءَ، وَأَبْعَدَ هَذَا الرَّجَاءَ!

O people, throw away the reins of the horses who carry on their backs the weight of your hands (i.e.

sins), do not cut away from your chief (Imam) otherwise you will blame yourself for your own doings. Do not jump in the fire which is in flames in front of you; keep away from its courses and leave the middle way for it. Because, by my life, the believer will die in its flames, and others will remain safe in it.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، أَلْقُوا هَذِهِ الْأَزِمَةَ الَّتِي تَحْمِلُ ظُهُورَهَا الْأَثْقَالَ مِنْ أَيْدِيكُمْ، وَلَا تَصَدَّعُوا عَلَى سُلْطَانِكُمْ فَتَذْمُوا غِبَّ فِعَالِكُمْ، وَلَا تَقْتَحِمُوا مَا اسْتَقْبَلْتُمْ مِنْ فَوْرِ نَارِ الْفِتْنَةِ، وَأَمِيطُوا عَنْ سَنَنِهَا، وَخَلُّوا قَصْدَ السَّبِيلِ لَهَا، فَقَدْ لَعَمْرِي يَهْلِكُ فِي لَهَبِهَا الْمُؤْمِنُ، وَيَسْلَمُ فِيهَا غَيْرُ الْمُسْلِمِ.

I am among you like a lamp in the darkness. Whoever enters by it will be lit from it. So listen, O men, preserve it and remain attentive with the ears of your hearts so that you may understand.

إِنَّمَا مَثَلِي بَيْنَكُمْ مَثَلُ السِّرَاجِ فِي الظُّلْمَةِ، يَسْتَضِيءُ بِهِ مَنْ وَلَجَهَا. فَاسْمَعُوا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ وَعُوا، وَأَحْضِرُوا آذَانَ قُلُوبِكُمْ تَفْهَمُوا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 187

(1) Al-Mada'ini, *Siffin*, see 'Abd al-Zahra', II, 478;

(2) al-Zamakhshari, *Rabi'*, *bab al-mal wa al-kasb*.

1. In that period the reward of the beggar who takes will be higher than that of the giver because the ways of earning livelihood of the rich will be unlawful, and whatever he will donate of it, its purpose will be showing himself, hypocrisy and seeking fame, for which he will not be entitled to any reward, while the poor who take it by force of their poverty and helplessness, and to spend it in the right manner, will deserve more reward and recompense.

The commentator, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written another meaning of it also, namely if the beggar does not take the wealth from the rich and it remains with him he will spend it on unlawful matters and enjoyments, and since his taking it from him prevents him from using it in unlawful manner; therefore, for this prevention of evil, the beggar will deserve more reward and recompense. (Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 13, p. 97)

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