

Sermon 191: Praise be to Allah Whose praise is wide-spread....

Praise of Allah

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام

يحمد الله ويثني على نبيه ويوصي بالزهد والتقوى

Praise be to Allah Whose praise is wide-spread, Whose army is over-powering and Whose dignity is grand. I praise Him for His successive favours and His great gifts. His forbearance is high so that He forgives and is just in whatever He decides. He knows what is going on and what has already passed.

He crafted all creation by His knowledge and produced it by His intelligence without limitation, without learning, without following the example of any intelligent producer, without committing any mistake and without the availability of any group (for help); I stand witness that Muhammad – the peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants – is His slave and His messenger whom He deputed (at a time) when people were collecting in the abyss and moving in bewilderment. The reins of destruction were dragging them, and the locks of misguidance and deviation lay fixed on their hearts.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْفَاشِي حَمْدُهُ، وَالْغَالِبِ جُنْدُهُ، وَالْمُتَعَالِي جَدُّهُ. أَحْمَدُهُ عَلَى نِعَمِهِ التَّوَامِ، وَالْأَلَيْهِ الْعِظَامِ، الَّذِي عَظَّمَ حِلْمُهُ
فَعَفَا، وَعَدَلَ فِي كُلِّ مَا قَضَى، وَعَلِمَ مَا يَمْضِي وَمَا مَضَى، مُبْتَدِعَ الْخَلَائِقِ بِعِلْمِهِ، وَمُنْشِئَهُمْ بِحُكْمِهِ، بِلاَ اقْتِدَاءٍ وَلَا
تَعْلِيمٍ، وَلَا احْتِذَاءٍ لِمِثَالِ صَانِعِ حَكِيمٍ، وَلَا إِصَابَةَ خَطَأٍ، وَلَا حَضْرَةَ مَلَأَ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، ابْتَعَثَهُ
وَالنَّاسُ يَضْرِبُونَ فِي غَمْرَةٍ، وَيَمْوَجُونَ فِي حَيْرَةٍ، قَدْ قَادَتْهُمْ أَرْمَةٌ الْحَيْنِ، وَاسْتَعْلَقَتْ عَلَى أَفْئِدَتِهِمْ أَقْقَالُ الرِّينِ

Advice about fear of Allah and an account of this world and its people

الوصية بالزهد والتقوى

I advise you, O creatures of Allah, that you should have fear of Allah because it is a right of Allah over you and it creates your right over Allah, and that you should seek Allah's help in it, and its help in (meeting) Allah. Certainly, for today fear of Allah is a protection and a shield, and for tomorrow (the Day of Judgement) it is the road to Paradise. Its way is clear and he who treads it is the gainer.

Whoever holds it, guards it. It has presented itself to the people who have already passed and to those coming from behind, because they will need it tomorrow (on the Day of Judgement) when Allah will revive His creation again, take back what He has given and take account of what He has bestowed. How few will be those who accept it and practise it as it ought to be practised. They will be very few in number, and they are the people who correspond to the description given by Allah, the Glorified, when He says:

... And very few of My creatures are grateful! (Qur'an. 34:13)

أَوْصِيَكُمْ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّهَا حَقُّ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَالْمُوجِبَةُ عَلَى اللَّهِ حَقَّكُمْ، وَأَنْ تَسْتَعِينُوا عَلَيْهِ بِاللَّهِ، وَتَسْتَعِينُوا بِهَا عَلَى اللَّهِ، فَإِنَّ التَّقْوَى فِي الْيَوْمِ الْحَرِزُ وَالْجَنَّةُ، وَفِي غَدِ الطَّرِيقُ إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ، مَسْلَكُهَا وَاضِحٌ، وَسَلْكُهَا رَابِحٌ، وَمُسْتَوْدَعُهَا حَافِظٌ، لَمْ تَبْرَحْ عَارِضَةً نَفْسَهَا عَلَى الْأُمَمِ الْمَاضِينَ وَالْغَابِرِينَ لِحَاجَتِهِمْ إِلَيْهَا غَدًا، إِذَا أَعَادَ اللَّهُ مَا أَبَدَى، وَأَخَذَ مَا أَعْطَى، وَسَأَلَ عَمَّا أَسَدَى. فَمَا أَقَلَّ مَنْ قَبْلَهَا، وَحَمَلَهَا حَقَّ حَمْلِهَا! أُولَئِكَ الْأَقْلُونَ عَدَدًا، وَهُمْ أَهْلُ صِفَةِ اللَّهِ (سُبْحَانَهُ إِذْ يَقُولُ: (وَقَلِيلٌ مِنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّكُورُ

Therefore, hasten with your ears towards it and intensify your efforts for it. Make it a substitute for all your past (short-comings) to take their place as a successor, and make it your supporter against every opponent. Turn your sleep into wakefulness by its help, and pass your days with it. Make it the equipment of your hearts, wash your sins with it, treat your ailments with it and hasten towards your death with it. Take a lesson from him who neglects it, so that others who follow it should not take a lesson from you (i.e., from your neglecting it). Beware, therefore; you should take care of it and should take care of yourselves through it.

فَاهْطِعُوا بِأَسْمَاعِكُمْ إِلَيْهَا، وَأَكْظُوا بِجَدِّكُمْ عَلَيْهَا، وَاعْتَاضُوهَا مِنْ كُلِّ سَلَفٍ خَلَفَا، وَمِنْ كُلِّ مُخَالَفٍ مُوَافَقًا. أَيْفُظُوا بِهَا نَوْمَكُمْ، واقطعوا بها يَوْمَكُمْ، وأشعروها قلوبكم، وارحضوها بها دنوبكم، وداؤوا بها الأسقام، وبادروا بها الحما، واعتبروا بمن أضاعها، ولا يعتبرن بكم من أطاعها. ألا وصونوها وتصونوا بها،

Keep away from this world and proceed towards the next world infatuatedly. Do not regard humble he whom fear of Allah has given a high position, and do not accord a high position to him whom this world has given a high position. Do not keep your eyes on the shining clouds of the world, do not listen to him who speaks of it, do not respond to him who calls towards it, do not seek light from its glare, and do not die in its precious things, because its brightness is deceitful, its words are false, its wealth is liable to be looted, and its precious thing are to be taken away.

وَكُونُوا عَنِ الدُّنْيَا نُزَاهًا، وَإِلَى الْآخِرَةِ وُلَاهًا وَلَا تَضَعُوا مَن رَفَعَتْهُ التَّقْوَى، وَلَا تَرْفَعُوا مَن رَفَعَتْهُ الدُّنْيَا، وَلَا تَشِيمُوا بِأَرْقَاهَا، وَلَا تَسْمَعُوا نَاطِقَهَا، وَلَا تُجِيبُوا نَاعِقَهَا، وَلَا تَسْتَضِيئُوا بِإِشْرَاقِهَا، وَلَا تُفْتِنُوا بِأَعْلَاقِهَا، فَإِنَّ بَرْقَهَا خَالِبٌ، وَنُطْقَهَا كَاذِبٌ، وَأَمْوَالُهَا مَحْرُوبَةٌ، وَأَعْلَاقُهَا مَسْلُوبَةٌ.

Beware, this world attracts and then turns away. It is stubborn, refusing to go ahead. It speaks lies and misappropriates. It disowns and is ungrateful. It is malicious and abandons (its lovers). It attracts but causes trouble. Its condition is changing, its step shaking, its honour disgrace, its seriousness jest, and its height lowliness. It is a place of plunder and pillage, and ruin and destruction. Its people are ready with their feet to drive, to overtake and to depart. Its routes are bewildering, its exits are baffling, and its schemes end in disappointment. Consequently, strongholds betray them, houses throw them out and cunning fails them.

أَلَا وَهِيَ الْمُتَصَدِّقَةُ الْعُنُونُ، وَالْجَامِحَةُ الْحَرُونُ، وَالْمَائِنَةُ الْخَاُونُ، وَالْجَحُودُ الْكَنُودُ، وَالْعَنُودُ الصَّدُودُ، وَالْحَيُودُ الْمَيُودُ. حَالُهَا انْتِقَالٌ، وَوُطْأُتُهَا زِلْزَالٌ، وَعِزُّهَا ذُلٌّ، وَجِدُّهَا هَزْلٌ، وَعُلُوُّهَا سُفْلٌ، دَارُ حَرْبٍ وَسَلْبٍ، وَنَهَبٍ وَعَطَبٍ، أَهْلُهَا عَلَى سَاقٍ وَسِيَاقٍ، وَلَحَاقٍ وَفِرَاقٍ. قَدْ تَحَيَّرَتْ مَذَاهِبُهَا، وَأَعْجَزَتْ مَهَارِبُهَا، وَخَابَتْ مَطَالِبُهَا، فَأَسْلَمَتْهُمْ الْمَعَاقِلُ، وَلَفَظَتْهُمْ الْمَنَازِلُ، وَأَعْيَتْهُمْ الْمَحَاوِلُ.

Some of them are like hocked camel, some like butchered meat, some like severed limbs, some like spilt blood, some are biting their hands (in pain) some are rubbing their palms (in remorse), some are holding their cheeks on their hands (in anxiety), some are cursing their own views and some are retreating from their determination. But the time for action has gone away and the hour of calamity has approached, *while* (there was no longer) **the time to escape** (Qur'an, 38:3). Alas! Alas! What has been lost is lost! What has gone is gone! The world has passed in its usual manner.

So wept not on them the heavens and the earth nor were they respited. (Qur'an, 44:29)

فَمِنْ نَاجٍ مَعْقُورٍ، وَلَحْمٍ مَجْزُورٍ، وَشَلْوٍ مَذْبُوحٍ، وَدَمٍ مَسْفُوحٍ، وَعَاضٍ عَلَى يَدَيْهِ، وَصَافِقٍ لِكَفَيْهِ، وَمُرْتَفِقٍ بِخَدَيْهِ، وَزَارٍ عَلَى رَأْيِهِ، وَرَاجِعٍ عَنْ عَزْمِهِ، وَقَدْ أَدْبَرَتِ الْحَيْلُ، وَأَقْبَلَتِ الْغِيْلَةُ، (وَلَاتَ حِينَ مَنَاصٍ) هَيْهَاتَ هَيْهَاتَ! قَدْ فَاتَ مَا (فَاتَ)، وَذَهَبَ مَا ذَهَبَ، وَمَضَتْ الدُّنْيَا لِحَالٍ بِأَلِهَا (فَمَا بَكَتْ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّمَاءُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَا كَانُوا مُنْظَرِينَ).

Alternative Sources for Sermon 191

(1) Al-'Amidi, *Ghurar*, 87, 180, 245;

(2) Ibn Abi al-Hadid, *Sharh*, see 'Abd al-Zahra', III, 28.

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