

Sermon 211: It is through the strength of Allah's greatness...

The greatness of Allah and the creation of the Universe

(ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام

في عجب صنعة الكون

It is through the strength of Allah's greatness and His subtle power of innovation that He made solid dry earth out of the water of the fathomless, compact and dashing ocean. Then He made from it layers and separated them into seven skies after they had been joined together. So, they became stationary at His command and stopped at the limit fixed by Him. He so made the earth that it is born by deep blue, surrounded and suspended water which is obedient to His command and has submitted to His awe while its flow has stopped due to fear of Him.

وَكَانَ مِنْ اقْتِدَارِ جَبَرُوتِهِ، وَبَدِيعِ لَطَائِفِ صُنْعَتِهِ، أَنْ جَعَلَ مِنْ مَاءِ الْبَحْرِ الزَّائِرِ الْمُتَرَكِّمِ الْمُتَقَاصِفِ، يَبْسًا جَامِدًا، ثُمَّ فَطَرَ مِنْهُ أَطْبَاقًا، فَفَتَقَهَا سَبْعَ سَمَاوَاتٍ بَعْدَ ارْتِنَاقِهَا، فَاسْتَمْسَكَتْ بِأَمْرِهِ، وَقَامَتْ عَلَى حَدِّهِ، [وَأَرْسَى أَرْضًا] يَحْمِلُهَا، الْأَخْضَرُ الْمُتَعَنِّجُ، وَالْقَمَقَامُ الْمُسَخَّرُ، قَدْ ذَلَّ لِأَمْرِهِ، وَأَذْعَنَ لِهَيْبَتِهِ، وَوَقَفَ الْجَارِي مِنْهُ لِحَشْيَتِهِ

He also created its high hills, rocks of stones and lofty mountains. He put them in their positions and made them remain stationary. Their peaks rose into the air while their roots remained in the water. In this way He raised the mountains above the plains and fixed their foundations in the vast expanse wherever they stood. He made their peaks high and made their bodies lofty. He made them like pillars for the earth and fixed them in it like pegs. Consequently, the earth became stationary; otherwise it might bend with its inhabitants or sink inwards with its burden, or shift from its positions.

وَجَبَلَ جَلَامِيدَهَا، وَتَشَوَّرَ مُتُونَهَا وَأَطْوَادَهَا، فَأَرْسَاهَا فِي مَرَاسِيهَا، وَالزَمَهَا قَرَارَاتِهَا، فَمَضَتْ رُؤُسُهَا فِي الْهَوَاءِ، وَرَسَتْ أُصُولُهَا فِي الْمَاءِ، فَأَنْهَدَ جِبَالَهَا عَنْ سُهُولِهَا، وَأَسَاخَ قَوَاعِدَهَا فِي مُتُونِ أَقْطَارِهَا، وَمَوَاضِعِ أَنْصَابِهَا، فَأَشْهَقَ قِلَالَهَا، وَأَطَالَ أَنْشَارَهَا، وَجَعَلَهَا لِلْأَرْضِ عِمَادًا، وَأَرْزَهَا فِيهَا أَوْتَادًا، فَسَكَنْتْ عَلَى حَرَكَتِهَا مِنْ أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِأَهْلِهَا، أَوْ تَسِيخَ بِحِمْلِهَا، أَوْ تَزُولَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهَا.

Therefore, Glorified is He who made it firm after the surging of its waters and solidified it after the watery state of its sides. In this way He made it a cradle for His creatures and spread it for them in the form of a floor over the deep ocean which is stationary and does not move and is fixed and does not flow. Severe winds move it here and there and clouds draw up water from it.

Verily in this there is a lesson unto him who feareth (Allah) (Qur'an, 79:26)

فَسُبْحَانَ مَنْ أَمْسَكَهَا بَعْدَ مَوْجَانِ مِيَاهِهَا، وَأَجْمَدَهَا بَعْدَ رُطُوبَةِ أَكْنَافِهَا، فَجَعَلَهَا لِحَلْقِهِ مِهَادًا، وَبَسَطَهَا لَهُمْ فِرَاشًا! فَوْقَ بَحْرِ لُجِّي رَاكِدٍ لَا يَجْرِي، وَقَائِمٍ لَا يَسْرِي، تُكَرِّرُهُ الرِّيَّاحُ الْعَوَاصِفُ، وَتَمَخُّصُهُ الْغَمَامُ الذَّوَارِفُ، (إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِمَنْ يَخْشَى)

Alternative Sources for Sermon 211

(1) Al-Zamakhshari, *Rabi'*, I, *bab al-sama' wa al-kawakib*;

(2) Ibn al-'Athir, *al-Nihayah*, I, 27 (a.z.r).

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