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Sermon 176: Seek benefit from the sayings of Allah....

Admonishing the people, expounding the excellences of the Qu'ran and forbidding innovation

(ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام

وفيها يعظ ويبيّن فضل القرآن وينهى عن البدعة

Admonishing the people

]عظة الناس[

(O creatures!) Seek benefit from the sayings of Allah, be admonished of Allah and accept the advice of Allah because Allah has left no excuse for you by providing clear guidance, has put before you the plea and clarified for you what acts He likes and what acts He hates, so that you may follow the one and avoid the other. The Prophet of Allah used to say. "Paradise is surrounded by unpleasant things while Hell is surrounded by desires."

انْتَفِعُوا بِبَيَانِ اللهِ، وَاتَّعِظُوا بِمَوَاعِظِ اللهِ، وَاقْبَلُوا نَصِيحَةَ اللهِ، فَإِنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى قَدْ أَعْذَرَ إِلَيْكُمْ بِالْجَلِيَّةِ، وَاتَّخَذَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْحُجَّةَ، وَبَيَّنَ لَكُمْ مَحَابَّهُ مِنَ الأَعْمَالِ، وَمَكَارِهَهُ مِنْهَا، لِتَتَّبِعُوا هذِهِ، وَتَجْتَنِبُوا هذِهِ، فَإِنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) كَانَ يَقُولُ: «إِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ حُفَّتْ بِالْمَكَارِهِ، وَإِنَّ النَّارَ حُفَّتْ بِالشَّهَوَاتِ».

You should know that every obedience to Allah is unpleasant in appearance while every disobedience to Allah has the appearance of enjoyment. Allah may have mercy on the person who kept aloof from his desire and uprooted the appetite of his heart, because this heart has far-reaching aims and it goes on

pursuing disobedience through desires.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ مَا مِنْ طَاعَةِ اللهِ شَيْءٌ إلاَّ يَأْتي فِي كُرْه، وَمَا مِنْ مَعْصِيَةِ اللهِ شَيءٌ إلاَّ يَأْتِي فِي شَهْوَة. فَرَحِمَ اللهُ رَجُلاً نَزَعَ عَنْ شَهْوَتِهِ، وَقَمَعَ هَوَى نَفْسِهِ، فَإِنَّ هذِهِ النَّفْسَ أَبْعَدُ شَيْء مَنْزِعاً، وَإِنَّهَا لاَ تَزَالُ تَنْزِعُ إِلَى مَعْصِيَة فِي هَوىً.

You should know, O creatures of Allah, that a believer should be distrustful of his heart every morning and evening. He should always blame it (for shortcomings) and ask it to add to (its good acts). You should behave like those who have gone before you and the precedents in front of you. They left this world like a traveller and covered it as distance is covered.

وَاعْلَمُوا ـ عِبَادَ اللهِ ـ أَنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ لاَ يُصْبِحُ وَلاَ يُمْسِي إلاَّ وَنَفْسُهُ ظَنُونٌ عِنْدَهُ، فَلاَ يَزَالُ زَارِياً عَلَيْهَا وَمُسْتَزِيْداً لَهَا، فَكُونُوا كَالسَّابِقِينَ قَبْلَكُمْ، وَالْمَاضِينَ أَمَامَكُمْ، قَوَّضُوا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا تَقْوِيضَ الرَّاحِلِ، وَطَوَوْهَا طَيَّ الْمَنَازِلِ.

The greatness of the Holy Qur'an

فضل القرآن

And know that this Qur'an is an adviser who never deceives, a leader who never misleads and a narrator who never speaks a lie. No one will sit beside this Qur'an but that when he rises he will achieve one addition or one diminution – addition in his guidance or elimination in his (spiritual) blindness. You should also know that no one will need anything after (guidance from) the Qur'an and no one will be free from want before (guidance from) the Qur'an.

Therefore, seek cure from it for your ailments and seek its assistance in your distresses. It contains a cure for the biggest diseases, namely unbelief, hypocrisy, revolt and misguidance. Pray to Allah through it and turn to Allah with its love. Do not ask the people through it. There is nothing like it through which the people should turn to Allah, the Sublime.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ هذَا الْقُرْآنَ هُوَ النَّاصِحُ الَّذِي لاَ يَغُشُّ، وَالْهَادِي الَّذِي لاَ يُضِلُّ، وَالْمحَدِّثُ الَّذِي لاَ يَكْذِبُ، وَمَا جَالَسَ هذَا الْقُرْآنَ أَحَدٌ إلاَّ قَامَ عَنْهُ بِزِيَادَة أَوْ نُقْصَان: زِيَادَة فِي هُدىً، أَوْ نُقْصَان مِنْ عَمىً.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ عَلَى أَحَد بَعْدَ الْقُرْآنِ مِنْ فَاقَة، وَلاَ لاحَد قَبْلَ الْقُرْآنِ مِنْ غِنىً; فَاسْتَشْفُوهُ مِنْ أَدْوَائِكُمْ، وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِهِ عَلَى لاَوَائِكُمْ، فَإِنَّ فِيهِ شِفَاءً مِنْ أَكْبَرِ الدَّاءِ، وَهُوَ الْكُفْرُ وَالنِّفَاقُ، وَالْغَيُّ وَالضَّلاَلُ، فَاسْأَلُوا اللهَ بِهِ، وَتَوَجَّهُوا إِلَيْهِ بِحُبِّهِ، وَلاَ تَسْأَلُوا بِهِ خَلْقَهُ، إِنَّهُ مَا تَوَجَّهَ الْعِبَادُ إِلَى اللهِ بِمِثْلِهِ.

Know that it is an interceder and its intercession will be accepted. It is a speaker who is testified. For

whoever the Qur'an intercedes on the Day of Judgement, its intercession for him would be accepted. He about whom the Qur'an speaks ill on the Day of Judgement shall testify to it. On the Day of Judgement an announcer will announce, "Beware. every sower of a crop is in distress except the sowers of the Qur'an."

Therefore, you should be among the sowers of the Qur'an and its followers. Make it your guide towards Allah. Seek its advice for yourselves, do not trust your views against it. and regard your desires in the matter of the Qur'an as deceitful.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ شَافِعٌ مُشَفَّعٌ، وَقَائِلٌ مُصَدَّقٌ، وَأَنَّهُ مَنْ شَفَعَ لَهُ الْقُرْآنُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ شُفِّعَ فِيهِ، وَمَنْ مَحَلَ بِهِ الْقُرْآنُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ صُدِّقَ عَلَيْه، فَإِنَّهُ يُنَادِي مُنَاد يَوْمَ الْقِيَامةِ: أَلاَ إِنَّ كُلَّ حَارِث مُبْتَلىً فِي حَرْثِهِ وَعَاقِبَةِ عَمَلِهِ، غَيْرَ حَرَثَةِ الْقُرآنِ: فَكُونُوا مِنْ حَرَثَتِهِ وَأَتْبَاعِهِ، وَاسْتَدِلُّوهُ عَلى رَبِّكُمْ، وَاسْتَنْصِحُوهُ عَلى أَنْفُسِكُمْ، وَاتَّهِمُوا عَلَيْهِ آرَاءَكُمْ، وَاسْتَغِشُّوا فِيهِ أَهْوَاءَكُمْ.

About the believers and their good deeds; and the hypocrites and their bad deeds

الحث على العمل

Action! action! Then (look at) the end; the end, and (remain) steadfast; steadfast. Thereafter (exercise) endurance, endurance, and piety, piety. You have an objective. Proceed towards your objective. You have a sign. Take guidance from your sign. Islam has an objective. Proceed towards its objective. Proceed towards Allah's by fulfilling His rights which He has enjoined upon you. He has clearly stated His demands for you. I am a witness for you and shall plead excuses on your behalf on the Day of Judgement.

الْعَمَلَ الْعَمَلَ، ثُمَّ النِّهَايَةَ النِّهَايَةَ، وَالاسْتَقَامَةَ الاسْتِقَامَةَ، ثُمَّ الصَّبْرَ الصَّبْرَ، وَالْوَرَعَ الْوَرَعَ! إِنَّ لَكُمْ نِهَايَةً فَانْتَهُوا إِلى نِهَايَتِكُمْ، وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ عَلَماً فَاهْتَدُوا بِعَلَمِكُمْ، وَإِنَّ لِلاْسْلاَمِ غَايَةً فانْتَهُوا إِلى غَايَتِهِ، وَاخْرُجُوا إِلَى اللهِ بِمَا افْتَرَضَ عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْ حَقِّهِ، وَبَيَّنَ لكُمْ مِنْ وَظَائِفِهِ. أَنَا شَاهِدٌ لَكُمْ، وَحَجِيجٌ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عَنْكُمْ.

Beware! What had been ordained has occurred and that which had been destined has come into play. I am speaking to you with the promise and pleas of Allah. Allah the Sublime, has said:

Verily, those who say: "Our Lord is Allah" and persevere aright, the angels descend upon them (saying): "Fear ye not, nor be grieved, and receive the glad tidings of the Garden which ye were promised." **(Qur'an, 41:30)**

You have said. "Our Lord is Allah." Then keep steadfast to His Book, to the way of His command and to the virtuous course of His worship. Thereafter do not go out of it, do not introduce innovations in it, and do not turn away from it, because those who go away from this course will be cut off from (the mercy of) Allah on the Day of Judgement.

أَلاَ وَإِنَّ الْقَدَرَ السَّابِقَ قَدْ وَقَعَ، وَالْقَضَاءَ الْمَاضِيَ قَدْ تَوَرَّدَ، وَإِنِّي مُتَكَلِّمٌ بِعِدَةِ اللهِ وَحُجَّتِهِ، قَالَ اللهُ تَعَالَى) :إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلاَئِكَةُ أَنْ لاَ تَخَافُوا وَلاَ تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنْتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ(، وَقَدْ قُلْتُمْ) : رَبُّنَا اللهُ(، فَاسْتَقِيمُوا عَلَى كِتَابِهِ، وَعَلَى مِنْهَاجِ أَمْرِهِ، وَعَلَى الطَّرِيقَةِ الصَّالِحَةِ مِنْ عِبَادَتِهِ، ثُمَّ لاَ تَمْرُقُوا مِنْهَا، وَلاَ تَبْتَدِعُوا فِيهَا، وَلاَ تُخَالِفُوا عَنْهَا; فَإِنَّ أَهْلَ الْمُرُوقِ مُنْقَطَعٌ بِهِمْ عِنْدَ اللهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ.

Counselling people

نصائح للناس

Beware from destroying your manners and changing them, maintaining one tongue. A man should control his tongue because the tongue is obstinate with its master. By Allah, I do not find that fear of Allah benefits a man who practises it unless he controls his tongue. Certainly the tongue of a believer is at the back of his heart while the heart of a hypocrite is at the back of his tongue; because, when a believer intends to say anything, he thinks it over in his mind. If it is good he discloses it, but if it is bad he lets it remain concealed. While a hypocrite speaks whatever comes to his tongue, without knowing what is in his favour and what goes against him.

ثُمَّ إِيَّاكُمْ وَتَهْزِيعَ الأَخْلاَقِ وَتَصْرِيفَهَا، وَاجْعَلُوا اللِّسَانَ وَاحِداً، وَلْيَخْتَزِنَ الرَّجُلُ لِسَانَهُ، فَإِنَّ هذَا اللِّسَانَ جَمُوحٌ بِصَاحِبِهِ، وَاللهِ مَا أَرَى عَبْداً يَتَّقِي تَقْوَى تَنْفَعُهُ حَتَّى يَخْتَزِنَ لِسَانَهُ، وَإِنَّ لِسَانَ الْمُؤْمِنِ مِنْ وَرَاءِ قَلْبِهِ، وَإِنَّ قَلْبَ الْمُنَافِقِ مِنْ وَرَاءِ لِسَانِهِ: لاِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنَ إِذَا أَرَادَ أَنْ يَتَكَلَّمَ بِكَلاَمٍ تَدَبَّرَهُ فِي نَفْسِهِ، فَإِنْ كَانَ خَيْراً أَبْدَاهُ، وَإِنْ كَانَ شَرّاً وَارَاهُ، وَإِنَّ الْمُنَافِقَ يَتَكَلَّمُ بِمَا أَتَى عَلَى لِسَانِهِ لاَ يَدْرِي مَاذَا لَهُ، وَمَاذَا عَلَيْهِ،

The Prophet of Allah – peace and blessing of Allah be upon him and his descendants – said: "The belief of a person cannot be firm unless his heart is firm, and his heart cannot be firm unless his tongue is firm." So whoever of you can manage to meet Allah, the Sublime, in such a position that his hands are unsmeared with the blood of Muslims and their property and his tongue is safe from exposing them, he should do so.

وَلَقَدْ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ(صلى الله عليه وآله): «لاَ يَسْتَقِيمُ إِيمَانُ عَبْدٍ حَتَّى يَسْتَقِيمَ قَلْبُهُ، وَلاَ يَسْتَقِيمُ قَلْبُهُ حَتَّى يَسْتَقِيمَ لِسَانُهُ»; فَمَنِ اسْتَطَاعَ مِنْكُمْ أَنْ يَلْقَى اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَهُوَ نَقِيُّ الرَّاحَةِ مِنْ دِمَاءِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَأَمْوَالِهِمْ، سَلِيمُ اللِّسَانِ مِنْ أَعْرَاضِهِمْ، فَلْيَفْعَلْ.

Following the sunnah and refraining from innovation

تحريم البدع

Know, O creatures of Allah, that a believer should regard lawful this year what he regarded lawful in the previous year, and should consider unlawful this year what he considered unlawful in the previous year. Certainly people's innovation cannot make lawful for you what has been declared unlawful; rather, lawful is that which Allah has made lawful and unlawful is that which Allah has made unlawful. You have already tested the matters and tried them; you have been preached by those before you. Illustrations have been drawn for you and you have been called to clear fact. Only a deaf man can remain deaf to all this, and only a blind man can remain blind to all this.

وَاعْلَمُوا عِبَادَ اللهِ أَنَّ الْمُؤمِنَ يَسْتَحِلُّ الْعَامَ مَا اسْتَحَلَّ عَاماً أَوَّلَ، وَيُحَرِّمُ الْعَامَ مَا حَرَّمَ عَاماً أَوَّلَ، وَأَنَّ مَا أَحْدَثَ النَّاسُ لاَ يُحِلُّ لَكُمْ شَيْئاً مِمَّا حُرِّمَ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَلكِنَّ الْحَلاَلَ مَا أَحَلَّ اللهُ، وَالْحَرَامَ مَا حَرَّمَ اللهُ، فَقَدْ جَرَّبْتُمُ الاْمُورَ وَضَرَّسْتُمُوهَا، وَوُعِظْتُمْ بِمَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ، وَضُرِبَتِ الاْمْثَالُ لَكُم، وَدُعِيتُمْ إِلَى الاْمْرِ الْوَاضِحِ; فَلاَ يَصَمُّ عَنْ ذلِكَ إِلاَّ أَصَمُّ، وَلاَ يَعْمَى عَنْهُ إِلاَّ أَعْمَى.

He whom Allah does not allow benefit from trials and experience cannot benefit from preaching. He will be faced with losses from in front, so that he will approve what is bad and disapprove what is good. People are of two categories – the follower of the *shari'ah* (religious laws), and the follower of the innovations to whom Allah has not given any testimony by way of *sunnah* or the light of any plea.

وَمَنْ لَمْ يَنْفَعْهُ اللهُ بِالْبَلاَءِ وَالتَّجَارِبِ لَمْ يَنْتَفِعْ بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْعِظَةِ، وَأَتَاهُ الْتَّقْصِيرُ مِنْ أَمَامِه، حَتَّى يَعْرِفَ مَا أَنْكَرَ، وَيُنْكِرَ مَا عَرَفَ. وَإِنَّمَا النَّاسُ رَجُلاَنِ: مُتَّبِعٌ شِرْعَةً، وَمُبْتَدِعٌ بِدْعَةً، لَيْسَ مَعَهُ مِنَ اللهِ سُبْحَانَهُ بُرْهَانُ سُنَّة، وَلاَ ضِياءُ حُجَّة.

Guidance from the Holy Qur'an

القرآن

Allah the Glorified, has not counselled anyone on the lines of this Qur'an, for it is the strong rope of Allah and His trustworthy means. It contains the blossoming of the heart and springs of knowledge. For the heart there is no other gloss than the Qur'an although those who remembered it have passed away while those who forgot or pretended to have forgotten it have remained. If you see any good give your support to it, but if you see evil evade it, because the Messenger of Allah used to say: "O son of Adam, do good and evade evil; by doing so you will be treading correctly."

وَإِنَّ اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ لَمْ يَعِظْ أَحَداً بِمِثْلِ هذَا الْقُرْآنِ، فَإِنَّهُ حَبْلُ اللهِ الْمَتِينُ، وَسَبَبُهُ الاْمِينُ، وَفِيهِ رَبِيعُ الْقَلْبِ، وَيَنَابِيعُ الْعِلْمِ، وَمَا لِلْقَلْبِ جَلاَءٌ غَيْرُهُ، مَعَ أَنَّهُ قَدْ ذَهَبَ الْمُتَذَكِّرُونَ، وَبَقِيَ النَّاسُونَ أَوِ الْمُتَنَاسُونَ. فَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمْ خَيْراً فَأَعِينُوا عَلَيْهِ، وَإِذَا رَأَيْتُمْ شَرّاً فَاذْهَبُوا عَنْهُ، فَإِنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) كَانَ يَقُولُ: «يَابْنَ آدَمَ، اعْمَلِ الْخَيْرَ وَدَعِ الشَّرَّ، فَإِذَا أَنْتَ جَوَادٌ قَاصِدٌ»

Categories of oppression

أنواع الظلم

Know that injustice is of three kinds – one, the injustice that will not be forgiven, another, that will not be left unquestioned, and another that will be forgiven without being questioned. The injustice that will not be forgiven is duality of Allah. Allah has said:

Verily Allah forgiveth not that **(anything)** ***be associated with Him ...*** **(Qur'an, 4:48,116).**

The injustice that will be forgiven is the injustice a man does to himself by committing small sins; and the injustice that will not be left unquestioned is the injustice of men against other men. The retribution in such a case is severe. It is not wounding with knives, nor striking with whips, but it is so severe that all these things are small against it. You should therefore avoid change in the matter of Allah's religion for your unity in respect of a right which you dislike is better than your scattering away in respect of a wrong that you like. Certainly, Allah the Glorified has not given any person, whether among the dead or among those who survive, any good from separation.

أَلاَ وَإِنَّ الظُّلْمَ ثَلاَثَةٌ: فَظُلْمٌ لاَ يُغْفَرُ، وَظُلْمٌ لاَ يُتْرَكُ، وظُلْمٌ مَغْفُورٌ لاَ يُطْلَبُ:

فَأَمَّا الظُّلْمُ الَّذِي لاَ يُغْفَرُ فَالشِّرْكُ بِاللهِ، قَالَ اللهُ تَعَالَى: (إِنَّ اللهَ لاَ يَغْفِرُ أَنْ يُشْرَكَ بِهِ) وَأَمَّا الظُّلْمُ الَّذِي يُغْفَرُ فَظُلْمُ الْعَبْدِ نَفْسَهُ عِنْدَ بَعْضِ الْهَنَاتِ. وَأَمَّا الظُّلْمُ الَّذِي لاَ يُتْرَكُ فَظُلْمُ الْعِبَادِ بَعْضِهِمْ بَعْضاً.

الْقِصَاصُ هُنَاكَ شَدِيدٌ، لَيْسَ هُوَ جَرْحاً بِالْمُدَى وَلاَ ضَرْباً بِالسِّيَاطِ، وَلكِنَّهُ مَا يُسْتَصْغَرُ ذلِكَ مَعَهُ. فَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالتَّلَوُّنَ فِي دِينِ اللهِ، فَإِنَّ جَمَاعَةً فِيمَا تَكْرَهُونَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ، خَيْرٌ مِنْ فُرْقَةٍ فِيمَا تُحِبُّونَ مِنَ الْبَاطِلِ، وَإِنَّ اللهَ سُبْحَانَهُ لَمْ يُعْطِ أَحَداً بِفُرْقَةٍ خَيْراً مِمَّنْ مَضَى، وَلاَ مِمَّنْ بَقِيَ.

O people, blessed is the man whose own shortcomings keep him away from (looking into) the shortcomings of others, and also blessed is the man who is confined to his house, eats his meal, buries himself in obeying his Allah. and weeps over his sins, so that he is engaged in himself and people are in safety from him.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ طُوبى لِمَنْ شَغَلَهُ عَيْبُهُ عَنْ عُيُوبِ النَّاسِ، وَطُوبى لِمَنْ لَزِمَ بَيْتَهُ، وَأَكَلَ قُوتَهُ، وَاشْتَغَلَ بِطَاعَةِ رَبِّهِ، وَبَكَى عَلَى خَطِيئَتِهِ، فَكَانَ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ فِي شُغُل، وَالنَّاسُ مِنْهُ فِي رَاحَة!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 176

(1) Al-Zamakhshari, *Rabi',* I, 219;

(2) al-Kulayni, *Usul al-Kafi,* II, 443;

(3) al-Barqi, *al-Mahasin,* 6;

(4) al-Saduq, *al-'Amali,* 153;

(5) al-'Ayyashi, *Tafsir,* II, 262;

(6) al-Harrani, *Tuhaf,* 71.

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