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Sermon 123: Whoever among you feels spiritedness of heart....

Amir al-mu'minin's address to his followers on the battlefield of Siffin (*About supporting the weak and the low-spirited during the fighting*)

(ومن كلام له (عليه السلام

قاله لاصحابه في ساعة الحرب بصفين

Whoever among you feels spiritedness of heart during the action and finds any of his comrades feeling disheartened should ward off (the enemies) from him just as he would do from himself, because of the superiority he enjoys over the other, for if Allah had willed He would have made the former also like him. Certainly death is a quick seeker. Neither does the steadfast escape it nor can the runner-away defy it. The best death is to be killed. By Allah in Whose hand (power) lies the life of the son of Abu Talib, certainly a thousand strikings of the sword on me are easier to me than a death in bed which is not in obedience to Allah.

وَأَيُّ امْرِىء مِنْكُمْ أَحَسَّ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ رَبَاطَةَ جَأْش عِنْدَ اللِّقَاءِ، وَرَأَى مِنْ أَحَد مِنْ إِخْوَانِهِ فَشَلاً، فَلْيَذُبَّ عَنْ أَخِيهِ بِفَضْلِ نَجْدَتِهِ الَّتي فُضِّلَ بِهَا عَلَيْهِ كَمَا يَذُبُّ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ، فَلَوْ شَاءَ اللهُ لَجَعَلَهُ مِثْلَهُ. إِنَّ الْمَوْتَ طَالِبٌ حَثِيثٌ لاَيَفُوتُهُ الْمُقِيمُ، وَلاَ يُعْجِزُهُ الْهَارِبُ. إِنَّ أَكْرَمَ الْمَوْتِ الْقَتْلُ! وَالَّذِي نَفْسُ ابْنِ أَبِي طَالِب بِيَدِهِ، لاَلْفُ ضَرْبَة بِالسَّيْفِ أَهْوَنُ مِنْ مِيتَة عَلَى الْفِرَاشِ فِي غَيْرِ طَاعَةِ اللهِ!.

A part of the same sermon

It is as if I see you uttering voices like the rustling sound of lizards! You do not seek your own claims nor do you defend against oppression. You have been let free on the path. He who rushes (into the battle)

achieves salvation, while he who lags behind, hesitating, gets destruction.

وَكَأَنِّي أَنْظُرُ إِلَيْكُمْ تَكِشُّونَ كَشِيشَ الضِّبَابِ: لاَ تَأْخُذُونَ حَقّاً، وَلاَ تَمْنَعُونَ ضَيْماً. قَدْ خُلِّيتُمْ وَالطَّرِيقَ، فَالنَّجَاةُ لَلْمُقْتَحِمِ، وَالْهَلَكَةُ لَلْمُتَلَوِّمِ

Alternative Sources for Sermon 123

(1) Ibn ‘Abd Rabbih, *al-’Iqd,* IV, 338;

(2) al-Kulayni, *Usul al-Kafi,* V, 53;

(3) al-Mufid, *al-Jamal,* 190, from al-Waqidi's *al-Jamal;*

(4) al-Mufid, *al-'Irshad,* 139, 159;

(5) Ibn Miskawayh, *Tajarib al-'umam,* see *Ta'sis al-Shi’ah,* 415;

(6) al-Tusi, *al-'Amali,* I, 220.

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