

Sermon 52: Beware, the world is wrapping itself...

The downfall of the world and reward and punishment in the next world.

(This sermon has already appeared earlier but due to the difference between the two versions we have quoted it again here). Its subject is the downfall of the world and reward and punishment in the next world.

(ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام

قد تقدّم مختارها برواية ونذكرها هاهنا برواية أخرى لتغاير الروايتين

Beware, the world is wrapping itself up and has announced its departure. Its known things have become strangers and it is speedily moving backward. It is advancing its inhabitants towards destruction and driving its neighbours towards death. Its sweet things (enjoyments) have become sour, and its clear things have become polluted. Consequently, what has remained of it is just like the remaining water in a vessel or a mouthful of water in the measure. If a thirsty person drinks it his thirst is not quenched.

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا قَدْ تَصَرَّمَتْ، وَأَذْنَتْ بِانْقِضَاءِ، وَتَنَكَّرَ مَعْرُوفُهَا، وَأَدْبَرَتْ حَدَّاءَ، فَهِيَ تَحْفِزُ بِالْفَنَاءِ سُكَّانَهَا، وَتَحْدُو بِالْمَوْتِ جِيرَانَهَا، وَقَدْ مَرَمِنْهَا مَا كَانَ حُلُوءًا، وَكَدِرَ مِنْهَا مَا كَانَ صَفْوًا، فَلَمْ يَبْقَ مِنْهَا إِلَّا سَمَلَةٌ كَسَمَلَةِ الْأَدَاوَةِ، أَوْ جُرْعَةٌ كَجُرْعَةِ الْمَقْلَةِ، لَوْ تَمَزَّزَهَا الصَّدْيَانُ لَمْ يَنْقَعِ .

O creatures of Allah, get ready to go out of this world for whose inhabitants decay is ordained, and (beware) heart's wishes should overpower you, nor should you take your stay (in life) to be long. By Allah, if you cry like the she-camel that has lost its young one, call out like the cooing of pigeons, make noise like devoted recluses and turn to Allah leaving your wealth and children as a means to secure His nearness and high position with Him or the forgiveness of sins which have been covered by His books

and recorded by His angels, it would be less than His reward that I expect for you or His retribution that I fear about you.

فَأَزْمِعُوا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ الرَّحِيلَ عَنْ هَذِهِ الدَّارِ الْمَقْدُورِ عَلَى أَهْلِهَا الزَّوَالُ، وَلَا يَغْلِبَنَّكُمْ فِيهَا الْأَمَلُ، وَلَا يَطُولَنَّ عَلَيْكُمُ الْأَمَدُ.
فَوَاللَّهِ لَوْ حَنَنْتُمْ حَنِينَ الْوَلَدِ الْعَجَالِ، وَدَعَوْتُمْ بِهَدِيلِ الْحَمَامِ، وَجَأَرْتُمْ جُؤَارَ مُتَبَتِّلِي الرُّهْبَانِ، وَخَرَجْتُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنَ
الْأُمُومِ وَالْأَوْلَادِ، التَّمَّاسِ الْقُرْبَةِ إِلَيْهِ فِي ارْتِفَاعِ دَرَجَةٍ عِنْدَهُ، أَوْ غُفْرَانِ سَيِّئَةٍ أَحْصَتْهَا كُتُبُهُ، وَحَفِظَتْهَا رُسُلُهُ، لَكَانَ
قَلِيلًا فِيمَا أَرْجُو لَكُمْ مِنْ ثَوَابِهِ، وَأَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ عِقَابِهِ.

By Allah, if your hearts melt down thoroughly and your eyes shed tears of blood either in hope for Him or for fear from Him and you are also allowed to live in this world all the time that it lasts even then your actions cannot pay for His great bounties over you and His having guided you towards faith.

وَتَاللَّهِ لَوْ انْمَأَتْ قُلُوبُكُمْ انْمِيَانًا، وَسَلَّاتِ عِيُونُكُمْ مِنْ رَغْبَةٍ إِلَيْهِ وَرَهْبَةٍ مِنْهُ دَمًا، ثُمَّ عُمِرْتُمْ فِي الدُّنْيَا، مَا الدُّنْيَا بِأَقِيَّةً، مَا
جَزَتْ أَعْمَالُكُمْ [عَنْكُمْ] - وَلَوْ لَمْ تُبْقُوا شَيْئًا مِنْ جُهْدِكُمْ - أَنْعَمَهُ عَلَيْكُمْ الْعِظَامُ، وَهَدَاهُ إِيَّاكُمْ لِلْإِيمَانِ

Alternative Sources for Sermon 52

- (1) al-Saduq, *Man la yahduruh*, I, 329;
- (2) al-Tusi, *al-Misbah*, 461;
- (3) Parts of it in Abu Nu'aym, *al-Hilyah*, I, 77;
- (4) al-Mufid, *al-'Amali*, 87.

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