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Sermon 141: O people! If a person knows his broche....

Against reliance on hearsay

(ومن كلام له (عليه السلام

في النهي عن سماع الغيبة وفي الفرق بين الحقّ والباطل

O people! If a person knows his brother to be steadfast in faith and of correct ways he should not lend ear to what people may say about him. Sometimes the bowman shoots arrows but the arrow goes astray; similarly talk can be off the point. Its wrong perishes, while Allah is the Hearer and the Witness. There is nothing between truth and falsehood except four fingers.

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، مَنْ عَرَفَ مِنْ أَخِيهِ وَثِيقَةَ دِين وَسَدَادَ طَرِيق، فَلاَ يَسْمَعَنَّ فِيهِ أَقَاوِيلَ الرِّجَالِ، أَمَا إِنَّهُ قَدْ يَرْمِي الرَّامِي، وَتُخْطِيءُ السِّهَامُ، وَيَحِيكُ الْكَلاَمُ، وَيَاطِلُ ذلِكَ يَبُورُ، وَاللهُ سَمِيعٌ وَشَهِيدٌ. أَمَا إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ بَيْنَ الْحَقِّ وَالْبَاطِلِ إِلاَّ أَرْبَعُ أَصَابِعَ.

Amir al-mu'minin was asked the meaning of this whereupon he joined his fingers together and put them between his ear and eye and said: It is falsehood when you say, "I have heard so," while it is truth when you say, "I have seen."

فسئل(عليه السلام) عن معنى قوله هذا، فجمع أصابعه ووضعها بين أذنه وعينه ثمّ قال: الْبَاطِلُ أَنْ تَقُولَ سَمِعْتُ، وَالْحَقُّ أَنْ تَقُولَ رَأَيْتُ!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 141

(1) Al-Quda'i, *Dustur,* 139;

(2) Ibn Hudhayl, '*Ayn,* 215;

(3) al-Saduq, *al-Khisal,* 110;

(4) Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *al-'Iqd,* VI, 268.

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