

Path of Eloquence  
Nahjul-Balāgha

نهج البلاغة

*By*  
Imām Alī ibn Abū Tālib

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# بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of Allah, the most Gracious, the most Merciful*

## Part One

### Sermons of

عليه السلام **Amīr al-Mu'minīn Ali Ibn Abū Tālib**

خطب أمير المؤمنين و سيد الوصيين

الامام علي بن أبي طالب عليه السلام

### الخطبة الأولى

يذكر فيها ابتداء خلق السماء والأرض وخلق آدم وفيها ذكر الحج وتحتوي على حمد الله وخلق العالم وخلق  
الملائكة واختيار الأنبياء ومبعث النبي والقرآن والأحكام الشرعية

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَا يَبْلُغُ مِدْحَتَهُ الْقَائِلُونَ وَلَا يُحْصِي نِعْمَاءَهُ الْعَادُونَ وَلَا يُؤَدِّي حَقَّهُ الْمُجْتَهُدُونَ الَّذِي لَا يُدْرِكُهُ بُعْدُ  
الْهَمِّ وَلَا يَبَالُغُهُ غَوْصُ الْفِطْنِ الَّذِي لَيْسَ لِصِفَتِهِ حَدٌّ مَحْدُودٌ وَلَا نَعْتٌ مَوْجُودٌ وَلَا وَقْتُ مَعْدُودٌ وَلَا أَجَلٌ مَمْدُودٌ فَطَرَّ  
الْخَلَائِقَ بِفُدْرَتِهِ وَنَشَرَ الرِّيحَ بِرَحْمَتِهِ وَوَتَدَّ بِالصُّخُورِ مِيدَانَ أَرْضِهِ أَوَّلَ الدِّينِ مَعْرِفَتُهُ وَكَمَالَ مَعْرِفَتِهِ التَّصْدِيقُ بِهِ  
وَكَمَالَ التَّصْدِيقِ بِهِ تَوْحِيدُهُ وَكَمَالَ تَوْحِيدِهِ الْإِخْلَاصُ لَهُ وَكَمَالَ الْإِخْلَاصِ لَهُ نَفْيُ الصِّفَاتِ عَنْهُ لِشَهَادَةِ كُلِّ صِفَةٍ  
أَنَّهَا غَيْرُ الْمُوصُوفِ وَشَهَادَةِ كُلِّ مَوْصُوفٍ أَنَّهُ غَيْرُ الصِّفَةِ فَمَنْ وَصَفَ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ فَقَدْ قَرَنَهُ وَمَنْ قَرَنَهُ فَقَدْ تَنَاهَا  
وَمَنْ تَنَاهَا فَقَدْ جَرَّاهُ وَمَنْ جَرَّاهُ فَقَدْ جَهَلَهُ وَمَنْ جَهَلَهُ فَقَدْ أَشَارَ إِلَيْهِ وَمَنْ أَشَارَ إِلَيْهِ فَقَدْ حَدَّهَ وَمَنْ حَدَّهَ فَقَدْ عَدَّهَ وَمَنْ  
قَالَ فِيهِ فَقَدْ ضَمَّنَهُ وَمَنْ قَالَ عَلَاً فَقَدْ أَخْلَى مِنْهُ كَانِئِنْ لَا عَنْ حَدَثٍ مَوْجُودٍ لَا عَنْ عَدَمٍ مَعَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَا بِمُقَارَنَةٍ  
وَغَيْرِ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ لَا بِمُزَابَلَةٍ فَاعِلٌ لَا بِمَعْنَى الْحَرَكَاتِ وَالْأَلَّةِ بِصَبْرٍ إِذْ لَا مَنْظُورَ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ مُتَوَحِّدٌ إِذْ لَا سَكَنَ  
يَسْتَأْنِسُ بِهِ وَلَا يَسْتَوْجِسُ لِفَقْدِهِ .

### خلق العالم

أَنْشَأَ الْخَلْقَ إِثْنَاءً وَابْتَدَأَهُ ابْتِدَاءً بِلَا رَوِيَّةٍ أَجَالَهَا وَلَا تَجْرِبَةٍ اسْتَفَادَهَا وَلَا حَرَكَةٍ أَحَدَتْهَا وَلَا هَمَامَةَ نَفْسٍ اضْطَرَبَ  
فِيهَا أَحَالَ الْأَشْيَاءَ لِأَوْقَاتِهَا وَلَا مَ بَيْنَ مُخْتَلَفَاتِهَا وَعَرَّرَ عَرَائِزَهَا وَالزَّمَمَهَا أَشْبَاحَهَا عَالِمًا بِهَا قَبْلَ ابْتِدَائِهَا مُحِيطًا  
بِحُدُودِهَا وَأَنْتَهَائِهَا عَارِفًا بِقَرَانِئِهَا وَأَخْنَائِهَا ثُمَّ أَنْشَأَ سُبْحَانَهُ فَنَقَّ الْأَجْوَاءَ وَشَقَّ الْأَرْجَاءَ وَسَكَنَكَ الْهَوَاءَ فَأَجْرَى فِيهَا  
مَاءً مُتَلَطِّمًا تَبَّارُهُ مُتَرَاجِمًا زَخَارُهُ حَمَلُهُ عَلَى مَتْنِ الرِّيحِ الْعَاصِفَةِ وَالرَّعْرَعِ الْقَاصِفَةِ فَأَمَرَهَا بِرَدِّهِ وَسَلَطَهَا عَلَى  
شَدِّهِ وَقَرَنَهَا إِلَى حَدِّهِ الْهَوَاءَ مِنْ تَحْتِهَا فَتَبَّقَ وَالْمَاءَ مِنْ فَوْقِهَا فَدَبَّقَ ثُمَّ أَنْشَأَ سُبْحَانَهُ رِيحًا اعْتَقَمَ مَهْبِئَهَا وَأَدَامَ مُرْبِئَهَا  
وَأَعَصَفَ مَجْرَاهَا وَأَبْعَدَ مَنْشَأَهَا فَأَمَرَهَا بِتَصْفِيقِ الْمَاءِ الزَّخَارِ وَإِنَارَةِ مَوْجِ الْبِحَارِ فَمَخَضَتْهُ مَخَضَ السَّقَاءِ  
وَعَصَفَتْ بِهِ عَصْفَهَا بِالْفَضَاءِ تَرُدُّ أَوْلَاهُ إِلَى آخِرِهِ وَسَاجِبُهُ إِلَى مَائِرِهِ حَتَّى عَبَّ عَبَابُهُ وَرَمَى بِالرَّبِيدِ رُكَامَهُ فَرَفَعَهُ

فِي هَوَاءٍ مُنْفَتِقٍ وَجَوٍّ مُنْفَتِقٍ فَسَوَى مِنْهُ سَبْعَ سَمَوَاتٍ جَعَلَ سَفْلَهُنَّ مَوْجاً مَكْفُوفاً وَعُلْيَاهُنَّ سَقْفاً مَكْفُوفاً وَسَمَكاً مَرْفُوعاً بَعْضُهَا يَدْعُمُهَا وَلَا دَسَارَ يَنْظُمُهَا ثُمَّ رَزَقَهَا مِنْ رِزْقِهَا الْكَوَاكِبَ وَضِيَاءَ النُّوَابِقِ وَأَجْرَى فِيهَا سِرَاجاً مُسْتَطِيراً وَقَمراً مُنِيراً فِي فَلَكٍ دَائِرٍ وَسَقْفٍ سَائِرٍ وَرَقِيمٍ مَائِرٍ .

### خلق الملائكة

ثُمَّ فَتَقَى مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَوَاتِ الْعُلَا فَمَلَأَهُنَّ أَطْوَاراً مِنْ مَلَائِكَتِهِنَّ مِنْهُمْ سُجُودٌ لَا يَرْكَعُونَ وَرُكُوعٌ لَا يَنْتَضِبُونَ وَصَافُونَ لَا يَنْزِيلُونَ وَمُسَبِّحُونَ لَا يَسْأَمُونَ لَا يَعْشَاهُمْ نَوْمٌ الْعُيُونَ وَلَا سَهُوُ الْعُقُولِ وَلَا فِتْرَةُ الْأَبْدَانِ وَلَا غَفْلَةُ النَّسِيَانِ وَمِنْهُمْ أَمْنَاءٌ عَلَى وَحْيِهِ وَالسَّنَّةُ إِلَى رُسُلِهِ وَمُخْتَلِفُونَ بِقَضَائِهِ وَأَمْرُهُ وَمِنْهُمْ الْحَفَظَةُ لِعِبَادِهِ وَالسَّدَنَةُ لِأَبْوَابِ جَنَانِهِ وَمِنْهُمْ النَّائِبَةُ فِي الْأَرْضِينَ السُّفْلَى أَقْدَامُهُمُ وَالْمَارِقَةُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ الْعُلْيَا أَعْنَاقُهُمُ وَالْحَارِجَةُ مِنَ الْأَقْطَارِ أَرْكَانُهُمُ وَالْمُنَاسِبَةُ لِقَوَائِمِ الْعَرْشِ أَكْتَافُهُمْ نَاكِسَةٌ دُونَهُ أَبْصَارُهُمْ مُتَلَفَعُونَ تَحْتَهُ بِأَجْحَتِهِمْ مُضْرُوبَةٌ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَنْ دُونَهُمْ حُجُبُ الْعِزَّةِ وَأَسْتَارُ الْقُدْرَةِ لَا يَتَوَهَّمُونَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالتَّصْوِيرِ وَلَا يُجْرُونَ عَلَيْهِ صِفَاتِ الْمُصْنُوعِينَ وَلَا يَحْدُونَهُ بِالْأَمَاكِينِ وَلَا يُسِيرُونَ إِلَيْهِ بِالنَّظَائِرِ .

### صفة خلق آدم عليه السلام

ثُمَّ جَمَعَ سُبْحَانَهُ مِنْ حَزْنِ الْأَرْضِ وَسَهْلِهَا وَعَذْبِهَا وَسَبْخِهَا تَرْبِيَةً سَنَهَا بِالْمَاءِ حَتَّى خَلَصَتْ وَلَا طَهَا بِالْبَلَّةِ حَتَّى لَزِبَتْ فَجَبَلَ مِنْهَا صُورَةً دَاتٍ أَحْنَاءٍ وَوُضُولٍ وَأَعْضَاءٍ وَفُضُولٍ أَجْمَدَهَا حَتَّى اسْتَمْسَكَتْ وَأَصْلَدَهَا حَتَّى صَلَصَلَتْ لَوْفَتْ مَعْدُودٍ وَأَمَدٍ مَعْلُومٍ ثُمَّ نَفَخَ فِيهَا مِنْ رُوحِهِ فَمَثَلَتْ إِنْسَاناً ذَا أَذْهَانٍ يُجْبِلُهَا وَفَكَرَ يَنْتَصِرُفُ بِهَا وَجَوَارِحَ يَخْتَدِمُهَا وَأَدْوَاتٍ يُعْلِنُهَا وَمَعْرِفَةٍ يَفْرُقُ بِهَا بَيْنَ الْحَقِّ وَالْبَاطِلِ وَالْأَدْوَابِ وَالْمَشَامِ وَالْأَلْوَانِ وَالْأَجْنَاسِ مَعْجُوناً بِطِينَةِ الْأَلْوَانِ الْمُخْتَلِفَةِ وَالْأَشْيَاءِ الْمُؤْتَلِفَةِ وَالْأَضْدَادِ الْمُتَعَادِيَةِ وَالْأَخْلَاطِ الْمُتَبَايِنَةِ مِنَ الْحَرِّ وَالْبَرْدِ وَالْبَلَّةِ وَالْجُمُودِ وَاسْتَأْدَى اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ الْمَلَائِكَةَ وَدِيَعَنَهُ لَدَيْهِمْ وَعَهْدَ وَصِيَّتِهِ إِلَيْهِمْ فِي الْإِدْعَانِ بِالسُّجُودِ لَهُ وَالْخُنُوعِ لِتَكْرَمَتِهِ فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ اسْجُدُوا لِأَدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ اعْتَرَتْهُ الْحَمِيَّةُ وَغَلَبَتْ عَلَيْهِ الشَّقْوَةُ وَتَعَزَّرَ بِخَلْقِهِ النَّارَ وَاسْتَوْهَنَ خَلْقَ الصَّلْصَالِ فَأَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ النَّظْرَةَ اسْتَحْقَاقاً لِلسُّخْطَةِ وَاسْتَيْتَمَاماً لِلنَّيْبَةِ وَإِنْجَاراً لِلْعِدَّةِ فَقَالَ فَإِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنْظَرِينَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْوَقْتِ الْمَعْلُومِ . ثُمَّ أَسْكَنَ سُبْحَانَهُ آدَمَ دَاراً أَرْغَدَ فِيهَا عَيْشُهُ وَأَمِنَ فِيهَا مَحَلَّتُهُ وَحَدَّرَهُ إِبْلِيسَ وَعَادَوْتَهُ فَأَعْتَرَتْهُ عُدُوهُ نَفَاسَةً عَلَيْهِ بِدَارِ الْمَقَامِ وَمُرَافَقَةِ الْأَبْرَارِ فَبَاقَ الْيَقِينِ بِسُكَّتِهِ وَالْعَزِيمَةَ بِوَهْنِهِ وَاسْتَبَدَلَ بِالْجَدَلِ وَجَلّاً وَبِالْإِعْتِرَارِ نَدماً ثُمَّ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ لَهُ فِي تَوْبَتِهِ وَلِقَاءِهِ كَلِمَةً رَحْمَتِهِ وَوَعَدَهُ الْمَرَدَّ إِلَى جَنَّتِهِ وَأَهْبَطَهُ إِلَى دَارِ الْبَلِيَّةِ وَتَنَاسَلَ الدَّرِيَّةُ .

### اختيار الأنبياء

وَاصْطَفَى سُبْحَانَهُ مِنْ وَلَدِهِ أَنْبِيَاءً أَخَذَ عَلَى الْوَحْيِ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَعَلَى تَبْلِيغِ الرِّسَالَةِ أَمَانَتَهُمْ لَمَّا بَدَلَ أَكْثَرَ خَلْقِهِ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ إِلَيْهِمْ فَجَهِلُوا حَقَّهُ وَاتَّخَذُوا الْأَنْدَادَ مَعَهُ وَاجْتَالَتْهُمْ الشَّيَاطِينُ عَنْ مَعْرِفَتِهِ وَاقْتَطَعَتْهُمْ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ فَبَعَثَ فِيهِمْ رُسُلَهُ وَوَاتَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ أَنْبِيَاءَهُ لِيَسْأَدُواهُمْ مِيثَاقَ فِطْرَتِهِ وَيُذَكِّرُوهُمْ مَنْسِيَّ نِعْمَتِهِ وَيَحْتَجُوا عَلَيْهِمْ بِالتَّبْلِيغِ وَيُنِيرُوا لَهُمْ دَفَائِنَ الْعُقُولِ وَيُرُوهُمْ آيَاتِ الْمَقْدِرَةِ مِنْ سَقْفِ مَرْفُوعٍ وَمِهَادِ تَحْتَهُمْ مَوْضُوعٍ وَمَعَايِشِ تَحْيِيهِمْ وَأَجَالِ تَقْيِيهِمْ وَأَوْصَابِ نَهْرِهِمْ وَأَحْدَاثِ تَتَابَعِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَمْ يُخَلِّ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ خَلْقَهُ مِنْ نَبِيٍّ مُرْسَلٍ أَوْ كِتَابٍ مُنْزَلٍ أَوْ حُجَّةٍ لَازِمَةٍ أَوْ مَحَجَّةٍ قَائِمَةٍ رُسُلٌ لَا تَقْصُرُ بِهِمْ فَلَهُ عَدَدُهُمْ وَلَا كَثْرَةُ الْمُكْدِبِينَ لَهُمْ مِنْ سَابِقِ سُمِّيَ لَهُ مَنْ بَعْدَهُ أَوْ غَابِرِ رَفَعَهُ مَنْ قَبْلَهُ عَلَى ذَلِكَ نَسَلَتِ الْقُرُونُ وَمَضَتْ الدُّهُورُ وَسَلَفَتِ الْأَبَاءُ وَخَلَفَتِ الْأَبْنَاءُ .

### مبعث النبي

إِلَى أَنْ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) لِإِنْجَارِ عَدْتِهِ وَإِتْمَامِ نُبُوتِهِ مَأْخُوداً عَلَى النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقَهُ مَشْهُورَةً سِمَاتُهُ كَرِيماً مِبْلَادُهُ وَأَهْلُ الْأَرْضِ يَوْمِئِذٍ مَلَأَ مُتَفَرِّقَةً وَأَهْوَاءَ مُتَنَشِّرَةً وَطَرَائِقَ مُتَسَنِّتَةً بَيْنَ مُشْبِهِ اللَّهِ بِخَلْقِهِ أَوْ مُلْحِدٍ فِي اسْمِهِ أَوْ مُشْبِرٍ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ فَهَدَاهُمْ بِهِ مِنَ الضَّلَالَةِ وَأَنْقَذَهُمْ بِمَكَانِهِ مِنَ الْجَهَالَةِ ثُمَّ اخْتَارَ سُبْحَانَهُ لِمُحَمَّدٍ (صلى الله عليه وآله) لِقَاءَهُ وَرَضِي لَهُ مَا عِنْدَهُ وَأَكْرَمَهُ عَنْ دَارِ الدُّنْيَا وَرَغِبَ بِهِ عَنْ مَقَامِ الْبُلُوَى فَقَبَضَهُ إِلَيْهِ كَرِيماً (صلى الله عليه وآله) وَخَلَفَ فِيكُمْ مَا خَلَفَتِ الْأَنْبِيَاءُ فِي أُمَّهَا إِذْ لَمْ يَتْرُكُوهُمْ هَمَلاً بَعْضُهَا بِغَيْرِ طَرِيقٍ وَاضِحٍ وَلَا عِلْمٍ قَائِمٍ .

### القرآن وأحكامه الشرعية

كِتَابٌ رَبُّكُمْ فِيكُمْ مُبِيناً حَلَالَهُ وَحَرَامَهُ وَقَرَائِضُهُ وَفَضَائِلُهُ وَنَاسِخُهُ وَمَنْسُوخُهُ وَرُخْصَتُهُ وَعَزَائِمُهُ وَخَاصَتُهُ وَعَامَّتُهُ وَعَبْرَتُهُ وَأَمْتَالُهُ وَمُرْسَلَتُهُ وَمَحْدُودَتُهُ وَمُحْكَمَتُهُ وَمُتَشَابِهَتُهُ مُفَسِّراً مُجْمَلُهُ وَمُبِيناً عَوَامِضُهُ بَيْنَ مَأْخُودٍ مِيثَاقِ عِلْمِهِ وَمَوْسَعٍ عَلَى الْعِبَادِ فِي جَهْلِهِ وَبَيِّنٍ مُثَبِّتٍ فِي الْكِتَابِ فَرَضُهُ وَمَعْلُومٍ فِي السُّنَّةِ نَسَخُهُ وَوَاجِبٍ فِي السُّنَّةِ أَخَذُهُ وَمُرْخَّصٍ فِي الْكِتَابِ تَرْكُهُ وَبَيِّنٍ وَاجِبٍ بِوَقْفَتِهِ وَزَائِلٍ فِي مُسْتَقْبَلِهِ وَمُبَايِنٍ بَيْنَ مَحَارِمِهِ مِنْ كَبِيرٍ أَوْ عَدٍّ عَلَيْهِ نِيرَانُهُ أَوْ صَغِيرٍ أَرْصَدَ لَهُ عُفْرَانَهُ وَبَيِّنٍ مَقْبُولٍ فِي أَدْنَاهُ مَوْسَعٍ فِي أَقْصَاهُ .

### ومنها في ذكر الحج

وَقَرَضَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَجَّ بَيْتِهِ الْحَرَامِ الَّذِي جَعَلَهُ قِبْلَةً لِلأَنَامِ يَرُدُّونَهُ وُرُودَ الأَنْعَامِ وَيَأْلَهُونَ إِلَيْهِ وُلُوءَ الْحَمَامِ وَجَعَلَهُ سُبْحَانَهُ عَلَامَةً لِلنَّوَاضِعِينَ لِعِظَمَتِهِ وَإِذْعَانِهِمْ لِعِزَّتِهِ وَاخْتَارَ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ سُمَاعاً أَجَابُوا إِلَيْهِ دَعْوَتَهُ وَصَدَّقُوا كَلِمَتَهُ وَوَقَفُوا مَوَاقِفَ أَنْبِيَائِهِ وَتَشَبَّهُوا بِمَلَائِكَتِهِ الْمُطِيفِينَ بِعَرْشِهِ يُحَرِّزُونَ الأَرْبَابَ فِي مَشْجَرِ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيَتَّبِعُونَ عِنْدَهُ مَوْعِدَ مَغْفِرَتِهِ جَعَلَهُ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى لِلإِسْلَامِ عِلْماً وَللْعَانِدِينَ حَرَمًا فَرَضَ حَقَّهُ وَأَوْجَبَ حَجَّهُ وَكَتَبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَفَادَتُهُ فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَبِحَمْدِهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ حِجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ .

## Sermon 1

**In this sermon, Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام recalls the creation of the earth and sky and Adam's birth**

“Praise is due to Allāh whose worth cannot be described by speakers, whose bounties cannot be counted by those who calculate and whose claim (to obedience) cannot be satisfied by those who attempt to do so, the One whom the height of intellectual courage cannot sufficiently appreciate and the depths of understanding cannot possibly reach; He is the One for describing whom no limit has been laid down, no ample praise exists, no time is ordained and no duration is fixed. He brought forth creation through His Omnipotence, dispersed winds through His Compassion and firmed the shaking earth with rocks.

“The foremost in religion is to acknowledge Him. The perfection of acknowledging Him is to testify to Him. The perfection of testifying to Him is to believe in His Oneness. The perfection of believing in His Oneness is to regard Him to be the Absolutely Pure One. The perfection of His purity is to deny Him attributes because every attribute is a proof that it is different from that to which it is attributed, and everything to which something is attributed is different from the attribute. Thus, whoever attaches attributes to Allāh recognizes His like. Whoever recognizes His like regards Him as being two. Whoever regards Him as being two recognizes the existence of parts for Him, and whoever recognizes parts for Him mistakes Him, and whoever mistakes Him points at Him, and whoever points at Him attributes limitations to Him, and whoever attributes limitations to Him numbers Him.

“Whoever asks, ‘In what is He?’ holds that He is contained, and whoever asks, ‘On what is He?’ holds that He is not on something else. He is a Being but not through the phenomenon of coming into being. He exists but not out of non-existence. He is with everything but not in physical nearness. He is different from everything but not in physical separation. He acts but without connotation of movements and parts. He sees even when there is none to be looked at from among His creation. He is the One and only, such that there is none with whom He may keep company or whom He may miss in his absence.”

### Creation of the universe

“He initiated creation and commenced it originally, without undergoing contemplation, without making use of any experiment, without inventing any movement and without experiencing any mental aspiration. He allotted all things their terms, put together their variations, gave them their properties and determined their features. He knew them before creating them, fully realizing their limits and confines and appreciated their propensities and intricacies.

“When the Almighty created the openings of the atmosphere, expanse of firmament and strata of winds, He allowed water, the waves of which were stormy and the surges of which leaped one over the other to flow onto it. He loaded dashing winds and breaking typhoons, ordered them to shed it back (as rain), gave the wind control over the vigor of the rain and acquainted it with its limitations. The wind blew under it while water flowed furiously above it.

“Then, the Almighty created forth wind and made its movement sterile, perpetuated its status, intensified its motion and spread it far and wide. Then He ordered the wind to raise deep waters and to intensify the waves of the oceans. So the wind churned the water like the churning of curd and pushed it fiercely into the firmament, throwing its front status on the rear while the stationary status flowed till its level was raised and the surface was full of foam. Then the Almighty raised the foam to the open wind and vast firmament and made therefrom the seven skies. He made the lower one as a stationary surge and the upper one as a protective ceiling and high edifice without any pole to support it or nail to hold it together. Then He decorated them with stars and the light of meteors and hung in it the shining sun and effulgent moon under the revolving sky, moving the ceiling and rotating the firmament.”

### **Creation of Angels**

“Then He created the openings between the high skies and filled them with all classes of His angels. Some of them are in prostration and do not rise. Others are in kneeling positions and do not stand up. Some of them are in array and do not leave their status. Others are extolling Allāh and do not get tired. The sleep of the eye or the slip of wit or languor of the body or effect of forgetfulness does not affect them.

“Among them are those who work as trusted bearers of His message, who serve, speaking as tongues of His prophets, and there are those who carry His orders and commands. Among them are protectors of His creatures and guards of the gates of the Gardens of Paradise. Among them are those whose steps are fixed on earth but their necks protrude into the skies. Their limbs are out on all sides, their shoulders are in accord with the columns of the Divine Throne, their eyes are cast down before it, they have spread their wings down under it and they have rendered between themselves and all else curtains of honor and screens of power. They do not think of their Creator through images, do not impute created attributes to Him, do not confine Him within abodes and do not point at Him through illustrations.”

### **Creation of Adam ﷺ**

“Allāh collected clay from hard, soft, sweet and sour earth, which He moistened with water till it became pure. He kneaded it with moisture till it became gluey. From it He carved an image with curves, joints, limbs and parts. He solidified it till it dried up for a fixed time and a known duration. Then He blew into it out of His Spirit whereupon it took the pattern of a human being with a mind that governed him, intelligence which he made use of, limbs that served him, organs that changed his status, sagacity that differentiates between truth and falsehood, tastes and smells, colors and species. He was a mixture of clays of different colors, cohesive materials, divergent contradictories and differing properties like heat, cold, softness and hardness.

“Then Allāh asked the angels to fulfill His promise with them and to accomplish the pledge of His injunction by acknowledging Him by prostrating to Him and submitting to His honored status. So Allāh said: “Prostrate to Adam, so they prostrated except Iblis (Satan)” (Qur’ān, 2: 34; 7: 11; 17: 61; 18: 50; 20: 116). Self-importance withheld him (Satan) and vice overcame him. So he took pride in his own creation of fire and held the creation of clay with contempt. So Allāh granted him a respite in order to let him fully deserve His wrath, to complete (man’s) test and to fulfill the promise (He had made to Satan). Thus, He said: “Verily you have been allowed time till the known Day” (Qur’ān, 15: 38, 38: 81).

“Thereafter, Allāh placed Adam ﷺ in a place where He made his life and stay safe, and He cautioned him about Iblis and his enmity. Then his enemy (Iblis) envied Adam’s abiding in Paradise and his connections with the virtuous. So he changed his conviction into wavering and determination into weakness. He thus turned his happiness into fear and prestige into shame. Then Allāh offered Adam ﷺ the chance to repent, taught him words of His Mercy, promised him a return to His Paradise then sent him down to the place of trial and the procreation of his offspring.”

### **Allāh chooses His prophets ﷺ**

“From Adam’s offspring, Allāh chose prophets and took their pledge for His revelation and for carrying out His message as their trust. Throughout the course of time, many people perverted Allāh’s trust with them, ignored His status and accepted associates along with Him. Satan turned them away from knowing Allāh and kept them away from worshipping Him. Then Allāh sent His Messengers and a series of prophets to people to get them to fulfill the pledges of His creation, to recall His bounties to them, to exhort them by preaching, to unveil before them the hidden virtues of wisdom and to show them the signs of His Omnipotence. Of these signs He demonstrated the sky which is raised over them, the earth that is placed beneath them, a means of livelihood to sustain, death that makes them no more, ailments that turn them old and incidents that successively betake them.

“Allāh never allowed His creation to remain without a prophet deputed by Him, or a book sent down from Him or a binding argument or a standing plea. These Messengers were such that they did not feel few because of their number being small or the the number of those who belied them being big. Among them was either a predecessor who would name the one to succeed him or a follower who was introduced by the predecessor.”

### **Prophethood of Muhammed ﷺ**

“In this way, ages passed by and times rolled on. Fathers passed away while sons took their places till Allāh deputed Muhammed ﷺ as His Prophet, in fulfillment of His promise and in completion of His Prophethood. Muhammed’s pledge had been taken from the prophets, his traits of character were well reputed and his birth was honorable. The people of the earth at this time were divided into different parties, their aims were separate and ways diverse. They either loved Allāh and His creation or twisted His Names or turned to those other than Him. Through Muhammed ﷺ,

Allāh guided them out of wrongdoing and with his efforts took them out of ignorance.

“Then Allāh chose Muhammed ﷺ to meet Him, preferred him for His own nearness, regarded him as being too dignified to remain in this world and decided to remove him from this place of trial. So He drew him towards Himself with honor. May Allāh shower His blessing on him and on his Progeny.”

### **The Holy Qur’ān and the Sunnah**

“But the Prophet ﷺ left among you the same that other prophets left among their people, as prophets do not leave their people intentionally (in the dark) without a clear path and a standing ensign. He left the Book (Qur’ān) of your Creator clarifying what He permits and what He prohibits, what is obligatory and what is discretionary, the repealing injunctions and the repealed ones, the permissible matters and the compulsory ones, what is particular and what is general, lessons and illustrations, long and short ones, clear and obscure ones, detailing its (Qur’ān’s) abbreviations and clarifying its obscurities.

“In it, there are some verses knowing which is obligatory and others people’s ignorance of which is permissible. It also contains what appears to be obligatory according to the Book but its repeal is signified by the Prophet’s deed (Sunnah) or that which appears compulsory according to the Prophet’s deed but the Book permits one not to follow it. Or there are those verses which are obligatory in a given time but not so after that time period. Its prohibitions also differ. Some are major ones for which there exists the peril of the fire (Hell) and others are minor for which there are prospects of forgiveness. There are also those of which a small portion is also acceptable (to Allāh) but they are capable of being expanded.”

### **In this same sermon, he spoke thus about the Hajj:**

“Allāh has made the pilgrimage (*hajj*) obligatory on you to His sacred House which is the turning point for the people who go to it as beasts or pigeons go towards spring waters. Allāh, the most Glorified One, made it a sign of their supplication before His Greatness and their acknowledgment of His Dignity. He selected from among His creation those who, on listening to His call, responded to it and testified to His word. They stood in the status of His prophets and resembled His angels who surround the Divine Throne securing all the benefits of performing His worship and hastening towards His promised forgiveness. Allāh, the most Glorified One, made it (His sacred House) a symbol for Islam and an object of respect for those who turn to it. He made pilgrimage to it obligatory and laid down its claim for which He held you responsible to fulfill. Thus, Allāh, the most Glorified One, said:

﴿إِنَّ أَوَّلَ بَيْتٍ وُضِعَ لِلنَّاسِ لَلَّذِي بِبَكَّةَ مُبَارَكًا وَهُدًى لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٥﴾ فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمَنْ دَخَلَهُ كَانَ آمِنًا وَرَبُّهُ عَلَى النَّاسِ حَجُّ الْبَيْتِ مَنْ اسْتَطَاعَ إِلَيْهِ سَبِيلًا وَمَنْ كَفَرَ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ﴾

*The pilgrimage to the House is made incumbent on mankind (purely) for Allāh, on those who can afford the journey thither. And whoever denies it, then verily Allāh is sufficiently Independent of the Worlds (Qur’ān, 3: 96-97).*

“The foremost in religion (*deen*) is to know Him. The literal meaning of *deen* is



obedience and its popular sense is a code. Whether the literal sense is taken or the popular one, in either case, if the mind is devoid of any conception of Divinity, there would be neither a question of obedience, nor the following of any code. This is so because when there is no aim, there is no point in advancing towards it. Where there is no object in view, there is no sense in making efforts to achieve it. Nevertheless, when the nature and guiding faculty of man bring him in contact with a superior Authority and his taste for obedience and impulse of submission subjugates him before a Deity, he finds himself bound by certain limitations as against abject freedom of activity. These very limitations are *deen* (religion) whose point of commencement is knowledge of Allāh and acknowledgment of His Being.

“After pointing out the essentials of the Divine knowledge, Amīr al-Mu’minīn has described its important components and conditions. He holds those stages of such knowledge which people generally regard as the point of highest approach to be insufficient. He says that its first stage is that with the natural sense of search for the unknown and the guidance of conscience, or on hearing from the followers of religions an image of the Unseen Being known as Allāh is formed in the mind. This image, in fact, is the forerunner of the obligation to thinking and reflecting and seeking His knowledge. But those who love idleness, or are under pressure of the environment, do not undertake this search despite the creation of such an image, and the image fails to get testified. In this case, they remain deprived of the Divine knowledge. Since access to the stage of testifying after the formation of image is by volition, they deserve to be questioned about it. But one who is moved by the power of this image goes further and considers thinking and reflecting as being necessary. In this way, one reaches the next stage in the attainment of the Divine knowledge, namely to search for the Creator through observing the diversity of the creation and the species of beings. This is so because every picture is a solid and inflexible guide to the existence of its painter, and every effect is to the deed of its cause. When he casts his glance around him, he does not find a single thing which might have come into existence without the act of a maker, so much so that he does not find the sign of a footstep without a walker nor a building without a builder. How can he comprehend that this blue sky with the sun and the moon in its expanse and the earth with the exuberance of its grass and flowers could have come into existence without the deed of a Creator? Therefore, after observing all that exists in the world and the regulated system of the entire creation, no one can help but conclude that there is a Creator for this world of diversities because existence cannot come out of non-existence, nor can existence sprout forth from nothingness.

﴿قَالَتْ رُسُلُهُمْ أَفِي اللَّهِ شَكٌّ فَاطِرِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ يَدْعُوكُمْ لِيَغْفِرَ لَكُمْ مَن ذُنُوبِكُمْ وَ يُؤَخِّرَكُمْ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى قَالُوا إِنَّ أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُنَا تُرِيدُونَ أَن تَصُدُّونَا عَمَّا كَانَ يَعْبُدُ آبَاؤُنَا فَأَثُونَا بِسُلْطَانٍ مُّبِينٍ﴾

“The Holy Qur’ān has pointed out to this reasoning thus: *What?! Is there any doubt about Allāh, the Originator of the heavens and the earth?* (Qur’ān, 14:10).

“But this stage would also be insufficient if this testimony in favor of Allāh is tarnished by belief in the divinity of some other deity.

“The third stage is that His existence should be acknowledged along with believing in His Unity and Oneness. Without this, the testimony to Allāh’s existence cannot be complete because if more gods are believed in, He would not be One, whereas it is



necessary that He should be One. The reason is that in case of more than one god, the question would arise about whether one of them created all this creation or all of them did so together. If one of them created it, there should be some difference that distinguishes him; otherwise, he would be accorded preferential status without reason, which is unacceptable to the mind. If all have created it collectively, then the status has only two forms: Either he cannot perform his functions without the assistance of others, or he is above the need of their assistance. The first case means he is incapable and in need of others, while the other case means that there are several regular performers of a single act, and the fallacy of both has already been shown. If we assume that all the gods performed the act of creation by dividing it among themselves, all the creation would not bear the same relationship towards the creator. This is so because each creature will bear relationship only to its own creator, whereas every creature should have one and the same relationship to all creators. This is so because all the creation should have one and the same relationship to all the creators as all the created in their capacity to accept effect, and all the creators, in their capacity to produce effect, should be similar. In short, there is no way but to acknowledge Him as One because to believe in numerous creators permits no possibility of the existence of any other thing and destruction proves implicit of the earth, sky and everything in creation. Allāh, the most Glorified One, has expressed His argument in the following words: *لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا* *Had there been in the heavens and the earth [other] gods except Allāh, they both (the heavens and the earth) would have been in disarray* (Qur’ān, 21: 22).

“The fourth stage is that Allāh should be regarded as being free of all defects and deficiencies, devoid of a physical body, form, image, similarity, status of place or time, motion, stillness, incapability and ignorance. This is so because there can be neither deficiency nor defect in the perfect Being, nor can anyone be deemed like Him because all these attributes bring down a being from the high status of the Creator to the low status of the created. That is why along with Unity, Allāh has held purity from deficiency to be of an equal importance:

﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿۱﴾ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ﴿۲﴾ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ﴿۳﴾ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ﴿۴﴾﴾

*Say: He (Allāh) is the One (and Only). Allāh is needless. He begets not, nor is He begotten. And there is none like unto Him* (Qur’ān, 112:1-4).

﴿لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ﴾

*Vision perceives Him not whereas He perceives (all) vision; He is the Subtle, the all-Aware* (Qur’ān, 6: 104).

﴿فَلَا تَضْرِبُوا لِلَّهِ الْأَمْثَالَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ﴾

*So do not coin any similitudes to Allāh; verily Allāh knows (everything) while you do not* (Qur’ān, 16: 74).

﴿لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ﴾

*There is nothing whatever like unto Him, and He is the One Who hears and sees (all things)* (Qur’ān, 42:11).

“The fifth stage of completing His Knowledge is that attributes should not be put on Him from outside lest there should be duality in His Oneness. Deviating from its proper connotation, Unity may fall into the labyrinth of one-in-three and three-in-one because His Being is not a combination of essence and form so that attributes may cling to Him like the smell of the flowers or brightness of the stars. Rather, He is the fountainhead of all attributes and needs no medium for manifesting His perfect Attributes. If He is named Omniscient, it is because the signs of his knowledge are manifest. If He is called Omnipotent, it is because every particle points to His Omnipotence and Activity. If the power to listen or to see is attributed to Him, it is because the cohesion of the entire creation and its administration cannot be done without hearing or seeing. But the existence of these attributes in Him cannot be held in the same way as in His creation. One should be capable of knowing only after he acquires knowledge, or he should be powerful and strong only after energy runs into his limbs because taking attributes as separate from his being would connote duality: Where there is duality, unity disappears.

“This is how Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام has rejected the idea of attributes being added to His Being, presenting Unity in its true significance and did not allow Unity to be tainted with stains of multiplicity. This does not mean that adjectives cannot at all be attributed to Him. This will be giving support to those who are groping in the dark abyss of negativism, although every nook and corner in the entire existence is brimming with His attributes, and every particle of creation stands to testify that He has knowledge, He is powerful, He hears and He sees. He nurtures under His care and allows growth under His mercy. The intention is that for Him, nothing can be suggested to serve as an adjunct to Him because His Self includes attributes and His attributes connote His Self. Let us learn this very theme in the words of Imām Abū Abdullāh Ja’far ibn Muhammed as-Sādiq عليه السلام, comparing it with the belief in Unity adopted by other religions, then appreciating who the exponent of the true concept of Unity truly is!”

**The Imām عليه السلام says the following:**

“Our Lord, the Glorified One, the magnificent One, has knowledge of Himself even though there was nothing to know, sight of Himself even though there is nothing to behold, hearing of Himself even though there is nothing to hear, and Power of Himself even though there is nothing under His Power. When He created the things and the objects, knowledge came into existence, His knowledge became related to the known, hearing related to what is heard, sight related to what is seen, and Power related to its object” (*At-Tawhid* by Shaikh as-Sadūq, p.139).

This is the belief about which the Imāms from among the Prophet’s family عليه السلام are unanimous, but the majority group [of Muslims, i.e. the Sunni] has adopted a different course by creating the idea of differentiating between His Self and Attributes. Al-Shahristāni says the following on p. 42 of his book titled *Kitāb al-Milal wal-Nihal*: “According to Abul-Hassan al-Ash`ari, Allāh knows through (the attribute of) knowledge, is Powerful through activity, speaks through speech, hears through hearing and sees through vision.”

If we regard attributes as being distinct from the Self in this manner, there will be two alternatives: Either the attributes must have existed in Him, or they must have occurred later. In the first case, we have to recognize as many eternal objects as the attributes which will all share His being eternal, but Allāh is above that which people deem Him to have equals. In the second case, in addition to subjecting Him to the alternations, it would also mean that before the acquiring of the attributes, He was neither knowledgeable, nor powerful, nor hearer nor beholder, and this runs counter to the basic tenet of Islam.

﴿وَأَحَلَّ اللَّهُ التَّيْعَ وَحَرَّمَ الرِّبَا﴾

*Allāh has decreed trade lawful and has forbidden usury (Qur'ān, 2:275).*

﴿فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ﴾

*And when you have finished the prayers, remember Allāh standing, sitting and reacting, and when you are secure (from danger) establish prayers (Qur'ān, 4:103).*

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ كُلُوا مِمَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ حَلَالًا طَيِّبًا وَلَا تَتَّبِعُوا خُطُوَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ﴾

*O men! Eat of what is in the earth lawful and good and do not follow the foot-steps of Satan, for verily he is an open enemy to you (Qur'ān, 2:168).*

﴿قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَنَا بَشَرٌ مِّثْلُكُمْ يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ أَنَّمَا إِلَهُكُمُ إِلَهٌ وَاحِدٌ فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا﴾

*Say: "I am only a man like you; it is revealed to me that your God is but one God (Allāh); therefore, whosoever desires to meet his Master, let him do good deeds and associate none in the worship of his Master" (Qur'ān, 18:110).*

﴿أَتَأْمُرُونَ النَّاسَ بِالْبِرِّ وَتَنْسَوْنَ أَنفُسَكُمْ وَأَنتُمْ تَتْلُونَ الْكِتَابَ أَفَلَا تَعْقِلُونَ﴾

*What?! Do you enjoin on people to be righteous while you forget your own selves even as you read the scripture?! What?! Do you not understand?! (Qur'ān, 2: 44).*

About the Qur'ān, Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام says that it contains descriptions of permitted and forbidden acts, such as Allāh has allowed to sell and buy but prohibited usury. It clarifies obligatory and optional deeds such as

﴿فَإِذَا قَضَيْتُمُ الصَّلَاةَ فَادْكُرُوا اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِكُمْ فَإِذَا اطْمَأْنَنْتُمْ فَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ إِنَّ الصَّلَاةَ كَانَتْ عَلَىٰ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ كِتَابًا مَّوْقُوفًا﴾

*When you have finished the prayer, remember Allāh rising, sitting or lying down and when you feel safe (from the enemy) then say the prayers (as usual) (4:104).*

Here, prayer is obligatory, while other forms of remembering (Allāh) are optional. It has repealing and repealed verses such as about the period of seclusion after the husband's death: four months and ten days, or the repealed one such as: till one year without going out. This shows that this period of seclusion should be one year. In

certain places, it permits what is forbidden such as: “Whoever is compelled, without being willfully wrongful or transgressing, commits no sin.”

It has positive injunctions such one should not add anyone to Allāh in his worship. It has particular and general injunctions. Particular is the one where the word shows generality but the meaning is limited such as: “I have made you superior to other nations of the world, O Children of Israel.”

Here, the meaning of “nations of the world” is restricted to that particular time period, although the word is general in its literal meaning. The general injunction is one which is extensive in meaning such as Allāh has knowledge of everything. It has lessons and illustrations such as Allāh caught him in the punishment of this world and the next, and there is a lesson in it.

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*So Allāh seized him with the chastisement in the hereafter and the life before (it) (Qur’ān. 79: 25).*

*Verily in this there is a lesson to him who fears (Allāh) (Qur’ān, 79:26).*

*A kind word and a pardon is better than charity followed by harm, and verily Allāh is self-Sufficient, Most forbearing (Qur’ān, 2: 263).*

*And remember when We made a covenant with you and raised the Tur (mountain) above you (saying): Hold fast to that which We have bestowed upon you with the strength (of determination) and remember that which is the rein so that you may guard (yourselves) against evil (Qur’ān, 2: 63).*

*So we made it a lesson for (those of) their own times and for those (of their posterity) who came after them and an exhortation to those who guard (themselves) against evil (Qur’ān, 2: 66).*

*He it is Who fashions you in the wombs (of your mothers) as He likes; there is no god but He, the Almighty, the all-Wise (Qur’ān, 3:5).*

*Obedience and a fair word; but when the affair is determined, then if they are true to Allāh, it would certainly be better for them (Qur’ān, 47: 21).*

*O you who believe! It is not lawful for you to inherit women against their will, and do not apply pressure on them so you may take back a portion of what you had given them unless they are guilty of manifest lewdness; but deal kindly with them, and if you hate them, it may be that you hate a thing while Allāh has placed in it abundant goodness (Qur’ān, 4: 19).*

*Say (to the People of the Book): You dispute with us about Allāh, while He is our Master and your Master, and for us are our deeds and for you are yours; to Him (Alone) we are (exclusively) loyal (Qur’ān, 2: 139).*

There is a lesson in the Holy Qur’ān for whoever fears Allāh and illustrations such as: “The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allāh is like a grain which grows seven ears each one of which bears a hundred grains.” It has unspecified

and specific verses. Unspecific is one which has no limitation on specification such as: “Recall when Moses said to his people: Allāh commands you to sacrifice a cow...”

Specific is one where denotation is limited as Allāh says that “The cow should be such that it has neither been used for ploughing nor for irrigating fields.” There is clarity and obscurity in it. The clarity is that which has no intricacy such as: “Verily, Allāh has a sway over all things,” while the obscurity is a verse the meaning of which is complicated such as: “... the Merciful One (Allāh) occupies the throne” the apparent meaning of which gives the impression as if Allāh is physically “sitting” on the Throne although the idea is to underscore His authority, power and control. In the Holy Qur’ān there are brief injunctions such as: “Establish prayers” and those of deep meanings such as verses the meaning of which is not known except by Allāh and those who are deeply rooted in knowledge.

Then Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام deliberates on this theme in a different way, saying that there are some things in it which are necessary to know such as: “So be informed that there is no god except Allāh” and there are others which are not necessary to know such as Aleef, Laam, Meem, etc. It has also injunctions which have been repealed by the Prophet’s deeds such as: “As for your women who commit adultery, get four male witnesses, and if four witnesses do come forth, shut such women in their houses till death ends their lives.” This punishment was in effect in early Islam, but it was later replaced by stoning in the case of married women. In it, there are some injunctions which repealed the Prophet’s deeds such as: “Turn your face towards Masjid al-Haram,” by which injunction facing Bayt al-Maqdis (Jerusalem) (while performing the prayers) was repealed. It also contains injunctions which are obligatory only at a particular time, then they were repealed. It also contains injunctions which are obligatory only at a particular time after which their obligation ends such as: “When the call for prayer is made on Friday, hasten towards the remembrance of Allāh.” It has also indicated levels of prohibition as the division of sins into light and serious ones such as: “Tell the believers to lower their gaze” and serious ones such as “Whoever kills a believer willfully, his penalty is to remain in Hell forever.” It also contains injunctions where a little performance is enough but there is a scope for further performance such as: “Read the Holy Qur’ān as much as you can.”

*Verily your Master is certainly He: the Almighty, the all-Merciful (Qur’ān, 26: 9).*

*Say (O Prophet Muhammed) to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their private parts; that is purer for them; verily Allāh is all-Aware of whatever you do (Qur’ān, 24: 30).*

*Not equal are those of the believers who sit (hold back) to those who are hurt and who strive in the way of Allāh with their wealth and selves (lives). Allāh has raised those who strive with their wealth and selves (lives) in rank above those who sit (hold back); to all (faithful) Allāh has promised goodness: But those who strive He has distinguished above those who sit (linger behind and not go out to fight for the faith) a great recompense (Qur’ān, 4: 95).*

*Verily, your Lord knows that you stand up (during the night for the night prayers) two-thirds of the night and (sometimes) half of it and (sometimes) a third of it and (so does) a group of those with you, and Allāh measures (well) the night and the day; He*



knows that you can never take (correct) account of it, so He turns to you (mercifully); recite, then, whatever is easy (in the prayers) to be read of the Holy Qur'an; He knows that there may be among you those who are sick and others who are traveling in the earth seeking of the grace of Allāh and others who are fighting in the way of Allāh, so recite as much as it can easily be done of it, establish the (regular) prayers, pay the (prescribed) zakāt and offer to Allāh a goodly loan. Whatsoever good (deeds) you send forth before hand for yourselves, you will (surely) find it (its reward) with Allāh, that is the best and the greatest recompense, and seek the forgiveness of Allāh; Verily, Allāh is oft-Forgiving, most Merciful (Qur'an, 73: 20)."



### الخطبة الثانية

من خطبة له عليه السلام

صفة آل النبي ثم صفة قوم آخرين بعد انصرافه من صفين و فيها حال الناس قبل البعثة و

أَحْمَدُهُ اسْتِنْمَاماً لِنِعْمَتِهِ وَاسْتِسْلَاماً لِعِزَّتِهِ وَاسْتِعْصَاماً مِنْ مَعْصِيَتِهِ وَأَسْتَعِينُهُ فَاقَةً إِلَى كِفَايَتِهِ إِنَّهُ لَا يَضِلُّ مَنْ هَدَاهُ وَلَا يَبُلُّ مَنْ عَادَاهُ وَلَا يَفْتَقِرُ مَنْ كَفَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ أَرْجَحُ مَا وَزَنَ وَأَفْضَلُ مَا خُزِنَ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ شَهَادَةً مُمْتَحَنَةً إِخْلَاصُهَا مُعْتَقَدٌ مُصَاصُهَا تَتَمَسُّكَ بِهَا أَبَدًا مَا أَبْقَانَا وَتَدَّخِرُهَا لِأَهَائِلِ مَا يَلْقَانَا فَإِنَّهَا عَزِيمَةُ الْإِيمَانِ وَقَاتِحَةُ الْإِحْسَانِ وَمَرْضَاةُ الرَّحْمَنِ وَمَدْحَرَةُ الشَّيْطَانِ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَرْسَلَهُ بِالذِّينِ الْمَشْهُورِ وَالْعِلْمِ الْمَأْتُورِ وَالْكِتَابِ الْمَسْطُورِ وَالنُّورِ السَّاطِعِ وَالضِّيَاءِ اللَّامِعِ وَالْأَمْرِ الصَّادِعِ إِزَاحَةً لِلشُّبُهَاتِ وَاجْتِاجَاً بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَتَحْذِيرًا بِالْآيَاتِ وَتَخْوِيفًا بِالْمَثَلَاتِ وَالنَّاسُ فِي فِتْنٍ أَنْجَذِمَ فِيهَا حَبْلُ الدِّينِ وَتَزَعَزَعَتْ سَوَارِي الْبِقِينِ وَاخْتَلَفَ النَّجْرُ وَتَشْتَتَّ الْأُمْرُ وَضَاقَ الْمَخْرَجُ وَعَمِيَ الْمَصْدَرُ فَالْهَدَى خَامِلٌ وَالْعَمَى شَامِلٌ عَصِيَ الرَّحْمَنُ وَنُصِرَ الشَّيْطَانُ وَخَذِلَ الْإِيمَانُ فَانْهَارَتْ دَعَائِمُهُ وَتَنَكَّرَتْ مَعَالِمُهُ وَدَرَسَتْ سُبُلُهُ وَعَفَتْ شُرُكُهُ أَطَاعُوا الشَّيْطَانَ فَسَلَكُوا مَسَالِكَهُ وَوَرَدُوا مَنَاهِلَهُ بِهِمْ سَارَتْ أَعْلَامُهُ وَقَامَ لَوَاؤُهُ فِي فِتْنٍ دَاسَتْهُمْ بِأَخْفَافِهَا وَوَطِنَتْهُمْ بِأَطْلَافِهَا وَقَامَتْ عَلَى سَنَابِكِهَا فَهَمَّ فِيهَا تَائِبُونَ حَائِرُونَ جَاهِلُونَ مَفْتُونُونَ فِي خَيْرِ دَارٍ وَشَرِّ جِيرَانٍ نَوْمُهُمْ سُهْوٌ وَكَلْمُهُمْ دُمُوعٌ بِأَرْضِ عَالِمِهَا مُلْجَمٌ وَجَاهِلِهَا مُكْرَمٌ .

و منها يعني آل النبي عليه الصلاة و السلام

هُم مَوْضِعُ سِرِّهِ وَلَجَأُ أَمْرِهِ وَعَيْبَةُ عِلْمِهِ وَمَوْئِلُ حُكْمِهِ وَكُهُوفُ كُتُبِهِ وَجِبَالُ دِينِهِ بِهِمْ أَقَامَ انْجِنَاءَ ظَهْرِهِ وَأَذْهَبَ ارْتِعَادَ فَرَائِصِهِ .

وَمِنْهَا يَعْنِي قَوْمًا آخَرِينَ

زَرَعُوا الْفُجُورَ وَسَقَوْهُ الْعُرُورَ وَحَصَدُوا النَّبُورَ لَا يُقَاسُ بِآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ (صلى الله عليه وآله) مِنْ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ أَحَدٌ وَلَا يُسَوَّى بِهِمْ مَنْ جَرَتْ نِعْمَتُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ أَبَدًا هُمْ أَسَاسُ الدِّينِ وَعِمَادُ الْبِقِينِ إِلَيْهِمْ يَقِيءُ الْعَالِي وَبِهِمْ يُلْحَقُ التَّالِي وَلَهُمْ خَصَائِصُ حَقِّ الْوِلَايَةِ وَفِيهِمُ الْوَصِيَّةُ وَالْوَرَاثَةُ الْآنَ إِذْ رَجَعَ الْحَقُّ إِلَى أَهْلِهِ وَنُقِلَ إِلَى مُنْتَقَلِهِ .

## Sermon 2

Delivered on his return from Siffin before being nominated by the Prophet ﷺ as his successor, the caliph

"I praise Allāh, seeking completion of His Blessings, submitting to His Glory and thus anticipating safety from committing sins. I invoke His help, being in need of His Sufficiency (of protection). Whomsoever He guides does not stray. He with whom He

is hostile receives no protection. He whom He supports does not remain in need. Praise is most weighty of all that is weighed and most valuable of all that is treasured.

“I testify that there is no god but Allāh the One and Only God. He has no likeness. My testimony has been tested in its frankness, and its essence shall store it facing the tribulations that overtake us because it is the foundation stone of Belief (*īmān*), the first step towards good deeds and the (achievement of) Divine pleasure. It is the means to keep Satan away.

“I also testify that Muhammed ﷺ is His Prophet. Allāh sent him with the illustrious religion, effective emblem, written Book<sup>1</sup>, effulgent light, sparkling gleam and decisive injunctions in order to dispel doubts, present clear proofs, administer warnings through signs and warn of punishments. At that time, people had fallen into committing vices whereby the rope of religion was broken, the pillars of belief were shaken, the principles were desecrated, the system became topsy turvy, the openings were narrow, the passage was dark, the guidance was unknown and the darkness prevailed.

“Allāh was being disobeyed, Satan was given support and true belief had been forsaken. As a result, the pillars of religion crumbled, its traces could not be discerned, its passages had been destroyed and its paths had fallen into decay. People obeyed Satan and tread his paths. They sought water from his (Satan’s) watering places. Through them, Satan’s emblems flew and his standard was raised in vices which trampled people under their hoofs and treaded on them with their feet. The vices stood on their toes (in full stature) and the people immersed in them were strayed, perplexed, ignorant and seduced as though in a Good House<sup>2</sup> with bad neighbors. Instead of sleep, they had wakefulness, and for antinomy, they had tears in the eyes. They were a land where the learned were in bridle (keeping their mouths shut) while the ignorant were honored.

In the same sermon, Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام referred to Ahl al-Bayt عليه السلام (the Household of the Holy Prophet ﷺ) as follows:

“They are trustees of His secrets, shelters for His affairs, sources of knowledge about Him, centers of His wisdom, valleys of His books and mountains of His religion. With them, Allāh straightened the bend of religion’s back and removed the trembling of its limbs.”

In the same sermon, he spoke about the hypocrites thus:

“They sowed vices, watering them with deception and harvesting destruction. Nobody in the Islamic community can be the peer of the Progeny<sup>3</sup> of the Prophet ﷺ (Ahl al-

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<sup>1</sup>This is a reference to the Preserved Tablet, the source of all divinely revealed books.

<sup>2</sup>The “Good House” means the Ka’ba in Mecca, while the “bad neighbors” phrase refers to unbelieving Quraishites.

<sup>3</sup>About the Progeny of the Prophet (ص), Amīr al-Mu’minīn (ع) has said that nobody in the world can be their peer, nor can anyone be deemed as their equal in sublimity because the world is over-laden with their obligations and has been able to secure eternal blessings only



Bayt [ع]). One who was under their obligation cannot be matched with them. They are the foundation of religion and the pillar of belief. The forerunner has to turn back to them, while the follower has to catch up with them. They possess the main characteristics for vicegerency. In their favor exists the will and the succession (of the Prophet (ص)). This is the time when right has returned to its owner and retracted to its right course.



الخطبة الثالثة من خطبه عليه السلام  
المعروفة بالشَّفَقِيَّة

وتشتمل على الشكوى من أمر الخلافة ثم ترجيح صبره عنها ثم مبايعة الناس له

أَمَا وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ تَقَمَّصَهَا فَلَانٌ وَإِنَّهُ لَيَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مَحَلِّي مِنْهَا مَحَلُّ الْقُطْبِ مِنَ الرَّحَى يَنْحَدِرُ عَنِّي السَّبِيلُ وَلَا يَرْقَى إِلَيَّ الطَّيْرُ  
فَسَدَلْتُ دُونَهَا تُوْبًا وَطَوَيْتُ عَنْهَا كَنْسًا وَطَفِقْتُ أَرْتِي بَيْنَ أَنْ أَصُولَ بِيَدِ جَدَاءٍ أَوْ أَصْبِرَ عَلَى طَخِيَّةِ عَمِيَاءٍ يَهْرَمُ  
فِيهَا الْكَبِيرُ وَيَشِيْبُ فِيهَا الصَّغِيرُ وَيَكْدُخُ فِيهَا مُؤْمِنٌ حَتَّى يَلْقَى رَبَّهُ .

ترجيح الصبر

فَرَأَيْتُ أَنَّ الصَّبْرَ عَلَى هَاتَا أَحَجَى فَصَبَرْتُ وَفِي الْعَيْنِ قَدَى وَفِي الْحَلْقِ شَجًّا أَرَى تُرَائِي نَهْبًا حَتَّى مَضَى الْأَوَّلُ

through their guidance. They are the cornerstone and foundation of religion and the sustenance of its life and survival. They are such middle course among the paths of excessiveness and backwardness that if someone goes far towards excess and exaggeration, or if he falls behind, unless he comes back or steps forward to that middle course, he cannot be on the path of Islam. They possess all the characteristics which give them superiority in the right for vicegerency and leadership. Consequently, no one else in the *umma* enjoys the right of patronage and guardianship. That is why the Prophet (ص) declared them as his vicegerents and successors. About the issues of will and succession, commentator Ibn Abul-Hadīd, the Mu'tazilite scholar, writes that there can be no doubt about the vicegerency of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع), but succession cannot imply succession in status, although the Shī'ite sect has interpreted it to be as such. It rather implies succession of learning. Now, according to him, if succession is taken to imply succession in learning, even he does not seem to succeed in achieving his objective because even via this interpretation, the right of succeeding the Prophet (ص) does not devolve on any other person. It is agreed on that learning is the most essential requirement of *khilāfa* (caliphate) because the most important functions of the Prophet's caliph consist of: dispensation of justice, solving problems of religious laws, clarifying intricacies and administering religious penalties. If these functions are taken away from the Prophet's deputy, his status will be reduced to that of a worldly ruler. He cannot be regarded as the pivot of religious authority. Therefore, either we should keep governmental authority separate from the Prophet's vicegerency or accept the successor of the Prophet's knowledge to suit that status.

This interpretation by Ibn Abul-Hadīd could be acceptable if Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع) had uttered this sentence alone, but observing that it was uttered soon after Ali's (ع) recognition as the caliph, and just after it the sentence "Right has returned to its owner" exists, this interpretation of his seems to be baseless. Rather, the Prophet's will cannot imply any other will meaning except that of vicegerency and caliphate. Succession would imply neither in property nor in knowledge, because this was not an occasion to mention it here. But it must mean succession in the right leadership which stood and proved to be from Allāh not only on the ground of kinship, but on the ground of qualities of perfection.

لِسَبِيلِهِ فَأَدْلَىٰ بِهَا إِلَىٰ فُلَانٍ بَعْدَهُ - ثُمَّ تَمَثَّلَ بِقَوْلِ الْأَعْمَىٰ - :

سَنَانٌ مَا يَوْمِي عَلَىٰ كُورِهَا \* وَيَوْمُ حَيَّانٍ أَخِي جَابِرٍ

فَبَا عَجَبًا بَيْنَا هُوَ يَسْتَفِيلُهَا فِي حَيَاتِهِ إِذْ عَقَدَهَا لِأَخْرَ بَعْدَ وَفَاتِهِ لَشَدَّ مَا تَشَطَّرَا ضَرَّ عَيْهَا فَصَيَّرَهَا فِي حَوْرَةِ خَسَنَاءَ يَغْلُظُ كُلُّمَهَا وَيَخْشُنُ مَسُهَا وَيَكْتُرُ الْعِنَارُ فِيهَا وَالْإِعْتِدَارُ مِنْهَا فَصَادِحُهَا كَرَّ اكْبَابِ الصَّعْبَةِ إِنْ أَسْنَقَ لَهَا خَرَمٌ وَإِنْ أَسْلَسَ لَهَا تَقَحَّمُ فَمُنَى النَّاسُ لِعَمْرِ اللَّهِ بِخَبِطِ وَشِمَاسٍ وَتَلَوْنِ وَاعْتِرَاضِ فَصَبَّرْتُ عَلَى طُولِ الْمُدَّةِ وَشِدَّةِ الْمُحَنَّةِ حَتَّى إِذَا مَضَى لِسَبِيلِهِ جَعَلَهَا فِي جَمَاعَةٍ زَعَمَ أَنِّي أَحَدُهُمْ فَبَا لِلَّهِ وَلِلشُّورَى مَتَى اعْتَرَضَ الرَّيْبُ فِي مَعَ الْأَوَّلِ مِنْهُمْ حَتَّى صَبَّرْتُ أَفْرَنْ إِلَى هَذِهِ النُّظَائِرِ لَكِنِّي أَسْفَفْتُ إِذْ أَسْفُوا وَطَبَّرْتُ إِذْ طَارُوا فَصَعَا رَجُلٌ مِنْهُمْ لِبُغْيِهِ وَمَالَ الْأَخْرُ لِبُغْيِهِ مَعَ هُنَّ وَهَنَ إِلَى أَنْ قَامَ ثَالِثُ الْقَوْمِ نَافِجًا حَضْنِيهِ بَيْنَ نَثِيلِهِ وَمُغْتَلْفِهِ وَقَامَ مَعَهُ بَنُو أَبِيهِ يَخْضَمُونَ مَالَ اللَّهِ خِضْمَةَ الْإِبِلِ بِنَيْتَةِ الرَّبِيعِ إِلَى أَنْ انْتَكَتَ عَلَيْهِ فَنَلَّهُ وَأَجْهَرَ عَلَيْهِ عَمَلَهُ وَكَبَّتْ بِهِ بِطْنَتُهُ .

### مبايعة علي

فَمَا رَاعِنِي إِلَّا وَالنَّاسُ كَعُرْفِ الضَّبْعِ إِلَيَّ يَنْتَالُونَ عَلَيَّ مِنْ كُلِّ جَانِبٍ حَتَّى لَقَدْتُ وَطِيَّ الْحَسَنَانَ وَشَقَّ عَطْفَايَ مُجْتَمِعِينَ حَوْلِي كَرَبِيبِضَةِ الْغَنَمِ فَلَمَّا نَهَضْتُ بِالْأَمْرِ نَكَتَتْ طَائِفَةٌ وَمَرَقَتْ أُخْرَى وَقَسَطَ آخَرُونَ كَانْتَهُمْ لَمْ يَسْمَعُوا اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ يَقُولُ تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ تَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فُسَادًا وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ بَلَى وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ سَمِعُوهَا وَعَوَّاهَا وَلَكِنَّهُمْ خَلَيْتِ الدُّنْيَا فِي أَعْيُنِهِمْ وَرَأَقَهُمْ زَبْرُجَهَا أَمَا وَالَّذِي فَلَقَ الْحَبَّةَ وَبَرَأَ النَّسَمَةَ لَوْ لَا حُضُورُ الْحَاضِرِ وَقِيَامُ الْحُجَّةِ بِوُجُودِ النَّاصِرِ وَمَا أَخَذَ اللَّهُ عَلَى الْعُلَمَاءِ إِلَّا يَفَارُوا عَلَى كِظَّةِ ظَالِمٍ وَلَا سَعْبٍ مَظْلُومٍ لِأَلْفَيْتِ حَبْلَهَا عَلَى غَارِبِهَا وَلَسَقَيْتِ آخِرَهَا بِكَاسِ أَوْلِيهَا وَلَا لَفَيْتُمْ دُنْيَاكُمْ هَذِهِ أَزْهَدَ عِنْدِي مِنْ عَفْطَةِ عَنَزٍ .

قَالُوا وَقَامَ إِلَيْهِ رَجُلٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ السَّوَادِ عِنْدَ بُلُوغِهِ إِلَى هَذَا الْمَوْضِعِ مِنْ خُطْبَتِهِ فَنَاقَلَهُ كِتَابًا قِيلَ إِنَّ فِيهِ مَسَائِلَ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْإِجَابَةَ عَنْهَا فَأَقْبَلَ يَنْظُرُ فِيهِ [فَلَمَّا فَرَّغَ مِنْ قِرَاءَتِهِ] قَالَ لَهُ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ: يَا أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ لَوْ اطَّرَدْتُ خُطْبَتُكَ مِنْ حَيْثُ أَفْضَيْتَ.

فَقَالَ : هِيَاتَا يَا ابْنَ عَبَّاسِ تِلْكَ شَفِيقَةٌ هَدَرْتُ ثُمَّ قَرَّتْ .

قَالَ ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ : فَوَاللَّهِ مَا أَسْفُتُ عَلَى كَلَامٍ قَطُّ كَأَسْفِي عَلَى هَذَا الْكَلَامِ إِلَّا يَكُونُ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (عليه السلام) بَلَّغَ مِنْهُ حَيْثُ أَرَادَ .

### Sermon 3

#### Known as the “Shaqshaqiyya” sermon

“Beware! By Allāh, the son of Abū Quhāfah (Abū Bakr) outfitted himself with it (caliphate) while certainly knowing that my status in relationship to it is the same as the status of the axis in relationship to the handmill. The flood water flows down from me and the bird cannot fly above me. I put a curtain against the caliphate and kept myself detached from it.

“Then I began to think about whether I should assault or endure calmly the blinding darkness of tribulations wherein the grown-ups are feeble and the youngsters grow old; a true believer acts under strain till he meets Allāh (on his death). I found that endurance thereon was wiser. So I adopted patience although there was pricking in the eye and suffocation (of mortification) in the throats. I watched the plundering of my inheritance till the first one went his way, handing over the caliphate to (Omar) ibn al-Khattāb after him.”

Then he quoted a verse of poetry by al-A`shā<sup>4</sup> and went on to say:

“My days are now passed on the camel’s back (in hardship) while there were days (of ease) when I enjoyed the company of Jābir’s brother, Hayyan.

“It is odd how during his lifetime, he (Abū Bakr) wished to be released from the caliphate burden, but he confirmed it for the other one (Omar) after his death. There is no doubt these two men shared its udders strictly among themselves. This one put the caliphate in a tough enclosure where the utterance was haughty and the touch was rough. Mistakes were many as well as the excuses for them. One in contact with it was like the rider of an unruly camel. If he pulled up its rein, the very nostril would be slit. But if he let it loose, he would be thrown. Consequently, by Allāh, people got involved in recklessness, wickedness, unsteadiness and deviation.

“Nevertheless, I remained patient despite a length of period and the hardship of the trial, until when he went his way (i.e. died), he placed the matter (of caliphate) before a group, regarding myself to be one of its (*shūra*’s) members. But good Heavens! What had I to do with his “consultation”? Was there any doubt about me with regard to the first of them that I was now considered akin to these men? Yet I remained low when they were low and flew high when they flew high. One of them turned against me because of his hatred, and the other was inclined the other way due to his in-law relationship, and this thing and that thing, till the third man of these people stood up with a heaving chest between his dung and fodder. With him his offspring by the grand-father (Umayyah) also stood up, swallowing up Allāh’s wealth like a camel devouring the spring foliage till its rope broke down, its deeds finished him, its gluttony brought him down on its knees.

“At that moment, nothing took me by surprise except how the crowd of people rushed to me. They advanced towards me from every direction like the mane of a hyena, so much so that Hassan and Hussain were crushed, and both ends of my shoulder garment were torn. They gathered around me like a herd of sheep and goats. When I took up the reins of government, one party broke away and another turned disobedient while the rest began acting wrongfully, as if they had not heard the word of Allāh saying:

*That abode is in the hereafter, We assign it for those who intend not to exult themselves in the earth, nor (to make) mischief, and the end is (best) for the pious.*  
(Holy Qur’ān 28: 83)

“Yes, by Allāh, they had heard it and understood it, but life in this world appeared glittering in their eyes and its embellishments seduced them. Behold, by Him Who split the grain (to grow) and created living beings! If people had not come to me and supporters had not exhausted the argument, and if there had been no pledge of Allāh with the learned to the effect that they should not acquiesce in the gluttony of the oppressor and the hunger of the oppressed..., I would have cast the rope of caliphate on its own shoulders and given the last the same treatment as to the first. Then you would have seen that in my view, this world of yours is not better than a a goat’s sneeze.”

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<sup>4</sup>A footnote about poet al-A`shā is included later in this book.

It is said that when Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ reached this point in his sermon, a man from Iraq stood up and handed him something in writing. Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ began looking at it, whereupon Ibn Abbās said, "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn! I wish you resumed your sermon from where you stopped it." Thereupon, he replied, "O Ibn Abbās, it was like the foam of a camel which gushed out but subsided." Ibn Abbās said that he never grieved over any utterance as he did over this one because Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ could not finish it as he wished.

Ash-Sharīf ar-Radi says the following: "The phrases in this sermon such as 'like the rider of a camel' are intended to convey that when a camel's rider is stiff in drawing up the rein, in this scuffle, the nostril gets bruised. But if he lets it loose in spite of the camel's unruliness, it would throw him somewhere and would get out of control." *Ash-shaqshaqah* is used when the rider holds up the rein and raises the camel's head upwards. In the same sense, the phrase *shanaqa an-naqah* is used. Ibn as-Sikkit (the renown linguist) has mentioned this in his book titled *Islāh al-Mantiq*. Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ has said, "Ashnaqa laha" instead of "aslaha laha" and harmony could be retained only by using both in the same form. Thus, Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ has used "ashnaq laha" as though in place of "in rafa`a laha ra'saha", that is, "If he stops it by holding up the reins, etc."

1. This sermon is known as the *Shaqshaqiyya* and is counted among the most famous sermons of Amīr al-Mu'minīn. It was delivered at ar-Rahbah area (in Kūfa, Iraq). Although some people do not accept it as being Amīr al-Mu'minīn's utterance and, by attributing it to Sayyid ar-Radi (or ash-Sharīf ar-Radi), they laid blame on the integrity of his acknowledge. Yet truth-loving scholars have rejected this argument's veracity. Nor can there be any ground for this denial because Ali's difference of view in the matter of caliphate is not a secret, so that such hints should be regarded as something alien. And, the events which have been alluded to in this sermon are preserved in the annals of history which testifies to them word by word and sentence by sentence. If the same events, which are related by history, are recounted by Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ, then what are the grounds for denying them? If the memory of a discouraging circumstance faced by him soon after the death of the Prophet ﷺ appeared unpalatable to him, it should not surprise anyone. Undoubtedly, this sermon hits at the prestige of certain personalities and causes a setback to their faith and belief. But this cannot be sustained by denying the sermon to be Amīr al-Mu'minīn's utterance unless the true events are analyzed and the truth is unveiled; otherwise, just denying it as Amīr al-Mu'minīn's utterance, because it contains disparagement by certain individuals, carries no weight, especially when other historians have related similar criticism as well. Thus (Abū `Othmān) `Amr ibn Bahr al-Jāhiz has recorded the following words of a sermon by Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ and they are not less weighty than the criticism in the Sermon of ash-Shaqshaqiyya:

"Those two men who passed away (Abū Bakr and Omar) and the third (Othmān) rose like the crow the courage of which is confined to its belly. It would have been better if both its wings had been cut off and head severed."

Consequently, the idea that it is the production of Sayyid ar-Radi is far from the truth,

the result of partisanship and partiality. Or else if it is the result of some research, it should be bought out; otherwise, remaining in such a wishful illusion does not alter the truth, nor can the force of decisive arguments be curbed down by mere disagreement and displeasure.

Now, we set forth the testimony of those scholars and traditionists who have clearly held it to be Amīr al-Mu`minīn's production, so that its historical importance should become known. Among these scholars, some are those who preceded Sayyid ar-Radi's time period, some are his contemporaries and some others are came after him, but they all related it through their own chain of authority:

1) Ibn Abul-Hadīd al-Mu` tazili<sup>5</sup> writes that his master, Abul-Khayr Musaddiq ibn Shabīb al-`Āsasi (d. 605 A.H./1209 A.D.), states that he heard this sermon from Shaikh Abū Muhammed Abdullāh ibn Amad al-Baghdādi (d. 567 A.H./1172 A.D.), who was known as "Ibn al-Khashshāb," and when he reached where Ibn Abbās expressed sorrow for this sermon having remained incomplete, Ibn al-Khashshāb said to him that if he had heard the expression of sorrow from Ibn `Abbās, he would have certainly asked him if there had remained with his cousin any further unsatisfied desire. This is so because with the exception of the Prophet ﷺ, he had already spared neither predecessors nor followers and had uttered all that he wished. Therefore, why should there be any sorrow that he could not say what he wished to say? Musaddiq says that Ibn al-Khashshāb was a man of a big heart and a decent taste. I inquired from him whether he also regarded the sermon as being a fabrication. He replied saying, "By Allāh, I believe it to be Amīr al-Mu`minīn's words as I believe you to be Musaddiq ibn SHabīb." I said that some people regard it to be Sayyid ar-Radi's production. He replied saying, "How can ar-Radi have such guts or such style of writing?! I have seen Sayyid ar-Radi's writings and I know his style of composition. Nowhere does his writing match this one, and I have already seen it in books written two hundred years before the birth of Sayyid ar-Radi. I have seen it in familiar writings about which I know by which scholars or men of letters they were compiled. At that time, not only ar-Radi, but even his father Abū Ahmed an-Naqīb had not yet been born."

2) Thereafter, Ibn Abul-Hadīd writes that he saw this sermon in the compilations of his master, Abul-Qāsim (Abdullāh ibn Ahmed) al-Balkhi (d. 317 A.H./929 A.D.). He was the Imām of the Mu` tazilites during the reign of al-Muqtadir-Billāh, whereas al-Muqtadir's period was far earlier than that of the birth of Sayyid ar-Radi.

3) He further writes that he saw this sermon in Abū Ja`far (Muhammed ibn Abd ar-Rahmān), Ibn Qibāh's book *Al-Insāf*. He was the student of Abul-Qāsim al-Balkhi and a theologian of the Imāmiyya (Shī`ite) sect. See the *Sharh* of Ibn Abul-Hadīd, Vol. 1, pp. 205-206.

4) Ibn Maytham al-Bahrāni (d. 679 A.H./1280 A.D.) writes in his commentary that he had seen one such copy of this sermon which bore the writing of al-Muqtadir Billāh's

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<sup>5</sup>His full name is Izz ad-Dīn "Abū Hamīd" Abd al-Hamīd bin Hibatullāh ibn Abul-Hadīd al-Mu` tazili al-Madā'ini. He was an eminent Shāfi`i Mu` tazili (or Mu` tazilite) scholar of his era and a writer, and he is famous mostly for his commentary on Nahjul-Balāgha titled *Sharh Nahjul-Balāgha*. His exact date of birth is unknown, but he died in 656 A.H./1258 A.D.

minister, Abū Hassan Ali ibn Muhammed ibn al-Furāt (d. 312 A.H./924 A.D.) (*Sharh Nahjul-Balāgha*, Vol. 11, pp. 252 - 253).

5) `Allāma Muhammed Bāqir al-Majlisi has related the following chain of authorities about this sermon from Shaikh Qutbud-Dīn ar-Rawandi's compilation of *Minhaj al-Bard'ah fi Sharh Nahjul-Balāgha*:

6) In the context, `allāma al-Majlisi has written that the Imām's sermon is also included in the compilations of Abū Ali (Muhammed ibn Abdul-Wahhab) al-Juba'i (d. 303 A.H./916 A.D.).

7) In connection with this authenticity issue, `allāma al-Majlisi writes the following:

“Al-Qadi (Judge) Abdul-Jabbar ibn Ahmed al-Assad-Abādi (d. 415 A.H./1024 A.D.), who was a strict Mu'tazilite, explains some expressions of this sermon in his book *Al-Mughni* and tries to prove that it does not hit at any preceding caliph, but he does not deny that it was Amīr al-Mu'minīn's composition (*Ibid.* p. 161).

8) Abū Ja'far Muhammed ibn Ali, Ibn Babawayh (d. 381 A.H./991 A.D.) writes the following:

“Muhammed ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Ishaq at-Talaqani told us that Abdul-Azīz ibn Yahya al-Jalludi (d. 332 A.H./944 A.D.) told him that Abū Abdullāh Ahmed ibn `Ammār ibn Khālid told him that Yahya ibn Abdul-Hamīd al-Himmani (d. 228 A.H./843 A.D.) told him that Isa ibn Rashad reported this sermon from Ali ibn Hudhayfah and he from `Ikrimah and he from Ibn Abbās” (*Ilal ash-Shara'i*, Vol. 1, pp. 122, 144; *Ma`ani al-Akhhbār*, pp. 360-361).

9) Ibn Babawayh records the following chain of authorities: “Muhammed ibn Ali Majilawayh has related this sermon to us, and he took it from his uncle, Muhammed ibn Abul-Qāsim, and he from Ahmed ibn Abū Abdullāh (Muhammed ibn Khālid) al-Barqi, and he from his father, and he from (Muhammed) ibn Abū Umayr, and he from Aban ibn `Othmān, and he from Aban ibn Taghlib, and he from `Ikrimah, and he from Ibn Abbās” (*Ilal al-Shara'i*, Vol. 1, pp. 122, 146; *Ma`ani al-Akhhbār*, pp. 22, 361).

10) Abū Ahmed al-Hassan ibn Abdullāh ibn Sa'īd al-`Askari (d; 382 A.H./992 A.D.), who is counted among great Sunni scholars, has written a commentary and an explanation of this sermon that has been recorded by Ibn Babawayh in *Ilal ash-Shara'i* and *Ma`ani al-Akhhbār*.

11) As-Sayyid Ni`matullah al-Jaza'iri writes the following: “The author of *Kitāb al-Gharz*, namely 'Abū Ishaq' Ibrāhīm ibn Muhammed al-Thaqafi al-Kūfi (d. 283 A.H./896 A.D.), has related this sermon through his own chain of authorities. The date of completion of writing this book is Tuesday the 13<sup>th</sup> of Shawwal 255 A.H. (June 26, 869 A.D.). In the same year, Murtada al-Musawi was born. He was older than his brother Sayyid ar-Radi” (*Al-Anwār an-Nu'maniyya*, p.37).

12) Sayyid Radi ad-Dīn “Abul-Qāsim” Ali ibn Mūsa ibn Tawus al-Hussaini al-Hilli (d. 664 A.H./1266 A.D.) has related this sermon from *Kitāb al-Gharz* with the following chain of authorities:



“This sermon was related to us by Muhammed ibn Yousuf who related it from al-Hassan ibn Ali ibn `Abdul-Karim az-Za`far Sa`id form Muhammed ibn Zakariyyah al-Ghallabi from Ya`qūb ibn Ja`far ibn Sulaymān from his father from his grandfather and he from Ibn `Abbās” (translation of *Al-Tara`if*, p. 202).

13) Shaikh (mentor of) al-Tā`ifa, namely Muhammed ibn al-Hassan at-Tusi (d. 460 A.H./1068 A.D.) writes the following:

“(Abul-Fath Hilāl ibn Muhammed ibn Ja`far) al-Haffar related this sermon to us. He related it from Abul-Qāsim (Isma`il ibn Ali ibn Ali (Du`bul and he from his father from his brother Du`bul (ibn Ali alKhuzā`i) from Muhammed ibn Salamah al-Ashami from Zurarah ibn A`yan from Abū Ja`far Muhammed ibn Ali (Shaikh al-`al-Sadūq) from Ibn Abbās” (*Al-AAmāli*, p. 237).

14) Shaikh al-Mufid (Muhammed ibn Muhammed ibn an-Nu`mān, (d. 413 A.H./1022 A.D.), who taught Sayyid ar-Radi, writes about he chain of authorities of this sermon. A number of narrators of traditions have related this sermon form Ibn Abbās through numerous chains (*Al-Irshād*, p. 135).

15) *A`laam al-Huda* (flag-posts of guidance): Sayyid al-Murtada, elder brother of Sayyid ar-Radi, has recorded it on pp. 203-204 of his book *Al-Shafi*.

16) “Abū Mansūr” at-Tibrisi writes the following: “A number of narrators have related an account of this sermon from Ibn Abbās through various chains. Ibn Abbās said that he was in the audience of Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ at ar-Rahba (a place in Kūfa which still bears this name) when conversation turned to caliphate and to those who had preceded him as caliphs when Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ made a sign and delivered this sermon.<sup>6</sup>

17) “Abul-Muzaffar” Yousuf ibn Abdullāh and Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzi al-Hanafi (d. 654 A.H./1256 A.D.) write the following:

“Our Shaikh Abūl Qāsim an-Nafīs al-Anbāri related this sermon to us through his chain of authorities that ends with Ibn Abbās who said that after allegiance had been sworn to Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ as caliph, he was sitting on the pulpit when a man from among the audience inquired why he had remained quiet till then, whereupon Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ delivered this sermon ex-tempore. (*Tadhkirat Khawass al-Umma*, p. 73)

18) Judge Ahmed ibn Muhammed ash-Shihab al-Khafaji (d. 1069 A.H./1659 A.D.) writes the following with regard to its authenticity:

“It is indicated by Amīr al-Mu`minīn Ali ﷺ that ‘It is strange during his lifetime how he (Abū Bakr) wanted to give up the caliphate, but he strengthened its foundation for the other one (Omar) after his death’” (*Sharh Durrat al-Ghawwas*, p. 17).

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<sup>6</sup>At-Tibrisi, *Al-Ihtijaj*, p. 101.



19) Shaikh Ala ad-Dawla as-Simnani writes the following: “The Commander of the Faithful and the master of people of knowledge, Ali عليه السلام, has stated this in one of his brilliant sermons: ‘This is the Shaqshaqah that burst forth’ as we read in *Al-Urwah li ahl al-khalwa wal-jalwa*, p. 3, a manuscript at the Nāsiriyya Library, Lucknow, India.”

20) Abul-Fadl Ahmed ibn Muhammed al-Maydani (d. 518 A.H./1124 A.D.) has written the following in connection with the word “Shaqshaqa”:

“It is a sermon of Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام Ali and is known as *Khutbat ash-Shaqshaqiyya* (sermon of the camel’s foam)” (*Majma` al-Amthal*, Vol. 1, p 369).

21) In fifteen places in *Al-Nihāya*, while the author explains the sermon’s diction, Abūs-Sa`ada, namely Mubarak ibn Muahmmmed ibn al-Athīr al-Jazri (d. 606 A.H./1210 A.D.) has acknowledged it to be Amīr al-Mu’minīn’s statement.

22) While explaining the same words in *Majma` Bihār al-Anwār*, Shaikh Muhammed Tahir Patni testifies that this sermon belongs to Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام saying, “Ali عليه السلام says so.”

23) Abul-Fadl ibn Manzūr (d. 711 A.H./1311 A.D.) has acknowledged it as Amīr al-Mu’minīn’s speech in his lexicon titled *Lisān al-`Arab*, on p. 54 of Vol. 12, saying, “In the sayings of Ali in one of his sermons, ‘It is the camel’s foam that burst forth then subsided.’”

24) Mujaddid ad-Dīn, namely al-Firūz Abādi (d. 816/817 A.H./1413 A.D.), has recorded it under the word “Shaqshaqa” in his lexicon *Al-Qamus*, Vol. 3, p. 251.

The “Shaqshaqiyya sermon” is by Ali عليه السلام; it is named so because when Ibn Abbās asked him to resume it where he had left it, he said, “O Ibn Abbās! It was the foam of a camel that burst forth then subsided.”

25) The compiler of *Muntahal-Adab* writes the following:

“The Shaqshaqiyya (sermon) is attributed to Ali (may Allāh honor his face).”

26) Shaikh Muhammed `Abdoh, Egypt’s *mufti*, recognizes it as Amīr al-Mu’minīn’s speech and has explained it.

27) Muhammed Muhyid-Dīn `Abdul-Hamīd, professor of Arabic at Al-Azhar University, has written annotations for *Nahjul-Balāgha*, adding a Foreword in the beginning wherein he recognizes all such sermons which contain disparaging remarks as the utterances of Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام.

In the face of these evidences and undeniable proofs, is there any scope to hold that it is not Amīr al-Mu’minīn’s production, and that Sayyid ar-Radi himself had produced it?!

28) Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام has referred to Abū Bakr's ascension to the caliphate metaphorically as having outfitted himself with it. This was a common metaphor of the time. Thus, when 'Othmān was advised to give up his post as the caliph, to abdicate, he replied, "I shall not put off this shirt with which Allāh has clothed me." No doubt, Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام has not attributed this clothing with the caliphate to Allāh but to Abū Bakr himself. He knew that this "outfit" had been "stitched" for his own body, and that his status with relationship to the caliphate was that of the axis to the hand-mill: It cannot retain its central status without it, nor can it otherwise be of any use. Similarly, he held that "I was the central pivot of the caliphate. Had I not been elected, its entire system would have strayed from the pivot. It was I who acted as a guard for its organization and order, guiding it through all difficulties. Currents of learning flowed from my bosom and watered it on all sides. My status was high beyond imagination but lust for this world beyond the seekers of governance became like a stone tumbling on me, and I had to confine myself to seclusion. Blinding darkness prevailed all around and there was intense gloom everywhere. The young grew old and the old departed for the graves, but this patience-breaking period would not end. I kept watching with my eyes the plundering of my own inheritance and saw the passing of caliphate from one hand to the other but remained patient as I could not stop their high-handedness because of lack of means."

### **Need for a successor for the Prophet, the method of his appointment**

After the demise of the Prophet ﷺ of Islam, the presence of a successor for him was inevitable, one who would stop the community from disintegration and guard the religious canon against alteration, distortion and interference by those who wanted to twist it to suit their own desires. If this need is denied, there is no sense in attaching so much importance to the succession of the Prophet ﷺ such as that discussed by those who assembled at the *saqīfa* (shed) of Banū Sā'idah and who considered such an assembling to be more important than burying the Prophet ﷺ who had just passed away and kept unburied for three days. If this need is recognized, the question is whether or not the Prophet ﷺ, too, realized it. If it is held that he could not attend to it and appreciate its need or absence of need, it would have been the greatest proof for regarding the Prophet's mind to be blank about considering means for stopping the evildoers from committing innovations and apostasy in spite of his warnings about them. If it is said that he did realize it but had to leave it unresolved on account of another preference, then instead of keeping it hidden, the preference should have been clearly indicated; otherwise, silence without purpose would constitute delinquency in the discharge of the obligations of Prophethood. If there was some impediment, it should be disclosed; otherwise, we should agree that just as the Prophet ﷺ did not leave any item related to the creed incomplete, he did not leave this matter either and did propose such a course of deed for it, that if it was acted on religion, it would have remained safe against others' interferences.

The question now is: What was that course of deed? If it is taken to be the consensus of opinion of the community, then it cannot truly take place as in such consensus in which the acquiescence of every individual is necessary. But taking into account the difference in human temperaments, it seems impossible that they would all agree on any single point. Nor is there any example where on such matters, there has been no single voice of dissent. How, then, can such a fundamental need be rendered

dependent on the occurrence of such an impossible event at which the future of Islam and the good of the Muslims converge? Therefore, reason is not prepared to accept this criterion. Nor is tradition in harmony with it, as judge Adud ad-Dīn al-ʿIjī has written in *Sharh al-Mawāqif*: “You should know that caliphate cannot depend on unanimity of election because no logical or traditional argument can be produced for it.”

In fact, when the advocates of unanimous election found out that unanimity of votes was difficult, they adopted the agreement of the majority as a substitute for unanimity, ignoring their differences with the minority. Also, in such a case, it often happens that the force of what is fair or foul would correct or not correct ways that turn the tide of the majority opinion in the direction where there is neither individual distinction nor personal merit as a result of which competent persons remain hidden, while incompetent individuals rise. When abilities remain so cubed and personal ends stand in the way like hurdles, how can there be expectation for electing the right person? Even if it is assumed that all voters have independent and unbiased views, that no one has his own objective in mind, and that none has any other consideration..., it is not necessary that every verdict of the majority should be correct and that it cannot stray. Experience shows that after experiments, the majority has held its own verdict as being wrong. If every verdict of the majority is correct, then its first verdict should be wrong because the verdict, which holds it wrong, is also that of the majority. In this circumstance, if the election of the caliph goes wrong, who would be responsible for the mistake and who should face the blame for the ruination of the Islamic polity. Similarly on whom would be the liability for the bloodshed and slaughter following the turmoil and activity of the elections? When it has been seen that even those who sat in the audience of the Holy Prophet ﷺ could not be free of mutual quarrel and strife, how can others avoid it?

If, with a view to avoid mischief, it is left to the people of authority to choose anyone they like, then here, too, the same friction and conflict would prevail because here, again, convergence of human temperaments on one point are not viewed as being necessary, nor can they be assumed to rise above personal ends. In fact, here the chances of conflict and collision could be stronger because if not all, at least most of them would see themselves as candidates for that status, and they would not spare any effort to defeat their opponent, creating impediments in his way as best as they possibly can. The inevitable consequence would be mutual struggles and mischief-mongering. Thus, it would not be possible to ward off the mischief for which this device was adopted. Instead of finding a suitable individual, the community would just become an instrument for the achievement of personal benefits for others. Again, what would be the criterion for these people in authority? The same as has usually been, that is, whoever collects a few supporters and is able to create commotion in any meeting by use of forceful words would count among the people of authority. Or would abilities also be judged? If the mode of judging the abilities is again subjected to common voting, then the same complications and conflicts would arise here too. If there is some other criterion, then instead of judging the voter’s competency, why not judge the person who is considered suitable for the status in view? Furthermore, how many persons in authority would be enough to issue a final verdict? Apparently, once accepted, a verdict would set a precedent for good, and the number of those who would give this verdict would become the criterion for the future. Judge Adud ad-Dīn al-ʿIjī writes the following: “Rather, the nomination of one or two individuals by the

people in authority is enough because we know that the companions who were strict in religion deemed it enough as is the case with the nomination of Abū Bakr by `Omar and of `Othmān by Abd ar-Rahmān [ibn `Awf]” as we read on p. 351 of *Sharh al-Mawāqif*.

This is the account of the unanimous election in the “hall of Banū Sā`idah” and the activity of the “consultative assembly”; that is, one man’s deed has been given the name of “unanimous election”, one individual’s deed is given the label of “consultative assembly”. Abū Bakr had well understood this reality: Election means the vote of one person or two only which is then to be passed on to simple common people. That is why he ignored the requirement of a unanimous vote, a majority vote, or a method of choosing through an electoral assembly, appointing `Omar through his own personal nomination. `Ā`isha also considered leaving the question of caliphate to the vote of a few particular individuals as inviting mischief and trouble. She sent a word to `Omar on his death saying:

“Do not leave the Islamic community without a chief. Nominate a caliph for it and do not leave it without an authority; otherwise, I foresee mischief and trouble.”

When the election by those in authority proved to be futile, it was given up, and only “might is right” became the criterion, that is, whoever subdues others and binds them under his sway and control is accepted as the successor of the Prophet ﷺ and caliph. These are the self-adopted principles in the face of which all the Prophet’s ahādith uttered in the “Feast of the *ashīra*, tribal relatives,” on the night of hijra, at the Battle Tabūk, on the occasion of conveying the Qur’ānic chapter Bara’a (Tawba, Ch. 9) and at Ghadīr (the swamp of) Khumm... were all ignored. The strange thing is that when each of the first three caliphates was based on one individual’s choice, how can this same right to thus choose be denied to the Prophet ﷺ himself, particularly when this was the only way to end all the dissensions? The Prophet ﷺ should have himself settled it and saved the community from future disturbances, sparing it from leaving this decision in the hands of people who were themselves seeking personal interests and objects. This is the correct procedure which stands to reason and which also has the support of the Prophet’s definite statements.

Hayyan ibn as-Samīn al-Hanafī of Yamāma was the chief of the tribe of Banū Hanīfah and the commander of the fortress and army. Jābir is the name of his younger brother, while al-A`shā, whose real name was Maymūn ibn Qays ibn Jandal, enjoyed the status of being his bosom friend, and he led a decent, happy life due to his wealth. In one verse of poetry, he compares his current life with the previous one, that is, the days when he roamed about in search of livelihood and those when he led a happy life in Hayyan’s company. Generally, Amīr al-Mu`minīn’s quoting of this verse has been taken to compare this troubled period with the peaceful days that were passed under the care and protection of the Prophet ﷺ, i.e. when he was free from all sorts of troubles and enjoyed mental peace. But taking into account the occasion for making this comparison and the subject-matter of the verse, it would not be far-fetched if it is taken to indicate the difference between the unimportant status of those in power during the Prophet’s life time and the authority and power which they enjoyed after him. That is, during the days of the Prophet ﷺ, no heed was paid to them because of Ali’s overwhelming personality and prestige, but now times have changed, so the same people suddenly became masters of the affairs of the Muslim world.

When `Omar was wounded by Abū Lu'lu'ah and saw that it would be unlikely for him to survive due to his deep wounds, he formed a “consultative committee,” nominating Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام, `Othmān ibn `Affān, `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf, az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwām, Sa`d ibn Abū Waqqās and Talhah ibn `Ubaydillāh. Then he bound them with this condition: After three days of his death, they should select one of them to be the caliph, while during those three days, Suhayb ar-Rūmi<sup>7</sup> (born c. 587 A.D.) should act as the caliph. On receipt of these instructions, some members of the “committee” requested him to indicate what ideas he had about each of them in order to enable him to proceed further in that light. `Omar, therefore, disclosed his own view about each individual. He said that Sa`d was harsh-tempered and hot-headed; `Abd ar-Rahmān was the Pharaoh of the community; if pleased, as-Zubayr would be a true believer, but if displeased, he would turn un-believer (!); Talhah was the embodiment of arrogance and haughtiness, and if he was made caliph, he would put the ring of the caliphate on his wife’s finger (!), while `Othmān did not see beyond his kinsmen (i.e. favoritism). As regarding Ali عليه السلام, he is “enamored” by the caliphate “... although I know that he alone can run it on the right course.” Nevertheless, despite such admissions, `Omar thought it necessary to form the consultative committee. In selecting its members and laying down the working procedures, he made sure that the caliphate would take the direction in which he wished to turn it. Thus, any man of ordinary prudence can draw the conclusion that all the factors for `Othmān’s success were present there and then. If we look at the members of this “committee”, we can see that one of the them, namely `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf was the husband of `Othmān’s sister; Sa`d ibn Abū Waqqās was harboring malice towards Ali عليه السلام and is a relative and kinsman of Abd ar-Rahmān. Neither of these men could be expected to go against the word of `Othmān. Prof. Muhammed Abdoh writes the following about the third candidate, namely Talhah ibn `Ubaydullāh, in this annotation of *Nahjul-Balāgha*:

“Talhah was inclined towards `Othmān. The reason for it was no less than the fact that he was against Ali عليه السلام: Talhah belonged to the Taym tribe, and Abū Bakr’s accession to the caliphate had created bad blood between Banū Taym and Banū Hāshim.”

As regarding az-Zubayr, even if he had voted for Ali, what could his single vote

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<sup>7</sup>There is disagreement among scholars about the identity of this Suhayb. Ibn al-Athīr details his biography on pp. 433-36, Vol. 2 of the most recently published edition of his *Usd al-Ghāba* encyclopedia (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Fikr, 1419 A.H./1998 A.D.), citing the historian al-Wāqidi saying that the man’s full name is: Suhayb ibn Sinan ibn Khālid ibn Abd `Amr ibn Tufayl. He adds saying that he is also known as "Al-Rumi" because the [Eastern] Romans had taken him into captivity when he was a child, and that both his father and uncle were governors appointed during the rule of Kisra of Persia, and that they had homes built on the Tigris near Mosul, though some say they were on the Euphrates in the Jazeera (the upper delta area between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers in today’s northern Iraq). He was bought by Abdullāh ibn Jud`an al-Taymi of Mecca who set him free and brought him to Hijāz. Ibn al-Athīr indicates that Suhayb died in Shawwal of 38 A.H./March 659 A.D. at the age of 70 or 73 (which would put his date of birth at around 586 or 589 A.D.) and was buried in Medīna. He is said as having participated in the battles of Badr, Uhud, al-Khadaq and all other battles in the company of the Prophet of Islam (ص), and surely Allāh knows best.



achieve? According to al-Tabari's statement, Talhah was not present in Medīna at that time, but his absence did not stand in the way of `Othmān's succession. Rather, even if he were present and had attended the meeting (of the committee), he was regarded as being a supporter of Ali عليه السلام. Still, there could be no doubt about `Othmān's succession because `Omar's plotting mind had set the working procedure to be as follows:

If two members agree about one (candidate) and the other two about another, Abdullāh bin `Omar should then act as the arbitrator. The group over which he presides should choose the caliph from among its members. If they do not accept Abdullāh bin `Omar's verdict, support should be given to the group which includes `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf. But if the others do not agree, they should be beheaded for opposing this verdict...!<sup>8</sup>

Here, the disagreement with the verdict of Abdullāh bin `Omar makes no sense since he was instructed to support the group which included among its members `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf. `Omar had already ordered both his sons Abdullāh and Suhayb that:

“If the people differ, you should side with the majority. But if three of them are on one side and the other three are on the other, you should side with the group that includes `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf,” as we can see in the *Tārīkh* of al-Tabari, Vol. 1, pp. 2725, 2789, and in Ibn al-Athīr, Vol. 3, pp. 51, 67.

In this instruction, the agreement with the majority also means support for `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf because the majority could not be on any other side since fifty blood-thirsty swords had been placed on the heads of the opposition group with orders to fall on their heads as soon as `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf gave the order...! Amīr al-Mu'minīn's eyes had foreseen it at that very moment, that is, the caliphate was going to `Othmān. This appears from his following words which he spoke to Abbās ibn Abdul-Muttalib: “The caliphate has been turned away from us.” Al-Abbās asked him how he could know it. He replied, “`Othmān has also been coupled with me, and it has been laid down that the majority should be supported. But if two (members) agree on one (candidate) and two on the other, then support should be given to the group which includes `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf.” Now Sa'd will support his cousin `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf who, of course, is the husband of `Othmān's sister according to the same reference cited above.

However, after `Omar's death, this meeting took place in the room of `Ā'isha. At its door stood Abū Talhah al-Ansāri with fifty men having drawn swords in their hands. Talhah started the proceedings and, inviting all others to bear witness, he said that he gave his right of vote to `Othmān. This touched on az-Zubayr's sense of honor because his mother, Safiyya daughter of Abdul-Muttalib, was the sister of the Prophet's father (i.e. paternal aunt of the Prophet [ص]). So, he gave his right of vote to Ali. Thereafter, Sa'd ibn Abū Waqqās cast his vote in favor of `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf. This left three members of the consultative committee out of whom `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf said that he was willing to give up his own right of vote only if Ali

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<sup>8</sup>al-Tabari, *Tārīkh*, Vol. 1 pp. 2779-80; Ibn al-Athīr, *Isāba*, Vol. 3, p. 67.

عليه السلام and `Othmān gave him the right to choose one of them, or if one of these men should acquire this right by the other withdrawing. This was a trap in which Ali had been entangled from all sides: Either he should abandon his own right, or else he should allow `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf to do as he pleased. The first scenario was not possible for him; that is, to give up his own right and elect `Othmān or Abd ar-Rahmān. So, he uphold his right, while Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf, separating himself from it, assumed this power and said to Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام, “I swear the oath of allegiance to you on your following the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah (teachings) of the Prophet ﷺ and the conduct of the two Shaikhs (Abū Bakr and `Omar).” Ali عليه السلام replied, “Rather, on following the Book of Allāh, the Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ and my own judgment (*ijtihad*).” When Abd ar-Rahmān got the same reply even after repeating the question three times, he turned to `Othmān and said, “Do you accept these conditions?” `Othmān had no reason to refuse, so he agreed to the conditions and allegiance was sworn to him. When Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام saw his rights being trampled on, he said: “This is not the first day when you thus behave against us (we Ahl al-Bayt [ع]). I have only to maintain patience. Allāh is the Helper against whatever you say. By Allāh, you have not made `Othmān caliph but in hope that he would give back the caliphate to you.” And this is exactly what happened as history tells us.

After recording the events of the *shūra* (consultative committee), Ibn Abul-Hadīd has written that when allegiance had been sworn to `Othmān, Ali عليه السلام addressed `Othmān and `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `awf thus: “May Allāh sow the seed of dissension among you,” and so it happened: Each of those men turned a bitter enemy of the other, and after that `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf did not ever speak to `Othmān till the latter was killed by angry Muslims who were fed-up with his favoritism and misappropriation of public funds. Even on his deathbed, `Othmān turned his face away from him...

On seeing these events, the question arises about whether the principle of *shūra* (consultative committee) means confining the matter to six persons, thereafter to three and finally to only one! Also, was the condition of following the conduct of the two Shaikhs [Abū Bakr and `Omar] for running the government was put by `Omar, or was it just a hurdle placed by `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn `Awf between Ali عليه السلام and the caliphate? The first caliph did not put forth this condition when he nominated his successor, the second caliph, `Omar, so that he should follow his own footsteps. What then, was the occasion for this condition here?

Anyway, Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام had agreed to participate in it in order to avoid mischief and to put an end to arguing, so that others should be silenced and should not be able to claim that they would have voted in his favor and that he, himself, evaded the consultative committee and did not give them an opportunity to select him.

About the reign of the third caliph [`Othmān ibn `Affān], Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام says that soon on `Othmān's coming to power, Banū Umayyah got firm grounds and began plundering *baytul-māl* (state treasury, the equivalent now of the state's budget) just like cattle on seeing green grass after a drought trampled them: They recklessly feel on Allāh's money and devoured it. At last, this self-indulgence and nepotism brought `Othmān to the stage when people besieged his opulent mansion, put him to the sword and made him vomit all that he had swallowed.



The mis-administration that took place in `Othmān's period was such that no Muslim could remain silent, unaffected, unmoved on seeing that companions of high status were starving without anyone to care for them, stricken with poverty and surrounded by bankruptcy while control over *baytul-māl* was the lot of Banū Umayyah. Government positions were distributed to their young and inexperienced sons, special Muslim properties were confiscated by them, meadows provided grazing but only to their cattle, opulent mansions were built but by them and orchards were planted. If any compassionate person spoke about these excesses, his ribs were broken by the authorities. If someone agitated about their horading, he was banished out of the city. The uses to which *zakāt* (poor-rate) and charities, which were intended by Islam for the poor and the wretched, and the public funds which were the common property of the Muslims..., were put may be observed from the following few illustrations:

1) Al-Hakam ibn Abul-`Ās, who had been condemned and expelled from Medīna by the Prophet ﷺ for his sins, was allowed back in the city, not only against the Prophet's Sunnah (teachings) but also against the conduct of the first two caliphs as well. He was paid three hundred thousand dirhams (silver pieces) from the public funds as we read in a famous and highly respected Sunni reference, namely *Ansāb al-Ashraaf* (lineages of men of distinction), Vol. 5, pp. 27, 28, 125).

2) Al-Walīd ibn `Uqbah ibn Abū Mu`et, who is condemned and called a *fasiq*, an open sinner, in verse 6, Chapter 49 (Sūrat Al-Hujurat, the Chambers) of the Holy Qur`ān, was paid one hundred thousand dirhams from the Muslims' public funds as we read in another great Sunni reference, namely: Ibn Abd Rabbih, *Al-Iqd al-Farīd*, Vol. 3, p. 94. By the way, some ignorant Muslims praise this Walīd, call him a "great *sahābi*" and go as far as invoking the Almighty's blessings for him! And thus do some people do.

3) Caliph `Othmān married off his daughter, Umm Aban, to his cousin Marwān ibn al-Hakam, paying him one hundred thousand dirhams from the public funds as we read in *Sharh Nahjul-Balāgha* of the Mu`tazilite scholar Ibn Abul-Hadīd, Vol. 1, pp. 198-199.

4) He married off his daughter `Ā'isha to al-Hārith ibn al-Hakam and granted him one hundred thousand dirhams from the public funds (*Ibid.*).

5) Abdullāh ibn Khālīd was paid four hundred dirhams<sup>9</sup> as we read on p. 84 of *Al-Ma`ārif* of Ibn Qutaybah.

6) He allowed the *khums* (one-fifth religious tax) from Africa which amounted to five hundred thousand dinars to Marwān ibn al-Hakam, according to the same reference.

7) Fadak, which was confiscated from the angelic daughter of the Prophet ﷺ on the ground of being a public charity, was given as a royal favor to Marwān ibn al-Hakam. See the same reference cited above.

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<sup>9</sup>I think the correct figure is four hundred thousand dirhams, although four hundred dirhams (silver pieces) constituted no small fortune in those days, but `Othmān's men would not consider four hundred dirhams as being worthy of entering history books!

8) Mahzūr, a place in the commercial area of Medīna, which had been declared “public trust” by the Prophet ﷺ, was gifted to Hārith ibn al-Hakam, according to the same reference.

9) In the meadows around Medīna, no camels except those of Banū Umayyah were allowed to graze, as we read in the *Sharh* of Ibn Abul-Hadīd, Vol. 1, p. 199.

10) After his (‘Othmān’s) death, one hundred and fifty thousand dinars (gold coins) and one million dirhams (silver coins) were found in his house.<sup>10</sup> There was no limit to tax-free lands and to the total value of the real estate which ‘Othmān owned. Only in Wadi al-Qura and Hunain, the value of his properties was estimated at one hundred thousand dinars. There were countless camels and horses that were owned by the caliph, according to *Murūj al-Dhahab*, Vol. 1, p.435.

11) The caliph’s relatives ruled all major cities, metropolises. Thus, in Kūfa, al-Walīd ibn ‘Uqbah was the governor, but when he was intoxicated after having drunk wine, he used to lead the morning prayer service performing four instead of two *rak`as*... This went on for so long till people were agitated and demanded his removal, so the caliph put in his place a hypocrite named Sa`id ibn al-`Ās. In Egypt, Abdullāh ibn Sa`d ibn Abū Sarh, in Syria Mu`āwiyah ibn Abū Sufyān and in Basra, Abdullāh ibn Amīr were the governors, all appointed by ‘Othmān (*Ibid*).



#### الخطبة الرابعة

وهي من أفصح كلامه عليه السلام وفيها يعظ الناس ويهديهم من ضلالتهم و يقال إنه خطبها بعد قتل طلحة و الزبير

بِنَا اهْتَدَيْتُمْ فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ وَتَسَنَّمْتُمْ دُرُورَةَ الْعُلَيَاءِ وَبِنَا أَفَجَرْتُمْ عَنِ السَّرَارِ وَوَقِرَ سَمْعُ لَمْ يَفْقَهُ الْوَاعِيَةَ وَكَيْفَ يِرَاعِي النَّبَاةَ مَنْ أَصَمَّتْهُ الصَّيْحَةُ رُبِطَ جَنَانٌ لَمْ يُفَارِقْهُ الْخَفَقَانُ مَا زِلْتُ أَنْتَظِرُ بِكُمْ عَوَاقِبَ الْعَدْرِ وَأَتَوَسَّمُكُمْ بِحِلْيَةِ الْمُعْتَرِينَ حَتَّى سَتَرَنِي عَنْكُمْ جَلْبَابُ الدِّينِ وَبَصَرَنِيكُمْ صِدْقُ النَّبِيِّ أَقَمْتُ لَكُمْ عَلَى سَنَنِ الْحَقِّ فِي جَوَادِّ الْمَضَلَّةِ حَيْثُ تَلْتَقُونَ وَلَا دَلِيلَ وَتَحْتَفِرُونَ وَلَا تُمِيهُونَ الْيَوْمَ أَنْطِقَ لَكُمْ الْعُجَمَاءُ ذَاتَ الْبَيَانِ عَزَبَ رَأْيِي أَمْرِي تَخَلَّفَ عَنِّي مَا شَكَّكَتْ فِي الْحَقِّ مَذْ أَرِيئُهُ لَمْ يُوجِسْ مُوسَى (عليه السلام) خَيْفَةً عَلَى نَفْسِهِ بَلْ أَشْفَقَ مِنْ غَلْبَةِ الْجُهَالِ وَدُورِ الضَّلَالِ الْيَوْمَ تَوَاقَفْنَا عَلَى سَبِيلِ الْحَقِّ وَالْبَاطِلِ مَنْ وَثِقَ بِمَاءٍ لَمْ يَطْمَأْ.

#### Sermon 4

#### Amīr al-Mu`minīn’s far-sightedness and deeply rooted conviction

“Through us did you receive guidance in the darkness, securing a high status. And through us did you get out of the gloomy nights. May the ears that do not listen to the cries become deaf. How can one who remained deaf to the loud cries (of the Holy Qur`ān and the Prophet [ص]) listen to (my) feeble voice? May the heart that ever

<sup>10</sup>In classic Arabic sources, the word “million” does not exist. Arabs use instead the phrase “a thousand thousands”.

palpitates (with fear of Allāh) be at peace.

“I always expected from you the consequences of treachery, and I had seen you outfitted in the garb of deceit. The curtain of the religion had kept me hidden from you, but the truth of my intentions unveiled you to me. I stood for you on the path of the truth among misleading tracks where you met each other, but there was no leader, and you dug, but you got no water.

“Today, I am making these dumb things speak to you (i.e. my suggested ideas and deep musing, etc.) which are full of descriptive power. May the opinion of the person who abandons me miss the mark. I have never doubted the truth since it was shown to me. Mūsa (Moses)<sup>11</sup> did not entertain fear for his own life. Rather, he feared the mastery of the ignorant and the path towards deviation. Nowadays, we stand on the crossroads of truth and falsehood. One who is sure of getting water feels no thirst.”

Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام says that the ground for Moses' fear was not because he saw ropes and sticks moving, so he perhaps entertained fear for his life, but the cause of his fear was lest people should be impressed with this sorcery and thus stray, and thus untruth might prevail on account of this trick. That is why Moses was not consoled by saying that his life was safe but by saying that he would prove to be superior and that his claim would be upheld. Since his fear was for the defeat of the truth and the victory of falsehood, not for his own life, the assurance was given to him that the truth would win, not that his life would be protected from those seemingly snakes.

Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام also means that he too, had the same fear, meaning that the people should not be caught in the trap of these individuals (Talhah, az-Zubayr, etc.) and thus fall into misguidance by straying from the paths of the true faith; other than that, he himself never feared for his own life.



ومن كلام له عليه السلام  
وخاطبه العباس وأبو سفيان في أن يبايعا له بالخلافة صلى الله عليه وآله لما قبض رسول الله  
وذلك بعد أن تمت البيعة لأبي بكر في السقيفة، وفيها ينهى عن الفتنة ويبين عن خلقه وعلمه

#### النهي عن الفتنة

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ شَفُّوا أَمْوَاجَ الْفِتَنِ بِسُفْنِ النَّجَاةِ وَعَرِّجُوا عَنْ طَرِيقِ الْمُنَافَرَةِ وَضَعُوا تَبِجَانَ الْمُفَاخَرَةِ أَقْلَحَ مَنْ نَهَضَ  
بِجَنَاحٍ أَوْ اسْتَسْلَمَ فَارَاحَ هَذَا مَاءٌ أَجْنٌ وَلُفْمَةٌ يَعْصُ بِهَا أَكْلُهَا وَمُجْتَبِي النَّمْرَةِ لِعَيْرٍ وَقَتِ إِبْنَاعِهَا كَالزَّرَارِعِ بَعِيرٍ  
أَرْضِيهِ .

<sup>11</sup>This is a reference to Moses when sorcerers were sent to confront him, and they demonstrated their sorcery by throwing ropes and sticks on the ground and Moses seemingly felt afraid. Thus, the Holy Qur'ān records: “It seemed to him (Moses), by their sorcery, as if they were running. Then Moses felt within himself apprehension. We said: Fear not! Verily, you are the uppermost” (20:66-68).

## خلقه و علمه

فَإِنْ أَقْلٌ يَقُولُوا حَرَّصَ عَلَى الْمُلْكِ وَإِنْ أَسْكُتُ يَقُولُوا جَزَعٌ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ هَيْهَاتَ بَعْدَ اللَّتْيَا وَالَّتِي وَاللَّهِ لَا بَيْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ  
أَنْسُ بِالْمَوْتِ مِنَ الطِّفْلِ بِنُدْيِ أُمِّهِ بَلِ انْدَمَجْتُ عَلَى مَكُونِ عِلْمٍ لَوْ بَحْتُ بِهِ لِأَضْطَرِّبُكُمْ اضْطِرَابَ الْأَرْضِيَّةِ فِي  
الطُّوِيِّ الْبَعِيدَةِ .

### Sermon 5

**Delivered when the Holy Prophet ﷺ died and Abbās ibn Abdul-Muttalib and  
Abū Sufyān ibn Harb offered to swear the oath of allegiance to Amīr al-  
Mu'minīn عليه السلام as the caliph**

“O People!<sup>12</sup> Steer clear through the waves of mischief by boats of deliverance, turn away from the path of dissension and take off the garbs of pride. Prosperous is one who rises with wings (i.e. when he has power) or else he remains peaceful as others enjoy ease. It (i.e. the aspiration for caliphate) is like turbid water or like a morsel that would suffocate the person who swallows it. One who picks fruits before they are ripe is like one who cultivates in someone else’s field.

“If I speak out, they will call me greedy for power, but if I keep quiet, they will say that I am afraid of death. What a pity it is after all the ups and downs (I have been through)! By Allāh, the son of Abū Tālib is fonder of death<sup>13</sup> than an infant of the

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<sup>12</sup>The Holy Prophet (ص) died on Monday, the 28<sup>th</sup> of Safar, 11 A.H. (May 28, 632 A.D. according to the Julian Christian calendar, or the 28<sup>th</sup> of the same month and year according to the Gregorian calendar, both confirming that day to be a Monday). He remained unburied till the next day, although some historians say till Wednesday. Abū Sufyān was not in Medīna on that day. He was on his way back from a trip, most likely a business trip, when he received the reports of this tragedy. At once, he inquired about who had become the leader, the chief, the successor, the caliph. He was told that people had paid allegiance to Abū Bakr. On hearing this, the acknowledged mischief-monger of Arabia went into deep thought and eventually went to Abbās ibn Abdul-Muttalib with a suggestion. He said to him, “Look! These people have by contrivance handed over the caliphate to the Taym tribe, depriving Banū Hāshim of it for good. And, after him (referring to Abū Bakr), this man will place over our heads an arrogant person from Banū `Adiy (referring to `Omar). Let us go to Ali bin Abū Tālib (ع) and ask him to get out of his house and take up arms in order to secure his right.” So, taking Abbās with him, he went to Ali (ع) and said: “Stretch your hand so I may pledge allegiance to you. If anyone rises in opposition, I will fill the streets of Medīna with men of cavalry and infantry.” This was the most delicate moment for Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع). He regarded himself as the true master and successor of the Prophet (ص) who, acting on the Divine command, appointed him as such only few days ago, on Thul-Hijja 17, 10 A.H./March 18, 632 A.D., while a man with the backing of a tribe such as that of Abū Sufyān was ready to support him. Just a signal was enough to ignite the flames of war. But Amīr al-Mu'minīn’s foresight and right judgment saved the Muslims from a civil war as his piercing eyes perceived that this man wanted to start a civil war by rousing the passions of tribal partisanship and distinction of birth so that Islam would be struck with a convulsion that would shake it to the roots. Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع), therefore, rejected his counsel and admonished him several times. He spoke forth the statements whereby he stopped people from mischief-mongering and undue conceit. He declared his stand to be like this: There are only two courses: Either take up arms or sit quietly at home. If he rose for war, there were no supporters so that he could suppress the rising insurgency. The only course left was to quietly wait for the opportunity until circumstances were favorable, which he did.

<sup>13</sup>About death, Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع) says that it is so dear to him that even an infant does

breast of its mother. I have hidden knowledge; if I disclose it, you will start trembling like ropes in deep wells.”

Amīr al-Mu'minīn's calm at this stage was indicative of his sublime policy and far-sightedness during turbulent times. During those circumstances, had Medīna become the center of war, its fire would have engulfed the whole of Arabia in its flames. The discord and scuffle that had already begun among Mecca's Muhājirūn and Medīna's Ansār would have reached its peak, the rope-pulling of the hypocrites would have been in full swing, and Islam's ship would have been caught in such a whirlpool that balancing it would have been very difficult. Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ suffered trials and tribulations but did not raise his hands. History testifies that during his life in Mecca, the Prophet ﷺ suffered all sorts of hardships, but he was not prepared to clash or abandon patience and endurance. Imām Ali ﷺ realized that had war taken place at that stage, the way for Islam's growth and fruition would have been closed. Of course, once he collected enough supporters and helpers to suppress the flood of unbelief and

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not so love to leap towards the source of its nourishment while being in its mother's lap. An infant's attachment to the breast of its mother is under the effect of a natural impulse, but the dictates of natural impulses change with the advance of age. When the limited period of infancy ends and the infant's temperament changes, he does not like to even look at what was so familiar to him but rather turns his face away from it. But the love of prophets and saints for a union with Allāh is mental and spiritual. Mental and spiritual feelings do not change, nor do they suffer weakness or decay. Since death is the means and first step towards this end, their love for death increases to such an extent that its rigors become the cause of pleasure for them, and its bitterness proves to be the source of delight for their taste. Their love for it is the same as that of the thirsty person for the well, or that of a lost traveller for his destination. Thus, when Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع) was wounded by Abd ar-Rahmān ibn Muljim's fatal attack, he said, "I am but like the walker who has now reached (the goal) or the seeker who has found (his lost object), and whatever is with Allāh is good for the pious." The Prophet (ص) also said that there is no pleasure for a believer other than a union with Allāh. According to Ibn Shahr Āshūb's *Manāqib Ali ibn Abī Tālib*, the Commander of the Faithful (ع) departed from this world during the eve that preceded Friday (i.e. Thursday evening) on the 19<sup>th</sup> of the month of Ramadan of the 42<sup>nd</sup> Hijri year, which then coincided with Thursday, the 5<sup>th</sup> of January, according to the Julian calendar, or the 8<sup>th</sup> of January, according to the Gregorian calendar, of the year 663 A.D. when he was 63 according to Sunni Muslims, 65 according to Shī'ite Muslims. He was attacked almost three days earlier with a poisoned sword as he was leading the dawn congregational prayers at the Grand Kūfa Mosque which at the time served as the seat of government, and Kūfa was then the capital of the Islamic world. If you go now to this great mosque in Kūfa, Iraq, you will see the exact spot where the Imām (ع) was killed. By the way, the site of this great mosque was the exact location where prophet Noah (ع) built his ark. The Imām (ع) lived in Mecca for 13 years and in Medīna for 10 years. He migrated during the Hijra at the age of 24 and started defending Islam at the age of 16. When he pulled the gate of the Jewish fortress of Khaybar, thus demonstrating a super-natural strength, he was 28. His term as the Imām lasted for 30 years of which he spent two years and four months and few days during the time of Abū Bakr, and he spent nine years and few months during the time of `Omar. According to al-Firyani, he spent 10 years and eight months and few days during the time of `Othmān. His resting place in Najaf al-Ashraf, Iraq, is now visited by millions of pilgrims every year, so much so that the city now has its own international airport in order to accommodate the influx of pilgrims who go there from all the corners of the world. During some religious occasions, pilgrims go to Najaf al-Ashraf on foot by the millions from all governorates of Iraq to pay homage and to express their loyalty to the first and greatest Imām and to his Infallible Progeny (ع).



curb the disturbances, he would rise to face the enemy. Similarly, Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام, treating the life of the Prophet ﷺ as a torch for his guidance, refrained from exhibiting the power of his arm because he realized that rising against the enemy without helpers and supporter would invite rebellion and defeat instead of success and victory. Therefore, on this occasion, Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام compares the desire for caliphate to turbid waters or to a morsel suffocating one's throat. Thus, when people had forcibly snatched this morsel away and wanted to swallow it by force, it got stuck in their throats. They could neither swallow it nor spit it out. That is, they could neither manage it, as is apparent from the blunders they committed in connection with Islamic injunctions, nor were they ready to cast off the knot from their neck.

He reiterated the same ideas in different words thus: "Had I attempted to pick the unripe fruit of caliphate, then by this the orchard would have been desolated and I, too, would have achieved nothing, like people who cultivate someone else's land but can neither guard it, nor water it at the proper time, nor reap any crop from it. The status of these people is that if I ask them to vacate it, so that the owner should cultivate it himself and protect it, they will say how greedy I am. But if I keep quiet, they will think that I am afraid of death. They should tell me on what occasion I ever felt afraid of death, or if I fled away from a battlefield for my life, whereas every small or big encounter is proof of my bravery and a witness to my daring and courage. He who plays with swords and strikes against hillocks is not afraid of death. I am so familiar with death that even an infant is not so familiar with the breast of its mother. Hark! The reason for my silence is the knowledge that the Prophet ﷺ has put in my bosom. If I divulge it, you will become perplexed and bewildered. Let days pass by and you will come to know the reason behind my indeed and will witness with your own eyes what sort of people will appear on this scene under the label of Islam and what destruction they will bring about. My silence is because this will happen; mine is not silence without a reason."

A Persian axiom says the following: "Silence has a meaning which cannot be couched in words."



ومن كلام له عليه السلام  
لما أشير عليه بالأيتبع طلحة والزبير ولا يرصد لهما القتال  
وفيه يبين عن صفته بأنه (عليه السلام) لا يخدع

وَاللَّهِ لَا أَكُونُ كَالضَّبْعِ تَنَامُ عَلَى طُولِ الدَّمِ حَتَّى يَصِلَ إِلَيْهَا طَالِبُهَا وَيَخْتَلِهَا رَاصِدُهَا وَلَكِنِّي أَضْرِبُ بِالْمُفْبِلِ إِلَى الْحَقِّ الْمُدْبِرِ عَنْهُ وَبِالسَّمْعِ الْمُطِيعِ الْعَاصِيِ الْمُرِيبِ أَبَدًا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ عَلَيَّ يَوْمِي فَوَاللَّهِ مَا زِلْتُ مَدْفُوعًا عَنْ حَقِّي مُسْتَأْتِرًا عَلَيَّ مُنْذُ قَبْضِ اللَّهِ نَبِيِّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ حَتَّى يَوْمِ النَّاسِ هَذَا .

## Sermon 6

Delivered on being advised not to persuade Talhah ibn Ubaydillāh and az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwām to fight<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup>When Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع) demonstrated his intention to chase Talhah and az-Zubayr, he

“By Allāh, I shall not be like the badger that feigns sleep on the continuous (sound of) stone-throwing till he who is in search of it finds it, or he who is on the look out for it overpowers it. Rather, I shall always strike the deviators from the truth with the help of those who advance towards it. And I shall pursue the sinners and the doubters with the help of those who listen to me and obey till my day (of death) comes. By Allāh, I have been continually deprived of my right from the day the Prophet ﷺ died until today.”



ومن خطبة له عليه السلام يذم فيها أتباع الشيطان

اتَّخَذُوا الشَّيْطَانَ لِأَمْرِهِمْ مَلَكَاً وَاتَّخَذَهُمْ لَهُ أَشْرَكَاً قَبَاضَ وَفَرَّخَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ وَدَبَّ وَدَرَجَ فِي حُجُورِهِمْ فَتَنَطَّرَ بِأَعْيُنِهِمْ وَنَطَقَ بِالسِّنْتِهِمْ فَرَكِبَ بِهِمُ الزَّلَلَ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الْخَطْلَ فَعَلَّ مَنْ قَدْ شَرِكَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فِي سُلْطَانِهِ وَنَطَقَ بِالْبَاطِلِ عَلَى لِسَانِهِ .

## Sermon 7 About the hypocrites

“They<sup>15</sup> have made Satan the master of their affairs, and he has taken them as

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was advised to leave them on their own lest he should receive some harm from them. Amīr al-Mu’minīn (ع) uttered these words in his reply, the sum total whereof is: “For how long can I be mere a spectator as my right is being snatched away, keeping quiet about it? Now, so long as I have the breath of life, I shall fight them and make them suffer the consequences of their conduct. They should not think that I can be easily over-powered like the badger.” Its nicknames are: “Umm Amīr” and “Umm Tāriq”. It is also called “the glutton” because it swallows everything and eats up whatever it gets as if several bellies were contained in one and it does not have its fill. It is also called Na’thal. It is a very simple and silly animal. Its slyness is apparent from the way it is easily caught. It is said that the hunter surrounds its den and strikes it with his foot or a stick and calls out softly, “Bow your head, Umm Tāriq, conceal yourself, Umm Amīr.” On repeating this sentence, while patting the ground, it conceals itself in a corner of the den. Then, the hunter says, “Umm Amīr is not in its den; it is sleeping.” On hearing this, it stretches its limbs and pretends to be asleep. The hunter then puts the knot in its feet and drags it out; it falls like a coward into his hands without resistance.

<sup>15</sup>Amīr al-Mu’minīn (ع) says about the hypocrites (i.e. those who opposed him before and during his caliphate) that they are partners in Satan’s actions, helpers and supporters of Satan. Satan has befriended them, too, so much so that he has made his abode with them, residing on their bosoms, laying eggs and hatching its young through them, while these young jump and play in their laps without demur. He means that Satan’s evil ideas take birth in their bosoms and grow and thrive there. There is no restraint on them, nor is there a restriction of any kind. He has permeated their blood and mingled with their spirits so that both have become a completely united unit. Now, the eyes are theirs but the sight is his, the tongue is theirs but the words are his. The Prophet (ص) has said, “Verily, Satan permeates the progeny of Adam like blood.” That is, just as the circulation of blood does not stop, the same way, the quick succession of Satan’s evil ideas knows no halt, and he draws man towards evil when he is



partners. He has laid eggs and hatched them in their bosoms. He creeps and crawls in their laps. He sees through their eyes and speaks with their tongues. In this way, he has led them to sin, and adorning for them foul things like the deeds of one whom Satan has made partner in his domain, speaking falsehood through his tongue.”



من كلام له عليه السلام  
ويدعوه للدخول في البيعة ثانية يعني به الزبير في حال اقتضت ذلك

يَزْعُمُ أَنَّهُ قَدْ بَايَعَ بِيَدِهِ وَلَمْ يُبَايِعْ بِقَلْبِهِ فَقَدْ أَقْرَبَ بِالْبَيْعَةِ وَادَّعَى الْوَلِيحَةَ فَلَيَاتِ عَلَيْهَا بِأَمْرٍ يُعْرَفُ وَإِلَّا فَلْيَدْخُلْ فِيهَا  
خَرَجَ مِنْهُ.

## Sermon 8

### About az-Zubayr at a time for which it was Appropriate

“He asserts that he swore allegiance to me with his hand, but he did not swear it with his heart.<sup>16</sup>

“So he does admit allegiance. With regard to his claim that he does so with his heart, he should come forward with a clear argument for it; otherwise, he should return to wherever he has come from.”<sup>17</sup>

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asleep or awake, in every posture, rising or sitting... He thus paints them with his dye so that their words and actions reflect an exact portrait of his words and actions. Those whose bosoms shine with the glory of faith prevent such evil ideas, but some people are already ready to welcome those evils, and these are the persons who, outfitted in the garb of Islam, seek to promote heresy.

<sup>16</sup>After swearing allegiance to Amīr al-Mu’minīn (ع), az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwam violated his oath of allegiance. Then sometimes he would put forth the excuse that he was forced to swear the oath of allegiance, and that his involuntary allegiance is actually no allegiance at all. Some other times, he would say that his allegiance was only a pretense, that his heart was not with it. It is as though he admitted with his tongue the duplicity of his outer appearance versus inner self. This excuse is like that of the one who reverts to apostasy after adopting Islam in order to avoid the penalty, saying that he had accepted Islam only with his tongue, not with his heart. Obviously, such an excuse cannot be heeded, nor can he escape the punishment. If az-Zubayr suspected that `Othmān was slain at the insistence of Amīr al-Mu’minīn (ع), this suspicion should have existed when he was taking the oath for obedience and stretching his hand for allegiance, not now that his expectations were being frustrated and hopes had started dwindling.

<sup>17</sup>Amīr al-Mu’minīn (ع) forfeited his claim for the short term. Thus, when this man admits that he had sworn allegiance, then he, according to him, had a justification for breaking it, he should stick to such a claim. According to him, however, his heart was not in agreement with it. Here, he should produce another proof for it. Since proof about the state of heart cannot be produced, how can he bring such proof? How can he be assertive without proof?



من كلام له عليه السلام  
في صفته وصفة خصومه ويقال إنها في أصحاب الجمل

وقَدْ أُرْعَدُوا وَأَبْرَقُوا، وَمَعَ هَذَيْنِ الْأَمْرَيْنِ الْفَشْلُ، وَلَسْنَا نُرْعِدُ حَتَّى نُوقِعَ، وَلَا نُسِيلُ حَتَّى نُمَطِّرَ.

### Sermon 9

#### Cowardice of the people of the Jamal

“They<sup>18</sup> thundered like clouds and shone like lightening, yet despite that, they exhibited cowardice while we do not thunder till we pounce on the foe, nor do we show flow (of words) until we have virtually rained.”



من خطبة له عليه السلام  
يريد الشيطان أو يكني به عن قوم

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ جَمَعَ جُزْبَهُ وَاسْتَجْلَبَ خَيْلَهُ وَرَجُلَهُ وَإِنَّ مَعِيَ لَبَصِيرَتِي مَا لَبَسْتُ عَلَى نَفْسِي وَلَا لُبْسَ عَلَيَّ وَإِنَّمَا اللَّهُ لَأَفْرَطَنَّ لَهُمْ حَوْضًا أَنَا مَا تَحُهُ لَا يَصْدُرُونَ عَنْهُ وَلَا يَعُودُونَ إِلَيْهِ.

### Sermon 10

#### About Talhah and az-Zubayr<sup>19</sup>

“Beware! Satan has collected his group and assembled his horsemen and foot soldiers. Surely, with me there is sagacity. I have neither deceived myself, nor have I ever been

<sup>18</sup>About the people of Jamal (i.e. the enemy in the Battle of Jamal, a battle that was led by Mother of the Believers `Ā'isha supported by her cousins, as-Zubayr and Talhah, against the newly elected Caliph Ali (ع)), Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع) says that they rose thundering, shouting and stampeding, but when encounter took place, they were seen flying like straw in the wind. At one time, they made loud claims that they would do this and that, and now they demonstrated such cowardice as to flee from the battlefield. About himself, Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع) says, “We do not threaten the enemy before the battle, nor are we boastful, nor do we terrorize the enemy by raising unnecessary cries because it is not the way of the brave to use the tongue instead of the might.” That is why on this occasion, he said to his comrades, “Beware of excessive talk as it is (a sign of) cowardice.”

<sup>19</sup>When Talhah and az-Zubayr broke away by violating their oath of allegiance, setting out for Basra in the company of `Ā'isha, Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع) spoke these words which are part of a long speech. Ibn Abul-Hadīd has written that in this sermon, Satan is meant to denote himself as well as a reference to Mu'āwiyah: Mu'āwiyah was secretly conspiring with both Talhah and az-Zubayr, instigating them to fight against Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع). Yet reference to the real Satan is more appropriate according to the then prevailing situations and circumstances.

deceived. By Allāh, I shall fill for them a cistern from which I alone will draw water. They can neither turn away from, nor can they return to it.”



من كلام له عليه السلام لابنه محمد بن الحنفية لما أعطاه الراية يوم الجمل

تَزُولُ الْجِبَالُ وَلَا تَزُولُ! عَضَّ عَلَى نَاجِيكَ، أَعْرَ اللَّهُ جُمُوعَتَكَ، تَدْفِي الْأَرْضُ قَدَمَكَ، أَرْمِ بِبَصْرِكَ أَقْصَى الْقَوْمِ،  
وَعُضَّ بِبَصْرِكَ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ النَّصْرَ مِنْ عِنْدِ اللَّهِ سُبْحَانَهُ.

### Sermon 11

Delivered during the Battle of the Jamal when Amīr

al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام gave the standard to his son Muhammed ibn al-Hanafiyya

“Mountains may move from their positions, but you should not move from yours. Grit your teeth. Lend to Allāh your head (i.e. while fighting for Allāh, give yourself wholly to Allāh). Plant your feet firmly on the ground. Set your eyes on the remotest foe and close your eyes (to their numerical majority). And be sure that succor is only from Allāh, the most Glorified One.”

Muhammed ibn al-Hanafiyya was Amīr al-Mu'minīn's son but is called Ibn (son of) Hanafiyya after his mother. His mother's name was Khawla daughter of Ja'far. She was known as Hanafiyya after her tribe Banū Hanīfah. When people of Yamāma were declared “apostates” for having refused to pay the *zakāt* (religious tax) and were killed, their women were brought to Medīna as war captives to be turned slaves according to the customs of the time. This particular lady was also brought to Medīna with them. When her tribesmen came to know about it, they approached Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام and requested him to save her from the blemish of slavery and protect her family's honor and prestige. Consequently, Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام bought her, set her free and married her. Thus, his son Muhammed was born.

Most historians have written his *kunya*, surname, as “Abul-Qāsim,” father of al-Qāsim, echoing the title of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. Thus, the author of *Al-Isti'ab* on pp. 1366-1368, 1370-1372 of Vol. 3. has narrated the opinion of Abū Rashīd ibn Hafs az-Zuhri who said that from among the sons of the companions (of the Prophet [ص]), he came across four individuals every one of whom was named “Muhammed” and surnamed “Abul-Qāsim.” They were: (1) Muhammed ibn al-Hanafiyya, (2) Muhammed ibn Abū Bakr, (3) Muhammed ibn Talhah and (4) Muhammed ibn Sa'd. After this, he writes saying that Muhammed ibn Talhah's name and surname were given by the Prophet ﷺ himself. Al-Wāqidi, the renown biographer of the Prophet ﷺ, says that the surname of Muhammed ibn Abū Bakr was suggested by `Ā'isha. Apparently, the Holy Prophet giving the name of “Muhammed” to the son of Talhah seems to be quite inaccurate since, from some traditions, it appears that the Prophet ﷺ had reserved it for a son of Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام, namely Muhammed ibn al-

Hanafiyya.

As regarding his surname, it is said that the Prophet ﷺ had told Ali عليه السلام that a son would be born to him after his demise, and that “I have given him my name and surname; after that, it is not permissible for anyone in my nation to have this name and surname together.”

With this viewpoint before us, how can it be correct to claim that the Prophet ﷺ had given this very name and surname to anyone else since he particularly stated that no one else should share it? Moreover, some people have recorded the surname of Ibn Talhah as “Abū Sulaymān” rather than “Abul-Qāsim,” and this further confirms our viewpoint. Similarly, if the surname of “Muhammed” ibn (son of caliph) Abū Bakr was on the ground that his son’s name was Qāsim, one of the theologians of Medīna, then what is the sense in `Ā’isha having suggested it? If she had suggested it along with the name, how could Muhammed ibn Abū Bakr tolerate it later since, having been brought up under the care of Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام, what the Prophet ﷺ had said about both name and surname could not have been concealed from his knowledge? Moreover, most people have recorded his surname as being “Abū Abd ar-Rahmān,” which weakens the viewpoint held by Abū Rashīd.

Although Ibn Khallikān (in his work titled *Wafiyāt al-A’yān* [death incidents of prominent figures], p. 170, Vol. 4) has recorded that among the sons of Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام for whom the Prophet ﷺ had particularly chosen this surname was Muhammed ibn al-Hanafiyya. Yet `allāma al-Maqaqāni (in *Tanqīh al-Maqāl*, p. 112, Part 1, Vol. 3) writes the following:

In applying this tradition to Muhammed ibn al-Hanafiyya, Ibn Khallikān has proven to be confused: The son of Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام to whom the Prophet ﷺ had gifted both his name and surname, something which is not permissible to be given to anyone else, is the Awaited last Imām (may our lives be his ransom), not to Muhammed ibn al-Hanafiyya, nor is the surname ‘Abul-Qāsim’ established for him.” Rather, being ignorant of the real intention of the Prophet ﷺ, some Sunnis have taken this to refer to Ibn al-Hanafiyya. However, Muhammed ibn al-Hanafiyya was prominent in righteousness and piety, sublime in renouncing this world, lofty in knowledge and achievements, and the heir of his father in his bravery. His performance in the Battles of Jamal and Siffīn had created such an impression among the Arabs that even seasoned warriors trembled at the mere mention of his name. Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام, too, was proud of his courage and valor. He always placed him in the vanguard of all encounters. Shaikh al-Bahā’i has written in his work titled *Al-Kashkūl* saying that Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام kept him [his son] abreast in the battles and did not allow Hassan and Hussain to go instead. He used to say, “He is my son, while these two (al-Hassan and al-Hussain) are the sons of the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ.” When a Khārijite said to Ibn al-Hanafiyya that Ali thrust him into the flames of war, saving Hassan and Hussain عليه السلام, he replied that he himself was like the right hand (of his father), while Hassan and Hussain عليه السلام were like Ali’s two eyes, that Ali عليه السلام protected his eyes with his right hand. But `allāma al-Maqaqāni has written in *Tanqīh al-Maqāl* saying that this was not the reply given by Ibn al-Hanafiyya but by Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام himself. During the battle of Siffīn, Muhammed mentioned this matter to his father, Amīr al-Mu’minīn Ali عليه السلام, in a complaining tone. The

Commander of the Faithful ﷺ replied thus: “You are my right hand, whereas they are my eyes, and the hand should protect the eyes.”

Apparently, it seems that first Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ must have given this reply and thereafter someone might have mentioned it to Muhammed ibn al-Hanafīyya. The latter must have repeated the same as there could be no reply more eloquent than this. Its eloquence confirms the opinion that it was originally the product of the eloquent tongue of Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ and was later appropriated by Muhammed al-Hanafīyya. Consequently, both these views can be regarded as being correct; there is no incongruity between them. However, he was born in the reign of the second caliph and died at the age of sixty-five during the reign of Abdul-Malik ibn Marwān. Some writers have recorded the year of his death as 80 A.H./699 A.D., others at one year later. There is a disagreement about the place of his death as well. Some have put it as Medīna, others at Ayla, and some others at Tā'if.

2. During the Battle of Jamal, Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ sent Muhammed ibn al-Hanafīyya to the battle field, telling him that he should fix himself before the enemy like the mountain of determination and resolution so that the onslaught of the army should not be able to displace him, that he should charge at the enemy with closed teeth because, by pressing teeth over teeth, tension occurs in the nerves of the skull. As a result, the stroke of the sword would miss the target, as he said somewhere else: “Press your teeth together. It causes the edge of the sword to miss.” Then he said, “Son! Lend your head to Allāh so that you may be able to achieve eternal life in place of this one because when one lends an article, he has the right to get it back. Therefore, you should fight as one who is heedless of his life; otherwise, also if your mind clings to life, you will hesitate to advance towards deadly encounters, and that would fall on your reputation of bravery. Look, do not let your steps falter because the enemy is emboldened by faltering steps. Such faltering steps hasten the enemy's feet. Keep the last lines of the enemy as your aim so that the enemy may be overawed with the loftiness of your intentions, and you may feel at ease while tearing through their lines, and their movements should not remain concealed from you. Look, do not heed their numerical superiority; otherwise, your valor and courage will suffer.” This statement can also mean that one should open his eyes wide to be dazzled by the shining of weapons, and the enemy may make attack in order to take advantage of the situation. Also, always keep in mind that victory is from Allāh. “If Allāh helps you, no one can overpower you.” Therefore, instead of relying on material means, seek His support and succor.

Remember, O Believers! If Allāh helps you, none shall overcome you (Qur'ān, 3: 159).



لَمَّا أَظْفَرَهُ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى بِأَصْحَابِ الْجَمَلِ وَمِنْ كَلَامِ لَهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

وَقَدْ قَالَ لَهُ بَعْضُ أَصْحَابِهِ وَدِدْتُ أَنْ أَجِي فَلَانَا كَانَ شَاهِدَنَا لِيَرَى مَا نَصَرَكَ اللَّهُ بِهِ عَلَيَّ أَعْدَائِكَ فَقَالَ لَهُ (عَلَيْهِ

السلام) أَهْوَىٰ أَخْبِكَ مَعَنَا فَقَالَ نَعَمْ قَالَ فَقَدْ شَهِدْنَا وَلَقَدْ شَهِدْنَا فِي عَسْكَرِنَا هَذَا أَقْوَامٌ فِي أَصْلَابِ الرِّجَالِ وَأَرْحَامِ  
النِّسَاءِ سَيَرَّ عَفُ بِهِمُ الزَّمَانُ وَيَقْوَىٰ بِهِمُ الْإِيمَانُ .

## Sermon 12

### When Allāh granted Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ victory over his enemies in the Battle of Jamal

One of his comrades said the following to him on that occasion: "I wish my so-and-so brother had been present so that he, too, could have seen what success and victory Allāh has given you." It was then that Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ asked him, "Did your brother hold me as a friend?" The comrade said, "Yes." Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ said, "In that case, he was with us, even in this army of ours. Even those persons who are still in the loins of men and in the wombs of women were also present. Shortly, time will bring them out and faith will gain strength through them."

If a person falls short in his deeds, despite might and means, this will be indicative of the weakness of his will. But if an impediment in the way of deed or life comes to an end, resulting in his deed still remaining inadequate, in this case, Allāh will not deprive him of the reward on the basis that his deeds are judged according to his intentions. Since his intention in any case was to carry out a good deed, he deserves rewards to some extent.

In the case of an deed, there may be absence of rewards because deeds can involve making a show, a pretense, etc. The intention is hidden in the depths of one's heart. A good deed may have no jot of show or affectation. The intention will remain at the same level of honesty, frankness, truth, perfection and correctness where it is, even though there may be no deed due to some impediments. Even if there is no occasion for forming an intention, but there is passion and zeal in the heart, a man will deserve rewards on the basis of his heart's feelings. This is to what Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ has alluded in this sermon, that is, "If your brother loved me, he will share the rewards with those who secured martyrdom for having supported us."



كُنْتُمْ جُنْدَ الْمَرْأَةِ وَأَتْبَاعَ الْبَهِيمَةِ رَعَا فَأَجَبْتُمْ وَعَقِرَ فَهَرَبْتُمْ أَخْلَافُكُمْ دِفَاقٌ وَعَهْدُكُمْ سِفَاقٌ وَدِينُكُمْ نِفَاقٌ وَمَاؤُكُمْ زُعَاقٌ  
وَالْمَقِيمَ بَيْنَ أَظْهُرِكُمْ مُرْتَهَنٌ بِدَنْبِهِ وَالشَّاجِصُ عَنْكُمْ مُتَدَارِكٌ بِرَحْمَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّهِ كَأَنِّي بِمَسْجِدِكُمْ كَجَوْجُ سَفِينَةٍ قَدْ بَعَثَ  
اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا الْعَذَابَ مِنْ فَوْقِهَا وَمَنْ تَحْتَهَا وَعَرِقَ مَنْ فِي ضِمْنِهَا. وَفِي رِوَايَةٍ وَإِنَّمَا اللَّهُ لَنَعْرَقَنَّ بِلَدُنُكُمْ حَتَّىٰ كَأَنِّي أَنْظِرُ  
إِلَىٰ مَسْجِدِهَا كَجَوْجُ سَفِينَةٍ أَوْ نِعَامَةٍ جَائِمَةٍ وَفِي رِوَايَةٍ كَجَوْجُ طَيْرٍ فِي لَجَّةِ بَحْرٍ وَفِي رِوَايَةٍ أُخْرَىٰ بِلَادِكُمْ أَنْتُنَّ  
بِلَادِ اللَّهِ تُرْبَةٌ أَقْرَبُهَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ وَأَبْعَدُهَا مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَبِهَا تَسْعَةُ أَعْشَارِ الشَّرِّ الْمُحْتَبَسِ فِيهَا بِدَنْبِهِ وَالْخَارِجُ بِعَفْوِ اللَّهِ  
كَأَنِّي أَنْظِرُ إِلَىٰ قَرِيْبِكُمْ هَذِهِ قَدْ طَبَّقَهَا الْمَاءُ حَتَّىٰ مَا يَرَىٰ مِنْهَا إِلَّا شَرْفَ الْمَسْجِدِ كَأَنَّهُ جَوْجُ طَيْرٍ فِي لَجَّةِ بَحْرٍ.

## Sermon 13

### Condemning the People of Basra

"You were the army of a woman (a reference to `A'isha) and in the command of a quadruped (animal, namely `Askar, the huge camel `A'isha was riding). When it



grumbled, you responded, and when it was wounded (hamstrung), you fled away. Your character is low and your pledge is broken. Your faith is hypocritical. Your water is brackish. He who stays with you is laden with sins, and he who forsakes you secures Allāh's mercy. As though I see your mosque prominent, resembling the surface of a boat, while Allāh has sent chastisement from above and from below it and everyone who is on it is drowned."

**Another version of the same sermon:**

"By Allāh! Your city will certainly be drowned, so much so that as though I see its mosque like the upper part of a boat or a sitting ostrich (or, in another version of his statement) like the bosom of a bird in the deep sea."

**Still Another Version States the Following:**

"Your city is the most stinking of all cities as regarding its clay, the nearest to water and remotest from the sky. It contains nine tenths of evil. He who enters it is surrounded with his sins. and he who is out of it enjoys Allāh's forgiveness. It seems as though I look at this habitation of yours with water having engulfed it, so much so that nothing can be seen of it except the highest part of the mosque appearing like the bosom of a bird in the deep sea."

Ibn Maytham writes that when the Battle of Jamal ended, three days thereafter, Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ said the morning prayers in the central mosque of Basra. Having finished it, he stood on the right side of the prayer place. Reclining against the wall, he delivered this sermon wherein he described the lowness of character of the people of Basra and their slyness, how they were inflamed at others' instigation without anyone of their own, handing their command over to a woman clung to a camel. They broke away after swearing allegiance and exhibited their low character and evil nature by being double-faced. In this sermon, the woman referred to is `Ā'isha, and the "quadruped" implies the camel (Jamal), Askar, after which this battle has been named, the Battle of the Jamal. This battle started this way:

During `Othmān's lifetime, `Ā'isha used to oppose him and had left for Mecca, leaving him in siege. As such, she had a share in his assassination the details of which will be stated at some suitable place in this book. But on her return from Mecca to Medīna, she heard from Abdullāh ibn Salamah that allegiance had been sworn to Ali (as the succeeding caliph). She suddenly exclaimed, "If allegiance has been sworn to Ali, I wish the sky had burst on the earth. Let me go back to Mecca." Consequently, she decided to return to Mecca where she started saying, "By Allāh, `Othmān has been helplessly killed. I shall certainly avenge his blood." On seeing this wide change in the state of affairs, Abū Salamah said, "What are you saying as you yourself used to say 'Kill this Na'thal; he had turned unbeliever (apostate)'?!" She replied, "Not only I but everyone used to say so; but leave these things asīde and listen to what I am now saying: This is better and deserves more attention. It is so strange that `Othmān was first called on to repent, but before giving him the opportunity to do so, he has been killed." On hearing this, Abū Salamah recited the following verses addressing her:

*You started it, now you change and raise storms of wind and rain.*

*You ordered his killing and told us that he had turned unbeliever.  
We admit that he has been killed but under your orders and  
The real killer is the one who ordered it.  
Nevertheless, neither the sky fell over us,  
Nor did the sun and the moon has had an eclipse.*

Certainly people have sworn allegiance to one who can ward off the enemy with power and grandeur, who does not allow swords to come near him and loosens the twist of the rope, that is, subdues his enemy. He is always fully armed for combat and the faithful is never akin to the traitor.

However, when she reached Mecca with a passion for vengeance, she began instigating people to avenge `Othmān's blood by circulating stories of his having been victimized. The first to respond to this call was Abdullāh ibn `Amir al-Hadrami, who had been governor of Mecca during `Othmān's reign, supported by Marwān ibn al-Hakam, Sa`īd ibn al-`Ās and other Umayyads. These men rose to support her. On the other side, Talhah ibn Ubaydillāh and az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwām, her cousins, also reached Mecca from Medīna to join the rebels. From Yemen, Ya`li ibn Munabbih, who had been governor there during `Othmān's caliphate and a former governor of Basra, Abdullāh ibn `Amir ibn Kurayz also reached there. Joining ranks, they began preparing their schemes. They were all determined to start the battle, but their discussions revolved round the venue of confrontation. `Ā'isha's opinion was to make Medīna the stage of the battle, but some people opposed and held that it was difficult to deal with the Medinites, that some other place should be chose as the battlefield. At last, after many discussions, it was decided to march towards Basra where there was no dearth of men to support "the cause". Consequently, on the strength of Abdullāh ibn Amīr's huge wealth and offer of six hundred thousand dirhams and six hundred camels supplied by Ya`li ibn Munabbih, they prepared an army of three thousand strong, then they set off to Basra.

There was a small incident on the way because of which `Ā'isha refused to advance any further. What happened was that at a particular place, she heard the barking of dogs. When she inquired from the camel driver about the name of the place, he told her that it was called Haw'ab حوآب. On hearing this name, she recalled the Prophet's admonition; he ﷺ had said this to his wives: "I wish I could know at which of you the dogs of Haw'ab will bark..." So when she realized that she herself was the one, she got the camel seated by patting it, expressing her intention to abandon the march and "the cause". But the device of her companions saved the critically deteriorating situation: Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr made an oath in order to assure her that it was not Haw'ab<sup>20</sup>, with Talhah seconding him. In order to further assuring her, he also sent for fifty persons to pronounce the same oath to her. When all of the people were on one side, what could a single woman do by opposing them? Eventually, they were successful, and `Ā'isha resumed her march forward with the same enthusiasm.

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<sup>20</sup>In his famous work, *Tārīkh*, al-Tabari starts detailing the incident at Haw'ab, where Islam recorded the first mass false oath, of the Askar camel, which was bought for one thousand dirhams, a huge sum of money at the time, on p. 185 of Vol. 3 among the incidents that took place during the year 36 A.H./657 A.D. The Arabic edition I have used for this and other books is dated 1426 A.H./2005 A.D. It is published by Dār al-Amīra of Beirut, Lebanon.

When this army reached Basra, people were first amazed to see the animal `Ā'isha was riding. Jariyah ibn Qudāmah came forward and said, “O, Mother of the Faithful! The assassination of `Othmān was one great tragedy, but the greater tragedy is that you have come out on this cursed camel and ruined your honor and esteem. It is better that you should go back.” But since neither the incident at Haw'ab could deter her nor the Qur'ānic injunction: “Keep sitting in your houses (33:33)” could stop her, what effect could these words produce? Consequently, she disregarded all such calls.

When the army tried to enter the city, `Othmān ibn Hunayf, the then governor of Basra, came forward to stop them. When the two parties came face-to-face, they unsheathed their swords and pounced on each other. When a good number had been killed from either side, `Ā'isha intervened on the basis of her influence, and the two groups agreed that until the arrival of Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ, the existing administration should continue and that `Othmān ibn Hunayf should remain in his post. But only two days had elapsed when they made a nightly attack on `Othmān ibn Hunayf, killing forty innocent persons, beat `Othmān ibn Hunayf, plucked every hair of his beard, took him in their custody and jailed him.

Then they attacked the public treasury. While ransacking the Muslims' money house, they killed twenty persons on the spot and beheaded fifty more after arresting them. That was the first time in Islamic history when a Muslim severed the head of another Muslim. Then they attacked the city's grain store, whereupon an elderly noble of Basra, Hukaym ibn Jabalah, could not control himself. Arriving there with his men, he said to Abdullāh ibn az-Zubayr, “Spare some of this grain for the city's residents. After all, there should be a limit to your oppression. You have spread killing and destruction all around and put `Othmān ibn Hunayf in confinement. For Allāh's sake, keep off these ruining activities and release `Othmān ibn Hunayf. Is there no fear of Allāh in your hearts?” Ibn az-Zubayr, cousin of `Ā'isha, said, “This is vengeance for `Othmān's blood.” Hukaym ibn Jabalah retorted, “Were these whom you have killed `Othmān's assassins? By Allāh, if I had supporters and comrades, I should have certainly avenged the blood of these Muslims whom you have killed without reason.” Ibn az-Zubayr replied, “We shall not give anything out of this grain, nor will `Othmān ibn Hunayf be released.” At last, the battle raged between these two parties, but how could a few individuals deal with such a big force? The result was that Hukaym ibn Jabalah, his son al-Ashraf ibn Hukaym ibn Jabalah, his brother ar-Ri'l ibn Jabalah and seventy persons of his tribe were all killed. In short, killing and looting prevailed all around. Neither anyone's life was secure, nor was there anyone or any way to save one's honor or property.

When Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ was informed of the march to Basra, he set out to stop it with a force which consisted of seventy of those who had taken part in the battle of Badr and four hundred out of those companions who had the honor of being present at the Allegiance of Ridwān (of “the Divine Pleasure”, also referred to as the Hudaibiya oath, to which reference is made in 48:18, Sūrat al-Fath, Chapter of Victory, of the Holy Qur'ān). When he stopped at the Khaqar stage, he sent his son al-Hassan ﷺ and `Ammār ibn Yāsir to Kūfa to invite its people to participate in fighting the dissidents. Consequently, despite the interference of Abū Mūsa al-Ash'ari, seven thousand combatants from there joined Amīr al-Mu'minīn's army. Ali ﷺ left that stage after placing the army divisions under various commanders. Eye witnesses state that when his force reached near Basra, first of all a contingent of the Ansār appeared

in the vanguard. Its standard bearer was the great *sahābi* Abū Ayyūb al-Ansāri. After it appeared, another contingent of 1,000 was commanded by Khuzaymah ibn Thābit al-Ansāri, another *sahābi*. Then another contingent came in sight, and its standard bearer was Abū Qatādah ibn ar-Rabī`. Then a crowd of a thousand old and young persons was seen. They had signs of prostration on their faces and signs of fear of Allāh. It seemed as if they were standing before the Divine Glory on the Day of Judgment. Their commander rode a dark horse. He was dressed in white, had a black turban on his head and was reciting the Holy Qur`ān loudly. This was `Ammār ibn Yāsir, one of the greatest of the Prophet`s *sahāba*. Then another contingent appeared. Its standard was in the hands of Qays ibn Sa`d ibn Abādah, the son of another great Ansāri *sahābi*. Then an army came in sight. Its leader was putting on a white outfit and a black turban. He was so handsome that all eyes were fixed on him. This was Abdullāh ibn Abbās, a cousin of the Prophet ﷺ, Islam`s scribe and recorder of the Sunnah. Then followed a contingent of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ. Their standard bearer was `Othmān ibn Abbās. After a few contingents had passed by, a big crowd was seen wherein there was such a large number of spears that they were overlapping and flags of numerous colors were flying. Among them, a big and lofty standard was seen with a distinctive status. Behind it a rider was seen guarded by sublimity and greatness. His sinews were well-developed and his eyes were cast downwards. His awe and dignity were as such that no one could look at him in the eyes. This was the ever victorious Lion of Allāh, none other than Ali ibn Abū Tālib عليه السلام. On his right and left were Hassan and Hussain (peace with them) respectively. In front of him, Muhammed ibn al-Hanafīyya walked in slow steps carrying the banner of victory and glory. On the back, there were young men from Banū Hāshim, the people of Badr, and Abdullāh ibn Ja`far ibn Abū Tālib. When this army reached a place called az-Zawiyah, Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام alighted from the horse. After performing a four rak`at prayer, he put his cheeks on the ground. When he lifted his head, the ground was drenched with tears, and he was uttering these words:

*O Sustainer of the earth, the heavens and the high firmaments! This is Basra. Fill our lap with its good and protect us from its evil.*

Proceeding forwards, he got down in the battlefield of Jamal where the enemy was already camping. First of all, Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام announced to his army that no one should attack another nor take the initiative. Having said so, he came in front of the opposite army and said to Talhah and az-Zubayr, “You ask `Ā`isha by swearing in the Name of Allāh and His Prophet ﷺ whether or not I am free of the blame of `Othmān`s blood, whether I used the same words for him which you used to say (to people), whether I pressured you to swear the oath of allegiance (to me) or whether you swore it of your own free will.” Talhah got exasperated at these words, but az-Zubayr relented. Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام turned back after that. Giving a copy of the Holy Qur`ān to Muslim, a young man from the tribe of Abd Qays, he sent the latter to them to pronounce the verdict of the Holy Qur`ān. But people took the young messenger within aim and showered him with their arrows. Then `Ammār ibn Yāsir went to canvass to convince them and to caution them about the consequences of their war, but his words were also replied with arrow shots.

Until now, Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام had not allowed an attack as a result of which the enemy continued to feel encouraged and went on to rain arrows continuously. At last,

due to the death of a few valiant combatants, consternation was created within Amīr al-Mu'minīn's ranks, and some people came with a few killed bodies before him and said, "O Commander of the Faithful! You are not allowing us to fight while they are covering us with arrows. For how long can we let them make our bosoms the target of their arrows and keep our hands folded for their excesses?" At this, Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام did show anger but, acting with restraint and endurance, he went back to the enemy in the very form without wearing armor or any weapons. He shouted, "Where is az-Zubayr?!" At first, az-Zubayr hesitated to come forward, but he noticed that Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام was unarmed, so he came out. Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام said to him "O az-Zubayr! You must remember how one day the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told you that you will fight me, how wrongs and excesses will be on your side." Az-Zubayr replied that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم had said so. Then Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام inquired, "Why, then, have you come out like that?" He replied that his memory had missed it and if he had recollected it earlier, he would not have come out that way. Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام said, "Well now you have recollected it." "Yes," he said. Having said this, he went straight to `Ā'isha and told her that he was leaving the camp. She asked him about the reason. He replied, "Ali has reminded me of a forgotten matter. I had gone astray, but now I have come back to the right path and will not fight Ali ibn Abū Tālib at any cost." `Ā'isha said, "You have caught the fear of the swords of the sons of `Abdul-Muttalib." He said, "No." Saying this, he turned the reins of his horse away. However, it is gratifying that some consideration was accorded to the Prophet's saying, for at Haw'ab, even after recollecting the Prophet's words, no more than a transient effect was taken of it. On returning after this conversation, Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام observed that they had attacked the right and the left flanks of his army." Noticing this, Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام said, "Now the plea has been exhausted. Call my son Muhammed."

Muhammed ibn al-Hanafīyya came. Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام said to him, "My son, attack them now." Muhammed bowed his head and, taking the standard, he proceeded to the battlefield. But arrows were falling in such force that he had to stop. When Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام saw this, he called out at him, "Muhammed! Why do you not advance?" He said, "Father, in this shower of arrows, there is no way to proceed. I will wait till the violence of arrows subsides." The Imām عليه السلام said, "No, thrust yourself in the arrows and spears and attack." Muhammed ibn al-Hanafīyya advanced a little, but the archers surrounded him, so much so that he had to hold his steps. On seeing this, a frown appeared on Amīr al-Mu'minīn's face and he said, "This is the effect of your mother's veins." The Imām عليه السلام took the standard, folded up his sleeves and made such an attack that a tumult was created in the enemy's ranks from one end to the other. To whichever row he turned, it became clear, and to whatever side he directed himself, that bodies were seen falling and heads rolling under the hoofs of combatants' horses. After confusing the ranks, he returned to his station and said to his son, Muhammed ibn al-Hanafīyya, "Look, my son! Battles are fought like this." Saying this, he gave the standard to him and ordered him to proceed. Muhammed advanced towards the enemy with an Ansār contingent. The enemy troops also came out moving and balancing their spears. But the brave son of the valiant father convulsed rows over rows while the other warriors left behind heaps of dead bodies.

From the other side, there was a full demonstration of the spirit of sacrifice. Dead bodies were falling one over the other, yet they continued sacrificing their lives devotedly around the camel. Particularly, the condition of Banū Dabbah was that



although their hands were being severed from the elbows for holding the reins of the camel and their bosoms were being pierced with spears, they had the following battle song on their tongues:

*To us, death is sweeter than honey.  
We are Banū Dabbah, camel breeders.  
We are sons of death when death comes.  
We announce `Othmān's death spear edges.  
Give us back our chief, and there will be an end to it.*

The low character and ignorance of the faith of these Banū Dabbah can be well understood by one particular incident which al-Madā'ini narrates. He writes that in Basra there was a man with a mutilated ear. He was asked about the reason behind it. He said, "I was watching the sight of dead bodies on the battlefield of the Jamal when I saw a wounded man who sometimes raised his head and sometimes dashed it back on the ground. I approached him. The following verses of poetry were on his lips:

*Our mother (`Ā'isha) pushed us into the deep waters of death;  
She did not get us back before we had thoroughly drunk of it.  
By misfortune did we obey Banū Taym  
Who are none but slave men and slave girls.*

"I told him that it was not the time to recite poetry, that he should rather remember Allāh and recite the *kalima*, the *shahāda* (the testimony of the Islamic creed). On my saying this, he gave me an angry look and uttered a severely abusing language. He said, 'Are you asking me to recite the *kalima*, get frightened at the last moment and show impatience?' I was astonished to hear this and decided to return without saying anything further. When he saw me returning, he said, 'Wait, for your sake I am prepared to recite it, *but teach me how.*' I approached him in order to teach him how to pronounce the *kalima* when he asked me to get even closer. When I got closer, he caught my ear with his teeth and did not leave it till he tore it from the root. I did not think that it was appropriate to assault a dying man, and I was about to reciprocate abusing and cursing him when he asked me to listen to one more thing. I agreed to listen to his last wish. He said that when I got to my mother, and she would inquire who had bitten my ear, I should say that it was done by `Umayr ibn al-Ahlab ad-Dabbi who had been deceived by a woman aspiring to become the commander of the faithful (head of state)."

However, when the dazzling lightning of swords finished the lives of thousands of persons, hundreds of Banū Azd and Banū Dabbah were killed for holding the rein of that camel. Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام ordered: "Kill the camel, for it is Satan." Saying this, he made such a severe attack that the pleading cries of "Peace!" and "Protection!" rose all around. When the Imām عليه السلام reached near the camel, he ordered Bujayr ibn Buljah to kill the camel at once. Consequently, Bujayr hit it with such force that the camel fell agonizing on its chest. No sooner than the camel fell, the opposite army took to heels and the carrier in which `Ā'isha was borne was abandoned, unguarded. The companions of Amīr al-Mu'minīn took control of the carrier and, under orders of Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام, Muhammed ibn Abū Bakr escorted `Ā'isha to the house where Safiyya daughter of al-Hārith was staying.



This encounter commenced on the 10<sup>th</sup> of Jumāda II, 36 A.H. (which coincided at the time with Sunday, December 4, 656 A.D.) in the afternoon and came to and end the same evening. From the camp of Amīr al-Mu'minīn's army of twenty-two thousand strong, seventy or, according to another version, five hundred persons were martyred. From the army of thirty thousand led by `Ā'isha, seventeen thousand persons were killed. That was the very first time when Muslims killed Muslims, and it has been going on ever since... The Prophet's statement: "The people who assign their affairs (of state) to a woman will never prosper" was fully corroborated. For more details, refer to these and other references: Ibn Qutaybah, *Al-Imāma wal-Siyāsa*; al-Mas'ūdi, *Murūj al-Dhahab*; Ibn Abd Rabbih, *Al-'Iqd al-Farīd*; al-Tabari's *Tārīkh*.

Ibn Abul-Hadīd has written saying that as prophesied by Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ, Basra got under the floods twice: once during the days of al-Qādir Billāh, and once during the reign of al-Qā'im bi Amrillāh. The condition of flooding was such that the whole city was submerged, but the top ends of its grand mosque were seen about the level of water and looked like a bird encroaching on its bosom's side.



ومن كلام له عليه السلام في مثل ذلك في البصرة وأهلها بعد الجمل

أَرْضُكُمْ قَرِيبَةٌ مِنَ الْمَاءِ، بَعِيدَةٌ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ، خَفَّتْ عُقُولُكُمْ، وَسَفِهَتْ حُلُومُكُمْ، فَأَنْتُمْ عَرَضٌ لِنَابِلٍ، وَأُكْلَةٌ لِأَكِلٍ، وَقَرِيبَةٌ لِصَائِدٍ.

#### Sermon 14

##### Also condemning the people of Basra

"Your grounds are close to the sea and away from the sky. Your wits have become light and your minds are full of folly. You are the aim of the archer, a morsel for the eater and an easy prey for the hunter."



ومن كلام له عليه السلام فيما ردّه على المسلمين من قطنع عثمان

وَاللّٰهُ لَوْ وَجَدْتُهُ قَدْ تَزَوَّجَ بِهِ النِّسَاءَ، وَمَلَكَ بِهِ الْأَمْوَاءَ، لَرَدَدْتُهُ: فَإِنَّ فِي الْعَدْلِ سَعَةً، وَمَنْ ضَاقَ عَلَيْهِ الْعَدْلُ، فَالْجَوْرُ عَلَيْهِ أَضْيَقُ!

#### Sermon 15

After resuming the land grants made by `Othmān ibn `Affān [to the state treasury], he said:

"By Allāh! Even if I had found that by such money women have been married or bondmaids have been purchased, I will have resumed it because there is a wide scope in dispensation of justice, and he who finds it hard to act justly should find it harder to

deal with injustice.”



و من كلام له عليه السلام  
لما بويع في المدينة و فيها يخبر الناس بعلمه بما تنول إليه أحوالهم و فيها يقسمهم إلى أقسام

ذِمَّتِي بِمَا أَقُولُ رَهِينَةٌ وَأَنَا بِهِ زَعِيمٌ إِنَّ مَنْ صَرَّحْتَ لَهُ الْعَبْرَ عَمَّا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَثَلَاتِ حَجَزَتْهُ النَّقْوَى عَنْ تَقَحُّمِ الشُّبُهَاتِ أَلَا وَإِنَّ بَلِيَّتَكُمْ قَدْ عَادَتْ كَهَيْئَتِهَا يَوْمَ بَعَثَ اللَّهُ نَبِيَّهُ (صلى الله عليه وآله) وَالَّذِي بَعَثَهُ بِالْحَقِّ لِنُبُلِّغَنَّ بَلْبَلَةً وَلِنُعْرَبِلَنَّ غَرْبَلَةً وَلِنَسَاطِنَ سَوَاطِئِ الْقُدْرِ حَتَّى يَعودَ أَسْفَلَكُمْ أَعْلَاكُمْ وَأَعْلَاكُمْ أَسْفَلَكُمْ وَلِنَسِيقَنَّ سَابِقُونَ كَانُوا قَصْرُوا وَلِيَقْصِرَنَّ سَابِقُونَ كَانُوا سَبَقُوا وَاللَّهِ مَا كَتَمْتُ وَشَمَّهْتُ وَلَا كَدَّبْتُ كِدْبَهُ وَلَقَدْ نُبِّئْتُ بِهَذَا الْمَقَامِ وَهَذَا الْيَوْمِ أَلَا وَإِنَّ الْخَطَايَا حَبْلٌ شَمْسٌ حُمِلَ عَلَيْهَا أَهْلُهَا وَخُلِعَتْ لُجْمُهَا فَتَقَحَّمَتْ بِهِمْ فِي النَّارِ أَلَا وَإِنَّ النَّقْوَى مَطَايَا ذَلِكَ حُمِلَ عَلَيْهَا أَهْلُهَا وَأَعْطُوا أَرْمَتَهَا فَأَوْرَدَتْهُمْ الْجَنَّةَ حَقٌّ وَبَاطِلٌ وَلِكُلِّ أَهْلٍ فَلَيْنَ أَمْرٍ الْبَاطِلُ لَقَدِيمًا فَعَلَ وَلَيْنَ قَلِّ الْحَقُّ فَلَرَبِيمًا وَلَعَلَّ وَلَقَلَّمَا أُدْبِرَ شَيْءٌ فَأَقْبِلَ.

قال السيد الشريف: وأقول إن في هذا الكلام الأدنى من مواقع الإحسان ما لا تبلغه مواقع الاستحسان وإن حظ العجب منه أكثر من حظ العجب به و فيه مع الحال التي وصفنا زوائد من الفصاحة لا يقوم بها لسان ولا يطلع فجبها إنسان ولا يعرف ما أقول إلا من ضرب في هذه الصناعة بحق وجرى فيها على عرق وما يعقلها إلا العالِمُونَ.

و من هذه الخطبة و فيها يقسم الناس إلى ثلاثة أصناف

شَغِلَ مِنَ الْجَنَّةِ وَالنَّارِ أَمَامَهُ سَاعَ سَرِيحٍ نَجَا وَطَالِبُ بَطِيءٍ رَجَا وَمُقَصِّرٌ فِي النَّارِ هَوَى الْيَمِينِ وَالشَّمَالِ مَضَلَّةٌ وَالطَّرِيقُ الْوَسْطَى هِيَ الْجَادَةُ عَلَيْهَا بَاقِي الْكِتَابِ وَأَثَرُ النَّبُوَّةِ وَمِنْهَا مَنْفَعُ السَّنَةِ وَإِلَيْهَا مَصِيرُ الْعَاقِبَةِ هَلْكَ مَنْ ادَّعَى وَخَابَ مَنْ افْتَرَى مَنْ أَيْدَى صَفْحَتَهُ لِلْحَقِّ هَلْكَ وَكَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ جَهْلًا أَلَا يَعْرِفُ قُدْرَهُ لَا يَهْلِكُ عَلَى النَّقْوَى سَنَخُ أَصْلٍ وَلَا يَظْمَأُ عَلَيْهَا زَرْعٌ قَوْمٌ فَاسْتَبْرُوا فِي بَيُوتِكُمْ وَأَصْلِحُوا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ وَالنُّوبَةَ مِنْ وَرَائِكُمْ وَلَا يَحْمَدُ حَامِدٌ إِلَّا رَبَّهُ وَلَا يَلْمُ لِأَنِّمْ إِلَّا نَفْسَهُ.

## Sermon 16

Delivered when allegiance was sworn to him in Medīna

“The responsibility for what I say is guaranteed, and I am to answer for it. He to whom experiences have clearly shown the past exemplary punishments (given by Allāh to people) is prevented by piety from falling into doubts. You should know that the same troubles have returned to you which existed when the Prophet ﷺ was first sent.

“By Allāh Who sent the Prophet ﷺ with faith and truth! You will be severely subverted, bitterly shaken as in a sieve and fully mixed as by a spoon in a cooking pot till your low persons become high and high ones become low, those who were behind will attain forward positions and those who were forward will be left behind. By Allāh, I have not concealed a single word or spoken any lie, and I had been informed of this event and of this time.

“Beware of sins that are like unruly horses on whom their riders have been placed and

their reins have been let loose so they jump with them into Hell. Beware that piety is like trained horses on whom the riders have been placed with the reins in the hands, so they will take the riders into Paradise. There is right and wrong, and there are followers of each. If wrong dominates, it has (always) in the past been so, and if truth goes down, that, too, has often taken place. It seldom happens that a thing that lags behind comes ahead.”

Commenting on the above, Ash-Sharīf ar-Radi says the following: “In the short speech, there is more beauty than can be appreciated, and the amazement aroused by it is more than can be expressed. Despite what we have stated, it has so many aspects of eloquence that cannot be expressed, nor can anyone reach its depth. And no one can understand what I am saying unless he attains this and knows its details.”

... *Such are the parables We set for mankind, but only those who have knowledge understand them* (Qur’ān, 29: 43)

### **From the Same Sermon:**

“He who has heaven and hell on his mind has no other aim. He who attempts and acts quickly succeeds, while a slow seeker may also entertain hope. And he who falls short of deeds faces destruction in Hell. On the right and left there are misleading paths. Only the middle way is the (right) path which is the Everlasting book and the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ. From them both, the Sunnah spreads out, and toward them is the eventual return.

“He who claims (otherwise) is ruined, and he who concocts falsehood is disappointed. He who opposes the right with his face is ruined. It is enough ignorance for one not to know himself. He who is deeply rooted in piety is not ruined, and the plantation of the people which is based on piety never remains without water. Hide yourselves in your houses and be reformed. Repentance is at your back. One should praise only Allāh and condemn only his own self.”

In some versions of this same sermon, after the words *man abda safhatahu lilhaqqi halaka*, the words *inda jahalatu’n-nas* also occur. In that case, the meaning of this sentence will be that he who stands in the face of what is right dies in the estimation of the ignorant.

Piety is the connotation of the heart and the mind being both affected and impressed by the Divine Greatness and Gory. As an effect of it, man’s spirit becomes full of the fear of Allāh and its inevitable result is that engrossment in worship and prayers intensifies. It is impossible for the heart to be full of the Divine fear, and there is no actual manifestation of it on deeds. Since worship and submission reform the heart and nurture the spirit, the purity of the heart increases as worship increases. That is why in the Qur’ān, *taqwa* (piety) is sometimes applied to fear as in this verse: *Ittaqullaha haqqa tuqātih* (fear [the wrath of] Allāh as He ought to be feared) (3:102). *Taqwa* implies worship and devotion. In the verse that says ...*wa yakhshal-laha wa yattaqhi faullaika humul fai’zun* (24:52), *taqwa* implies purity of the spirit and cleanliness of the heart.

According to traditions, *taqwa* has been assigned three degrees: The first degree is

that a man should follow the creed's injunctions and stay away from prohibitions. The second degree is that recommended matters should also be followed and disliked things should be avoided. The third degree is that for fear of falling into doubts, one may abstain even from what is permissible as well. The first degree is for the common men, the second for the noble ones and the third for the high dignitaries. Allāh has referred to these three degrees in the following verse:

*On those who believe and do good, there is no blame for what they ate (before) when they did guard themselves and did believe and did good, still (furthermore) they (should continue to) guard themselves and do good, and Allāh loves the doers of good. (Qur'ān, 5: 93)*

Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام says that only deed based on piety lasts and only that deed will blossom and bear fruit which is watered by piety because worship exists only in the feeling of submission (to the Almighty). Thus, Allāh says the following:

*Is he, therefore, better who has laid his foundation on fear of Allāh and (His) goodwill, or he who laid his foundation on the brink of a crumbling bank, so it broke down with him into the fire of hell? (Holy Qur'ān 9: 109).*

Consequently, every belief which is not based on knowledge and conviction is like an edifice erected without a foundation. In it, there is no stability or firmness. Every deed without piety is like the plantation which withers because it receives no water.



من كلام له عليه السلام  
في صفة من يتصدى للحكم بين الأمة و ليس لذلك بأهل و فيها أبغض الخلاق إلى الله صنفان

#### الصنف الأول

إِنَّ أَبْغَضَ الْخَلَائِقِ إِلَى اللَّهِ رَجُلَانِ رَجُلٌ وَكَلَهُ اللَّهُ إِلَى نَفْسِهِ فَهُوَ جَائِرٌ عَنْ قَصْدِ السَّبِيلِ مَشْغُوفٌ بِكَلَامِ بَدْعَةٍ وَدُعَاءِ ضَلَالَةٍ فَهُوَ فِتْنَةٌ لِمَنْ افْتَتَنَ بِهِ ضَالٌّ عَنْ هُدًى مَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَهُ مُضِلًّا لِمَنْ افْتَدَى بِهِ فِي حَيَاتِهِ وَبَعْدَ وَفَاتِهِ حَمَلٌ خَطَايَا غَيْرِهِ رَهْنٌ بِخَطِيئَتِهِ .

#### الصنف الثاني

وَرَجُلٌ قَمَشَ جَهْلًا مُوضِعٌ فِي جُهَالِ الْأُمَّةِ عَادٍ فِي أَعْيَاشِ الْفِتْنَةِ عَمَّ بِمَا فِي عَقْدِ الْهُدْنَةِ قَدْ سَمَّاهُ أَشْبَاهَ النَّاسِ عَالِمًا وَلَيْسَ بِهِ بَكْرٌ فَاسْتَكْتَرَ مِنْ جَمْعِ مَا قَلَّ مِنْهُ خَبِيرٌ مِمَّا كَثُرَ حَتَّى إِذَا ارْتَوَى مِنْ مَاءِ آجِنٍ وَاكْتَنَرَ مِنْ غَيْرِ طَائِلٍ جَلَسَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ قَاضِيًا ضَامِنًا لِتَخْلِيصِ مَا التَّنِيسَ عَلَى غَيْرِهِ فَإِنْ نَزَلَتْ بِهِ إِحْدَى الْمُبْهَمَاتِ هَيَّا لَهَا حَشْوًا رَتًا مِنْ رَأْيِهِ ثُمَّ قَطَعَ بِهِ فَهُوَ مِنْ لُبْسِ الشُّبُهَاتِ فِي مِثْلِ نَسْجِ الْعُنْكَبُوتِ لَا يَدْرِي أَصَابَ أَمْ أَخْطَأَ فَإِنْ أَصَابَ خَافَ أَنْ يَكُونَ قَدْ أَخْطَأَ وَإِنْ أَخْطَأَ رَجَا أَنْ يَكُونَ قَدْ أَصَابَ جَاهِلٌ خَبَّاطٌ جَهَالَاتٍ عَاشَ رِكَابُ عَشَوَاتٍ لَمْ يَعْضَ عَلَى الْعِلْمِ بِضِرْسٍ قَاطِعٍ يَدْرُو الرُّوَايَاتِ دُرُورِ الرِّيحِ الْهَشِيمِ لَا مَلِيٍّ وَاللَّهِ بِإِصْدَارِ مَا وَرَدَ عَلَيْهِ وَلَا أَهْلٌ لِمَا فَرَطَ بِهِ لَا يَحْسَبُ الْعِلْمَ فِي شَيْءٍ مِمَّا أَنْكَرَهُ وَلَا يَرَى أَنْ مِنْ وَرَاءَ مَا بَلَغَ مَذْهَبًا لِعَيْرِهِ وَإِنْ أَظْلَمَ عَلَيْهِ أَمْرٌ اكْتَنَمَ بِهِ لِمَا يَعْلَمُ مِنْ جَهْلِ نَفْسِهِ تَصْرُخُ مِنْ جُورِ قَضَائِهِ الذَّمَاءِ وَتَعَجُّ مِنْهُ الْمَوَارِيثُ إِلَى اللَّهِ أَشْكَو مِنْ مَعْشَرٍ يَعِيشُونَ جَهَالًا وَيَمُوتُونَ ضَلَالًا لَيْسَ فِيهِمْ سِلْعَةٌ أَبْوَرُ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ إِذَا ثَلِيَ حَقُّ تِلَاوَتِهِ وَلَا سِلْعَةٌ أَنْفَقُ بَيْعًا وَلَا أَعْلَى ثَمَنًا مِنَ الْكِتَابِ إِذَا حُرِّفَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ وَلَا عِنْدَهُمْ أَنْكَرُ

## **Sermon 17**

### **About those who sit for dispensing justice to the public but are not fit for it**

“Among all the people, the most detested by Allāh are two. One who is devoted to his own self (i.e. does not care about others and their needs). So he is deviated from the true path and loves speaking about (foul) innovations, inviting others towards the wrong path. He is, therefore, a nuisance for those who are enamored of him, is himself misled from guiding those who are enamored of him, is himself misled from the guiding those who precede him. He misleads those who follow him in his life or after his death, carries the weight of others’ sins while still being entangled in his own misdeeds.

“The other type of man picks up ignorance. He moves among the ignorant, is senseless in the thick of mischief and blind to the advantages of peace (of mind). Those who resemble men (but are not quite so) call him a scholar, but he is not. He goes out in the early morning to collect things the deficiency of which is better than the plenitude till he quenches his thirst for polluted waters and acquires meaningless things.

“He sits among the people as a judge responsible for solving whatever confuses others. If an ambiguous problem is presented before him, he manages a shabby argument about it of his own accord and passes judgment on its basis. This way, he is entangled in the confusion of doubts as in a spider’s web, not knowing whether he is right or wrong. If he is right, he fears lest he errs, while if he is wrong, he hopes he is right. He is ignorant, wandering astray in ignorance and riding on carriages aimlessly moving about in the dark. He does not try to find the reality of knowledge. He scatters the traditions as the wind scatters dry leaves.

“By Allāh! He is neither capable of solving problems that come to him, nor is he fit for the status assigned to him. Whatever he does not know he does not regard it worth knowing. He does not realize that what is beyond his reach is within the reach of others. If anything is not clear to him, he keeps quiet about it because he knows his own ignorance. Lost lives are crying against his unjust verdicts and properties (that have been wrongly disposed of) are grumbling against him.

“I complain to Allāh about persons who live in ignorance and die in misguidance. For them, nothing is more worthless than the Holy Qur’ān when it is recited as it should be, nor is there anything more valuable than the Holy Qur’ān when its verses are removed from their places, nor is there anything more vicious than virtue, nor more virtuous than vice...”

Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام has held two categories of individuals as the most detested by Allāh and the worst among people. Firstly, those who are misguided even when it comes to basic tenets and are busy in the spreading of evil. Secondly, those who abandon the Holy Qur’ān and the Sunnah and pronounce injunctions according only to their own whims create a circle of their devotees and popularize the religious code which is concocted by themselves. The misguidance and wrongfulness of such persons does not remain confined to their own selves: The seed of misguidance sown by them bears fruit and, growing into the form of a big tree, provides an asylum to the misguided. This misguidance continues to thus multiply. And since these very people

are the real originators, the weight of others' sins is also on their shoulders as the Holy Qur'an says:

*Certainly they shall bear their burdens and (others') burdens with their own burdens.*  
(Qur'an, 29: 13)



الخطب >> نهج البلاغة >> عقائد الشيعة الإمامية

من كلام له عليه السلام  
في ذم اختلاف العلماء في الفتيا وفيه يذم أهل الرأي ويكل أمر الحكم في أمور الدين للقرآن

ذم أهل الرأي

تَرُدُّ عَلَى أَحَدِهِمُ الْقَضِيَّةَ فِي حُكْمٍ مِنَ الْأَحْكَامِ فَيَحْكُمُ فِيهَا بِرَأْيِهِ ثُمَّ تَرُدُّ تِلْكَ الْقَضِيَّةَ بَعَيْنَهَا عَلَى غَيْرِهِ فَيَحْكُمُ فِيهَا بِخِلَافِ قَوْلِهِ ثُمَّ يَجْتَمِعُ الْفُضَنَاءُ بِذَلِكَ عِنْدَ الْإِمَامِ الَّذِي اسْتَقْضَاهُمْ فَيُصَوِّبُ آرَاءَهُمْ جَمِيعاً وَإِلَهُمْ وَاحِداً وَنَبِيِّهُمْ وَاحِداً وَكِتَابَهُمْ وَاحِداً أَفَأَمَرَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ بِالْإِخْتِلَافِ فَأَطَاعُوهُ أَمْ نَهَاهُمْ عَنْهُ فَعَصَوْهُ.

الحكم للقرآن

أَمْ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ دِيناً نَاقِصاً فَاسْتَعَانَ بِهِمْ عَلَى إِتْمَامِهِ أَمْ كَانُوا شُرَكَاءَ لَهُ فَلَهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا وَعَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَرْضَى أَمْ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ دِيناً تَاماً فَفَصَّرَ الرَّسُولُ (صلى الله عليه وآله) عَنْ تَبْلِيغِهِ وَأَدَائِهِ وَاللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ يَقُولُ مَا فَرَطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ وَفِيهِ تَبْيَانٌ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَذَكَرَ أَنَّ الْكِتَابَ يُصَدِّقُ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضاً وَأَنَّهُ لَا إِخْتِلَافَ فِيهِ فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ إِخْتِلَافاً كَثِيراً وَإِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ ظَاهِرُهُ أُنِيقٌ وَبَاطِنُهُ عَمِيقٌ لَا تَفْنَى عَجَائِبُهُ وَلَا تَنْقُضِي غَرَائِبُهُ وَلَا تُكْشِفُ الظُّلْمَاتُ إِلَّا بِهِ .

### Sermon 18

Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام delivered this sermon in disparagement of the differences of views among the theologians

“When a problem is put before any of them, he passes judgment on it from his own imagination. When exactly the same problem is placed before another, he passes an opposite verdict. Then these judges go to the chief who had appointed them, so he confirms all verdicts, although their God is One (and the same), their Prophet ﷺ is one (and the same), their Book (the Holy Qur'an), is one (and the same).

“Did Allāh order them to differ, so they obeyed Him? Or did He prohibit them from it, but they disobeyed Him? Or (is it that) Allāh sent them an incomplete faith and sought their help to complete it?! Or are they His partners in the affairs, so it is their



share of duty to pronounce while He has only to agree?! Or is it that Allāh, the most Glorified One, sent a perfect faith, but the Prophet ﷺ fell short of conveying it, handing it over (to the people instead)? The fact is that Allāh, the most Glorified One, says the following:

*We have not neglected anything in the Book (Qur'ān). (Qur'ān, 6: 38)*

“Allāh says that each part of the Holy Qur'ān confirms the other, that there is no divergence in it; He says the following:

*And if it had been from any other than Allāh, they will surely have found in it much discrepancy. (Qur'ān, 4: 82)*

“Certainly, the outside of the Holy Qur'ān is wonderful and its inside is deep (in meaning). Its wonders will never disappear, its amazing things will never expire, and its intricacies cannot be cleared except through itself.”

It is a disputed problem about whether there is no clear argument regarding a matter in the religious law, whether or not there is in reality an order about it. The view adopted by Abul-Hassan al-Ash`ari and his master, Abū Ali al-Jubbā'i, is that in such a case, Allāh has not ordained any particular course of deed, but He assigned the task of finding it out. He passed a verdict to the jurists so that whatever they held as being prohibitive would be deemed prohibitive, and whatever they regarded as being permissible would be deemed permissible. And if one has one view and the other has another, then as many verdicts will exist as there are views, and each of them will represent the final order. For example, if one scholar holds that barley malt is prohibited, while another jurist's view is that it is permissible, then it will really be both prohibited and permissible! That is, for one who holds it as being prohibited, its use will be prohibited, while for the other, its use will be permissible. About this (theory of) “correctness,” Muhammed ibn Abdul-Karīm al-Shahristāni writes the following:

“A group of theorists hold that in matters where *ijtihād* (research) is applied, there is no settled view about permissibility or otherwise, about the lawfulness and prohibition of it; but whatever the *mujtahid* (the researcher/scholar) holds is the order of Allāh because the ascertaining of the view of Allāh depends on the verdict of the *mujtahid*. If it is not so, there will be no verdict at all. And, according to this view, **every** *mujtahid* will be correct in his opinion. Refer to p. 98 of his book titled *Al-Milal wal Nihal*.

In this case, the *mujtahid* is viewed as being above committing mistakes because a mistake can be deemed to occur where a step is taken against reality, yet where there is no reality of a verdict, making a mistake makes no sense. Besides, the *mujtahid* can be considered to be above committing mistakes if it is held that Allāh, being aware of all the views that were likely to be adopted, has ordained many final orders as a result of which every view corresponds to some such order. Or that Allāh has assured that the views adopted by the *mujtahids* should not go beyond what He has ordained, or that by chance, the view of everyone of them would, after all, correspond to some ordained order or another.

The Imāmiyya sect, however, has a different theory, namely that Allāh has neither assigned to anyone the right to legislate, nor has He subjected any matter to the *mujtahid's* view, nor in case of a difference of views has He ordained numerous real orders. Of course, if the *mujtahid* cannot arrive at a real order than whatever view he takes, after researching and probing, this is enough for him and for his followers to act upon. Such an order is the apparent one which is a substitute for the real order. In this case, he is excused for missing the real order because he did his best to dive in the deep ocean and explore its depth. But, it is a pity that instead of pearls, he goes only for seashells. He does not say that observers should accept it as a pearl, or it should be seen as such. It is a different matter that Allāh, who watches over the endeavors, may value it at half so that the endeavor does not go to waste nor his enthusiasm discouraged.

If the theory of correctness is adopted, then every verdict on the law, and every opinion, shall have to be accepted as being correct. This is what Maybudhi has written in his *fatwa*: “In this matter, the view adopted by al-`Ash`ari is right. It follows that differing opinions should *all* be right. Beware, do not entertain a bad impression about jurists, and do not open your tongue to abuse them.”

When contrary theories and divergent views are accepted as being correct, it is strange why the deed of some conspicuous individuals are seen as mistakes of decision since mistakes of decision by the *mujtahid* cannot be expected at all. If the theory of correctness is right, the deeds of Mu`āwiyah and `Ā`isha should be deemed as right. But if their deeds can be deemed as being wrong, then we should agree that *ijtihād* can also go wrong, and that the theory of correctness is itself wrong. It will then remain to be decided in its own context whether feminism did not impede the decision of `Ā`isha, or whether it was a (wrong) conclusion of Mu`āwiyah, or something else. However, this theory of correctness was propounded in order to cover mistakes and to give them the garb of Allāh's orders so that there should be no obstacle in the way of achieving goals, nor should anyone be able to speak against any such misdeeds.

In this sermon, Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام has referred to those people who deviate from the path of Allāh, those who close their eyes to light, grope in the darkness of imagination, make faith the victim of their views and opinions, pronounce new findings, pass orders by their own imagination and produce divergent results. Then, on the basis of this theory of correctness, they regard all these divergent and contrary orders as having come from Allāh Almighty, as though each of their orders represents a Divine revelation, so that no order of theirs can be wrong, nor can they stumble on any occasion. Thus, Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام says in disproving this view that:

1) When Allāh is One, the Book (Holy Qur`ān) is one and the Prophet ﷺ is one, then the religion (that is followed) should also be one. And when the religion is one, how can there be divergent orders about any matter? There can be divergence in an order only in case he who passed the order has forgotten it or is oblivious about it, or senselessness may overtake him, or he may fully desire entanglement in these labyrinths while Allāh and the Prophet ﷺ are above. These divergences cannot, therefore, be attributed to the Book of Allāh and to His Prophet ﷺ. These divergences are rather the outcome of the thinking and opinions, of likes and dislikes, of people who are bent on twisting the delineations of religion by their own imagination or to serve some interest.

2) Allāh must have either forbidden these divergences or ordered their creation, and He is far above the latter. If He has issued orders in their favor, where is that order and at what place, on what occasion? As for forbidding them, the Holy Qur'ān says the following:

*Say: Has Allāh permitted you, or do you forge a lie against Allāh?! (Holy Qur'ān 10: 59)*

That is, everything that is not in accordance with the Divine orders is a concoction, and concoction is forbidden and prohibitive. For those who concoct things, there will be neither success, nor achievement, nor prosperity and anything good in the next world. Thus Allāh says the following:

*And utter you not whatever lie describes your tongues (saying): This is lawful and this is forbidden, in order to forge a lie against Allāh; verily, those who forge a lie against Allāh do not succeed. (Qur'ān, 16: 116)*

If Allāh has left religion incomplete, and the reason for leaving it halfway was that He desired that people should *assist* Him in completing the religious code and *share* with Him in the task of legislating..., then this belief is obviously nothing but polytheism. If He sent down the religion in a perfect order and form, the Prophet ﷺ must have failed in conveying it, so that there is room still left for others to apply their imagination and opinion to it. This suggestion, God forbid, means attributing weakness to the Prophet ﷺ, actually a slur slung at the very best creation of Allāh ﷻ.

4) Allāh has said in the Holy Qur'ān that He has not left out anything in the Book and has clarified each and every matter. Now, if an order is carved out which conflicts with the Holy Qur'ān, it will be outside the religious code. Its basis will not be on knowledge and perception, nor is it on the Holy Qur'ān and authentic Sunnah, but it will rather be a personal opinion, one's own personal judgment which cannot be deemed to be in agreement with religion and faith.

5) The Holy Qur'ān is the basis and source of religion, the fountainhead of the Sharī'a laws. If the Sharī'a laws were divergent, there should have been divergence in the Qur'ān, too. And, if there were divergences in it, it could not be regarded as the Divinely revealed word of the Almighty. When it is the Divine word, the laws of Sharī'a cannot be divergent so as to accept all divergent and contrary views as being correct, so imaginative verdicts can be viewed as being Qur'ānic dictates, which is not the case.



ومن كلام له عليه السلام قاله للأشعث بن قيس و هو على منبر الكوفة يخطب، فمضى في بعض كلامه شيء اعترضه الأشعث فيه، فقال يا أمير المؤمنين، هذه عليك لا لك، فخفض عليه السلام إليه بصره ثم قال:

مَا يُدْرِيكَ مَا عَلَيَّ مِمَّا لِي عَلَيْكَ لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ وَلَعْنَةُ اللَّاعِنِينَ حَانَكَ ابْنُ حَانَكَ مُنَافِقُ ابْنُ كَافِرٍ وَاللَّهُ لَقَدْ أَسْرَكَ الْكُفْرُ مَرَّةً  
وَالْإِسْلَامُ أُخْرَى فَمَا فَذَاكَ مِنْ وَاحِدَةٍ مِنْهُمَا مَالِكٌ وَلَا حَسْبُكَ وَإِنَّ أَمْرًا دَلَّ عَلَى قَوْمِهِ السَّيْفَ وَسَاقَ إِلَيْهِمُ الْحَتْفَ  
لَحْرِيٌّ أَنْ يَمُوتَهُ الْأَقْرَبُ وَلَا يَأْمَنُهُ الْأَبْعَدُ .

قال السيد الشريف : يريد (عليه السلام) أنه أسر في الكفر مرة و في الإسلام مرة. و أما قوله (عليه السلام) دل على قومه السيف فأراد به حديثا كان للأشعث مع خالد بن الوليد باليمامة غر فيه قومه و مكر بهم حتى أوقع بهم خالد وكان قومه بعد ذلك يسمونه عرف النار وهو اسم للغادر عندهم.

## Sermon 19

**Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام delivers a lecture from the pulpit of Kūfa's (Grand) Mosque when al-Ash'ath ibn Qays<sup>21</sup> objected and said, "O Amīr al-Mu'minīn!**

<sup>21</sup>Who is this al-Ash'ath ibn Qays al-Kindi, anyway? His original name was Ma'di Karb and surname "Abū Muhammed" but, because of his disheveled hair, he is better known as "Al-Ash'ath", one having disheveled hair. After the proclamation of Prophethood, he came to Mecca along with his tribe. The Prophet (ص) invited him and his tribe to accept Islam. After the Hijra (migration of the Holy Prophet [ص] from Mecca to Medīna), Islam became established and in full swing. Deputations began to come to Medīna in large numbers. He, too, went to the Prophet's audience with Banū Kindah tribesmen and accepted Islam. The author of *Al-Isṭi'āb* writes that after the Prophet (ص), this man again turned unbeliever. During the caliphate of Abū Bakr, he was brought to Medīna as a prisoner. He again accepted (or pretended to have accepted) Islam. This time, too, his Islam was proven to be a pretense. Thus, Shaikh Muhammed `Abdoh writes the following in his annotations on Nahjul-Balāgha:

"Just as Abdullāh ibn Ubayy ibn Sallūl was a companion (*sahābi*) of the Prophet (ص), al-Ash'ath was a companion of Ali. Both men (Abdullāh ibn Ubayy and al-Ash'ath ibn Qays) were high-ranking hypocrites. Al-Ash'ath lost one of his eyes in the Battle of Yarmūk (which took place in the month of Rajab of the year 15 A.H./August of 636 A.D.). Ibn Qutaybah has included him in the list of renown one-eyed personalities. Abū Bakr's sister, Umm Farwah daughter of Ibn Abū Quhāfah, who was once the wife of a tribesman from the Azdi tribe, then wife of Tamīm ad-Darmi, was on her third marriage married to this same al-Ash'ath... Three sons were born for her: Muhammed, Ismā'īl and Ishaq. Biography books indicate that she was blind. Ibn Abul-Hadīd has quoted the following statement of Abul-Faraj al-Isbahani from which it appears that this man was equally involved in the assassination plot of Ali (ع):

"On the night of the assassination [of Imām Ali (ع)], Ibn Muljim came to al-Ash'ath ibn Qays and both retired to a corner of the [Grand Kūfa] mosque and sat there when Hijr ibn `Adiy passed by. The latter overheard al-Ash'ath saying to Ibn Muljim, 'Be quick now or else dawn's light will disgrace you.' On hearing this, Hijr said to al-Ash'ath, 'O one-eyed man! You are getting ready to kill Ali (ع).'" Having said so, he hastened to Ali ibn Abū Tālib (ع). But Ibn Muljim was more swift than him and had already struck Ali with a poisoned sword. When Hijr turned back, people were crying that Ali (ع) had been killed."

It was the daughter of this same al-Ash'ath ibn Qays who poisoned Imām Hassan (ع). Al-Mas'ūdi has written the following:

"His (Imām al-Hassan's) wife, Ja'da daughter of al-Ash'ath (ibn Qays), poisoned him (poisoned Imām al-Hassan [ع]) after Mu'āwiyah had plotted it with her, promising her that if she would administer poison to al-Hassan (ع), he would pay her one hundred thousand dirhams and marry her off to [his corrupt and faithless son] Yazīd." Refer to p. 650, Vol. 2, of

**This statement is not in your favor but is against you.” Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ looked at him with anger and said:**

“How do you know what is for me and what is against me? The curse of Allāh and all others be on you. You are a weaver and son of a weaver. You are the son of an unbeliever and you yourself is a hypocrite. You were arrested once by the unbelievers and once by the Muslim believers, but your wealth and birth could not save you from either. The man who contrives for his own people to be put to the sword and invites death and destruction for them does deserve to be hated by the near ones as well as by the remote ones and should not be trusted.”

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says the following: “This man was arrested once when he was an unbeliever and once during the days of Islam.” As for Amīr al-Mu’minīn’s words that the man contrived for his own people to be put to the sword, the reference herein is to the incident which took place to al-Ash`ath ibn Qays<sup>22</sup> when he confronted Khālid ibn al-Walīd at Yamāma. There, he deceived his people and contrived a trick until Khālid attacked them. After this incident, his people nicknamed him, “Urf an-Nar,” which in the parlance stood for “traitor”.

After the Battle of Nahrawān (between Imām Ali ﷺ and the Khārijites which took place on the 13<sup>th</sup> of Safar of 37 A.H./July 31, 657 A.D.), Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ was delivering a sermon in the mosque of Kūfa about the ill effects of the “arbitration” when a man stood up and said, “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ! First you discouraged us from this arbitration, but thereafter you allowed it. We cannot understand which of these two was more correct and proper.” On hearing this, Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ clapped his one hand over the other [as a sign of sorrow and grief as well as helplessness] and said, “This is the reward of one who gives up a firm view; that is, this is the outcome of your own deeds as you had abandoned firmness and caution and insisted on “arbitration”. But al-Ash`ath mistook it to mean as though Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ implied that the army’s concern was about having accepted arbitration, so he spoke out thus: “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ! This brings blame on your own self,” whereupon Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ said the following with firmness: “What do you know about what I am saying? And what do you understand what is for me or against me?! You are a weaver and the son of a weaver brought up by unbelievers, and a hypocrite are you. The curse of Allāh and that of all the world be on you.”

Commentators have written several reasons for Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ calling al-Ash`ath a weaver and a hypocrite. The first reason is because he and his father, like most of the people of his native land, pursued weaving as a handicraft. So, in order to

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*Murūj al-Dhahab.*

This man’s son, Muhammed ibn al-Ash`ath ibn Qays, was active in defrauding Muslim bin Aqīl in Kūfa and in shedding Imām Hussain’s blood in Kerbala’. Despite all these shameful stigmas, he is counted among those men from whom al-Bukhāri, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd, al-Tirmidhi, al-Nisā’i and Ibn Mājah have quoted *ahādīth*, traditions...! Hadīth is one of two major sources of the *Shari`a*, Islam’s legislative system, the other being the Qur`ān.

<sup>22</sup>This man is discussed on pp. 137-38, Vol. 1 of Ibn al-Athīr’s *Usd al-Ghāba fī Ma`rifat al-Sahāba* (Beirut, Lebanon: Dār al-Fikr, 1419 A.H./1998 A.D.), telling us that `Othmān ibn `Affān appointed him as provincial ruler of Azerbaijan and that he died in 42 A.H./662 A.D.



refer to the lowliness of his occupation, he has been called a “weaver”. The people of Yemen had other occupations also, but mostly this profession was common among them. Describing their occupations, Khālid ibn Safwān has mentioned this one first of all:

“What can I say about a people among whom there are only weavers, leather dyers, monkey keepers and donkey riders?! The hoopoe found them out, the mouse flooded them<sup>23</sup> and a woman ruled over them,” as we read on p. 130, Vol. 1 of *Al-Bayān wal-Tabayīn*.

The second reason is that *hiyaka* means walking by bending on either side. Since this is due to pride and conceit, this man used to shrug his shoulders and bend his body as he walked, so he was called *hayik*.

The third reason is this: It is more conspicuous and clear that he is called a weaver in order to denote his foolishness and lowliness because every low person is proverbially known as a “weaver”. Their wisdom and sagacity can be well-gauged by the fact that their follies had become proverbial, while nothing attains proverbial status without peculiar characteristics. Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام has also confirmed it.

The fourth reason is that by this, it is meant a person who has conspired against Allāh and the Holy Prophet ﷺ and prepared webs that are those of hypocrites in particular. Thus, on p. 101, Vol. 12 of *Wasā’il ash-Shī’a*, it is stated that: “It was mentioned before Imām Ja’far as-Sādiq عليه السلام that the weaver is cursed. He explained that by the *weaver*, it is implied a person who concocts schemes against Allāh and the Prophet ﷺ.”

After the word “weaver,” Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام has used the word hypocrite and there is no conjunction between them in order to emphasize the nearness of meaning thereof. Then, on the basis of this hypocrisy and concealment of the truth, the Imām عليه السلام declared him as being worthy of the curse of Allāh and of all others, as Allāh, the most Glorified One, says the following:

*Verily, those who conceal what we have sent of (Our) manifest evidences and guidance, after what we have (so) clearly shown for mankind in the Book, (they are) those whom Allāh does curse and (also) are cursed by all those who curse. (Qur’ān, 2: 159)*

After this, Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام said, “You could not avoid the degradation of being a prisoner when you were unbeliever, nor did these ignominies spare you after your acceptance of Islam and you were taken prisoner.” When he was an unbeliever, the event of his being taken prisoner occurred in this way: When the tribe of Banū Murād killed his father, Qays, he (al-Ash’ath) gathered the warriors of Banū Kindah and divided them into three groups. He himself took command over one group. On the others, he placed Ka’b ibn Hāni’ and al-Qash’am ibn Yazīd al-Arqam as commanders.

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<sup>23</sup>This is a reference to the collapse of the famous Ma’rab Dam which was once considered one of the engineering marvels of ancient times. Its collapse, which is believed to have taken place between B.C. 650 - 115, caused the Arabs to migrate from Yemen and populate other parts of the Arabian Peninsula.



They set off to battle Banū Murad. But as misfortune would have it, instead of Banū Murad, they attacked Banū al-Hārith ibn Ka`b. The result was that Ka`b ibn Hāni` and al-Qash`am ibn Yazīd al-Arqam were killed, while this man, Qays, was taken prisoner. Eventually, he was released via the payment of three thousand camels for his ransom. In Amīr al-Mu`minīn`s words, “Your wealth or birth could not save you from either” is a reference not to the real ransom, because he was actually released on payment of those camels, but the idea is that neither plenty of wealth nor high status and prestige in the tribe could save him from this ignominy; moreover, he could not protect himself from being taken captive.

The event of his second imprisonment is that when the Holy Prophet of Islam ﷺ passed away from this world, a rebellion took place in the area of Hadramaut. In order to put the rebellion down, Abū Bakr, then the caliph, wrote the area`s governor, namely Ziyād ibn Labīd al-Bayādi al-Ansāri, to secure allegiance and collect *zakāt* and charities from those people. When Ziyād ibn Labid went to the tribe of Banū `Amr ibn Mu`āwiyah for collecting the *zakāt*, he took a keen fancy for a she-camel of Shaytan ibn Hijr which was very beautiful and had a huge body. He jumped over it and took possession of it. Shaytan ibn Hijr did not agree to spare it and suggested to him to take some other she-camel in its place, but Ziyād did not agree. Shaytan sent for his brother al-Adda` ibn Hijr to support him. On coming, he, too, had a talk with the man, but Ziyād insisted on his point and did not, by any means, consent to keep his hand off that she-camel. At last, both of these brothers appealed to Masrūq ibn Ma`di Karib for help. Consequently, Masrūq also used his influence so that Ziyād might leave the she-camel, but he refused categorically, whereupon Masruq became angry. Untying the she-camel, he handed it over to Shaytan. On this, Ziyād was infuriated and, collecting his men, was ready to fight. On the other side, Banū Wā`ilah also assembled for the confrontation, but they could not defeat Ziyād and were badly beaten at his hands. Their women were taken away and their property was looted. Eventually, those who had survived were obliged to take refuge under the protection of al-Ash`ath. Al-`Ash`ath promised assistance on the condition that he should be acknowledged as the ruler of the area. Those people agreed to this condition, and his coronation was also formally performed. After having his authority acknowledged, he arranged an army and set out to fight Ziyād. On the other side, Abū Bakr had written to the chief of Yemen, al-Muhājir ibn Abū Umayyah, to go to help Ziyād with a contingent. Al-Muhājir was coming with his contingent when they came face-to-face. Seeing each other, they drew swords and commenced fighting at az-Zurqān. In the end, al-Ash`ath fled from the battlefield. Taking his remaining men, he closed himself in the fortress of an-Najjār. The enemy would not leave them alone, laying siege around the fort. Al-`Ash`ath thought about how long he could remain shut up in the fort while having no equipment or men, and he should think out some way to escape.

So one night, he stealthily came out of the fort, met Ziyād and al-Muhājir and conspired with them that if they gave asylum to nine members of his family, he would get the fort gate opened. They accepted this term and asked him to write down the names of those nine persons for them. He wrote down the nine names, but acting on his “traditional wisdom”, he forgot to include his own name in that list. After settling this, he told his people that he had secured protection for them and the gate of the fort should be opened. When the gate was opened, Ziyād`s forces pounced on them. They said they had been promised protection, whereupon Ziyād`s army said that this was wrong and that al-Ash`ath had asked protection for only nine members of his

household whose names were preserved with them. In short, eight hundred persons were put to the sword and the hands of several women were chopped off. According to the settlement, nine men were left alone, but the case of al-Ash`ath became complicated. Eventually, it was decided that he should be sent to Abū Bakr who would decide about him.

At last, Qays ibn al-‘Ash`ath was sent to Medīna in chains along with a thousand female prisoners. On the way, relatives and others, men and women, all cursed him and the women were calling him traitor and the one who got his own people put to the sword. Who else can be a greater traitor?! However, when he reached Medīna, Abū Bakr released him and, on that occasion, he was married to Umm Farwah, sister of Abū Bakr...

ومن كلام له عليه السلام وفيه ينفر من الغفلة وينبه إلى الفرار لله

فَأَنَّكُمْ لَوْ قَدْ عَابَيْتُمْ مَا قَدْ عَابَيْنَ مَنْ مَاتَ مِنْكُمْ لَجَزَّ عَنْكُمْ وَوَهَلْتُمْ وَسَمِعْتُمْ وَأَطَعْتُمْ وَلَكِنْ مَحْجُوبٌ عَنْكُمْ مَا قَدْ عَابَيْتُوا  
وَقَرِيبٌ مَا يُطْرَخُ الْحَبَابُ وَالْقَدْ بُصِرْتُمْ إِنْ أَبْصَرْتُمْ وَأَسْمِعْتُمْ إِنْ سَمِعْتُمْ وَهَدَيْتُمْ إِنْ اهْتَدَيْتُمْ وَبِحَقِّ أَقُولُ لَكُمْ لَقَدْ  
جَاهَرْتُكُمْ الْعَبْرُ وَزُجِرْتُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مُرْدَجَرٌ وَمَا يُبْلَغُ عَنِ اللَّهِ بَعْدَ رُسُلِ السَّمَاءِ إِلَّا الْبَشَرُ .

## Sermon 20

### Death: Learning lessons from it

“If you could see what has been seen by those of you who have died, you would be baffled and troubled. Then you will have listened and obeyed; but what they have seen is yet veiled from you. Shortly, the curtain will be removed. You will be shown, provided you see, you will be made to listen, provided you can hear, listen and you have been guided, only if you accept guidance. I spoke to you the truth. You have been called loudly by (instructive) examples and fully warned. After the heavenly messengers (angels), only man can convey the message from Allāh. (So what I am conveying is from Allāh).”



و من خطبة له عليه السلام وهي كلمة جامعة للعظة و الحكمة

فَإِنَّ الْعَايَةَ أَمَامَكُمْ وَإِنَّ وِرَاءَكُمْ السَّاعَةَ تَحْدُوكُمْ تَخَفُّوْا تَلْحَقُوا فَإِنَّمَا يُنْتَظَرُ بِأَوْلَائِكُمْ آخِرُكُمْ.

قال السيد الشريف : أقول إن هذا الكلام لو وزن بعد كلام الله سبحانه و بعد كلام رسول الله (صلى الله عليه وآله) بكل كلام لمال به راجحا و برز عليه سابقا. فأما قوله (عليه السلام) تخفوا تلحقوا فما سمع كلام أقل منه مسموعا و لا أكثر منه محصولا و ما أبعد غورها من كلمة و أنفع نطقها من حكمة وقد نبهنا في كتاب الخصائص على عظم قدرها و شرف جوهرها .

## Sermon 21

### Advice to keep light in this world

“Your aim (reward or punishment) is before you. Behind your back is the Hour (of resurrection) which is driving you on to it. Keep (yourselves) light and overtake (those ahead of you). Your last ones are being awaited by the first ones (who have

preceded you).”

Sayyid ar-Radi says the following: “If this utterance of Ali عليه السلام is weighed with any utterance except the words of Allāh or those of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وآله, his will prove to be heavier and superior in every respect. For example, Ali’s saying “keep light” and “overtake” is the shortest expression anyone has ever heard in the greatest meaning which it conveys. How broad its meaning is and how clear its spring of wisdom! I have pointed out the greatness and meaningfulness of this phrase in my book *Al-Khasā’is*.



ومن خطبة له عليه السلام  
حين بلغه خبر الناكثين ببيعته وفيها يذم عملهم و يلزمهم دم عثمان ويتهددهم بالحرب

#### ذم الناكثين

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ دَمَرَ جِزْبَهُ وَاسْتَجْلَبَ جَنْبَهُ لِيَعُودَ الْجَوْرُ إِلَى أَوْطَانِهِ وَيَرْجِعَ الْبَاطِلُ إِلَى نِصَابِهِ وَاللَّهُ مَا أَنْكَرُوا عَلَيَّ مُنْكَرًا وَلَا جَعَلُوا بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُمْ نَصْفًا .

#### دم عثمان

وَإِنَّهُمْ لَيَطْلُبُونَ حَقًّا هُمْ تَرَكَوهُ وَدَمًا هُمْ سَفَكُوهُ فَلَيْنُ كُنْتُ شَرِيكُهُمْ فِيهِ فَإِنَّ لَهُمْ لَنْصِيبَهُمْ مِنْهُ وَلَيْنُ كَانُوا وَلَوْهُ دُونِي فَمَا التَّبِعَهُ إِلَّا عِنْدَهُمْ وَإِنْ أَعْظَمَ حُجَّتَهُمْ لَعَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ يَرْتَضِعُونَ أَمَا قَدْ فَطَمْتُ وَيُحْيُونَ بِدَعَاةٍ قَدْ أَمِيتَتْ يَا خَبِيئَةَ الدَّاعِي مَنْ دَعَا وَإِلَامٍ أَجِيبٍ وَإِنِّي لَرَاضٍ بِحُجَّةِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَعِلْمِهِ فِيهِمْ .

#### التهديد بالحرب

فَإِنْ أَبَوْا أَعْطَيْتُهُمْ حَدَّ السَّيْفِ وَكَفَى بِهِ شَافِيًا مِنَ الْبَاطِلِ وَنَاصِرًا لِلْحَقِّ وَمِنَ الْعَجَبِ بَعْثُهُمْ إِلَيَّ أَنْ أُبْرِزَ لِلطَّعَانِ وَأَنْ أَصِيرَ لِلجَلَادِ هَبْلَتُهُمْ الْهَبُولُ لَقَدْ كُنْتُ وَمَا أَهْدَدُ بِالْحَرْبِ وَلَا أَرْهَبُ بِالضَّرْبِ وَإِنِّي لَعَلَى يَقِينٍ مِنْ رَبِّي وَعَيْرِ شُبْهَةٍ مِنْ دِينِي .

#### Sermon 22

#### About those who accused him of masterminding the assassinating of `Othmān

“Beware! Satan has certainly started mobilising his forces and has collected his hosts so that oppression may reach its extreme ends and what is wrong may come back to where it belongs. By Allāh, they have not put a correct blame on me, nor have they done justice between me and themselves.

“They are demanding of me a right which they themselves have abandoned and a blood which they have themselves shed. If I were a partner with them in it, then they, too, have their share of it. But if they did it without me, they alone have to face the consequences. Their biggest argument (against me) is really against their own selves. They are suckling from a mother who is already dry and bringing into life innovation

that is already dead. How disappointing is this challenger to battle? Who is this challenger and for what is he responding to? I am happy that the reasoning of Allāh has been exhausted before them and He knows (all) about them. If they refuse (to obey), I will offer them the edge of the sword which suffices for a cure for wrongdoing and for supporting what is right.

“It is strange that they send me word to proceed to them for spear-fighting and to be ready to fight with the sword. May the mourning women mourn over them. I have never been frightened of a fight, nor of being threatened with a confrontation. I enjoy full certainty of belief from my Lord and have no doubt in my faith.”

When Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام was accused of `Othmān's assassination, he delivered this sermon to refute that allegation. In it, he says this about those who blamed him of it: “These seekers of vengeance cannot say that I alone am the assassin and that no one else took part in it. Nor can they falsify witnessed events by saying that they were unconcerned about it. Why, then, have they put me foremost for this avenging? With me, they should include themselves, too. If I am free of this blame, they cannot establish their freedom from it. How can they detach themselves from this punishment? The truth of the matter is that by accusing me of this charge, their aim is that I should behave with them in the same manner to which they are accustomed. But they should not expect from me to revive the innovations of the past regimes. As for fighting, neither was I ever afraid of it, nor am I so now. Allāh knows my intention and He also knows that those who stand to make this an excuse for seeking revenge [for having killed some of their *kāfir* ancestors] are themselves his assassins. Thus, history corroborates that the people who managed his (`Othmān's) assassination by agitation and had even prevented his burial in Muslims' graveyard by hurling stones at his coffin were the same who rose for avenging his blood. In this connection, the names of Talhah ibn Ubaydullāh, az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwām and `Ā'isha are at the top of the list. On both occasions, their efforts come to sigh with conspicuity. Thus, Ibn Abul-Hadīd writes that: “Those who have recorded events relevant to the assassination of `Othmān state that on the day when he was killed, Talhah's condition was this: In order to obscure himself from the eyes of the people, he was covering his face as he was shooting arrows at `Othmān's mansion (mansion).”

In this regard, i.e. about az-Zubayr, he writes the following: “Historians have also stated that az-Zubayr used to say: ‘Kill `Othmān. He has altered your faith.’<sup>24</sup> People

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<sup>24</sup>Az-Zubayr here is echoing his cousin, Mother of the Faithful `Ā'isha, saying, “*Uqtulu Na`thalan faqad kafar* قتلوا نعثلاً فقد كفر” (Kill Na`thal, for he has committed apostasy). Who was this Na`thal? Some renown authors, including Ibn Manzour, tell us that this Na`thal was a man in Egypt famous for his very long beard. Other authors say that he was a Jew from Yemen who had a long and coarse beard. I, Editor of Nahjul-Balagha, looked for this word in Ibn Manzour's famous lexicon, *Lisān al-`Arab*, which is one of my library books, and I found it explained in detail on p. 214 of its 6<sup>th</sup> Volume, that is, the 1997 first edition printed by Dār Sādir of Beirut, Lebanon. According to this lexicon, the word means, among others, “the foolish old man.” The question that may jump to the heads of some readers, especially those who have recently embraced the Islamic faith and who may count caliph `Othmān as one of Islam's saints, is this: How can the Mother of the Faithful `Ā'isha call the third “righteous caliph” *kāfir*, apostate, a very serious charge? Did she really say that? In order to answer this question, one can refer to one or more of these very famous and highly respected classic Sunni references for verification: First of all, this statement by `Ā'isha is recorded by al-

said, ‘Your son is standing at his door guarding him!’ He replied saying, ‘Even may my son be lost, but `Othmān must be killed. `Othmān will be lying like a carcass on the Sīrat tomorrow’” (*Sharh Nahjul-Balāgha*, Vol. 9, pp. 35-36). About `Ā’isha, Ibn Abd Rabbih writes the following: “Al-Mughīrah ibn Shu’bah came to `Ā’isha once who said to him, ‘O Abū Abdullāh, I wish you have been with me on the Day of Jamal, how arrows were piercing through my *hawdaj* (camel litter) till some of them hit my body.’ Al-Mughīrah said, ‘I wish one of them had killed you.’ She said, ‘May Allāh have pity on you! Why so?!’ He replied, ‘So it would have been an atonement for what you had done against `Othmān,’” according to *Al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, Vol. 4, p. 294, a highly respected Sunni classic work of Ibn Abd Rabbih.



على تهذيب الفقراء بالزهد و تأديب الأغنياء بالشفقة

### تهذيب الفقراء

أَمَا بَعْدُ فَإِنَّ الْأَمْرَ يَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ كَقَطْرَاتِ الْمَطَرِ إِلَى كُلِّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا قُسمَ لَهَا مِنْ زِيَادَةٍ أَوْ نُقْصَانٍ فَإِنَّ رَأَى أَحَدَكُمْ لِأَخِيهِ غَفِيرَةً فِي أَهْلِ أَوْ مَالٍ أَوْ نَفْسٍ فَلَا تَكُونَنَّ لَهُ فِتْنَةً فَإِنَّ الْمَرْءَ الْمُسْلِمَ مَا لَمْ يَغْشَ دَنَاءَةً تَطْهَرُ فَيَخْشَعُ لَهَا إِذَا ذُكِرَتْ وَيُغْرَى بِهَا لِئَامُ النَّاسِ كَانَ كَأَفْالِحِ الْيَاسِرِ الَّذِي يَنْتَظِرُ أَوَّلَ فَوْزَةٍ مِنْ قِدَاحِهِ تُوجِبُ لَهُ الْمَغْنَمَ وَيُرْفَعُ بِهَا عَنْهُ الْمَغْرَمُ وَكَذَلِكَ الْمَرْءُ الْمُسْلِمُ الْبَرِيءُ مِنَ الْخِيَانَةِ يَنْتَظِرُ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِحْدَى الْحُسْنَيْنِ إِمَّا دَاعِيَ اللَّهِ فَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ خَيْرٌ لَهُ وَإِمَّا رِزْقَ اللَّهِ فَإِذَا هُوَ ذُو أَهْلِ وَمَالٍ وَمَعَهُ دِينُهُ وَحَسْبُهُ وَإِنَّ الْمَالَ وَالْبَنِينَ حَرْثَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْعَمَلَ الصَّالِحَ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ وَقَدْ يَجْمَعُهُمَا اللَّهُ تَعَالَى لِأَقْوَامٍ فَأَحْدَرُوا مِنَ اللَّهِ مَا حَدَّرَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ وَأَخْشَوْهُ خَشْيَةً لَيْسَتْ بِتَعْدِيرٍ وَاعْمَلُوا فِي غَيْرِ رِيَاءٍ وَلَا سُمْعَةٍ فَإِنَّهُ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ لِغَيْرِ اللَّهِ يَكِلْهُ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ عَمِلَ لَهُ نَسَأَلُ اللَّهَ مَنَازِلَ الشَّهَدَاءِ وَمُعَايِشَةَ السُّعْدَاءِ وَمُرَافَقَةَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ.

### تأديب الأغنياء

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّهُ لَا يَسْتَعْنِي الرَّجُلُ وَإِنْ كَانَ ذَا مَالٍ عَنْ عَثْرَتِهِ وَدِفَاعِهِمْ عَنْهُ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ وَالسِّنِّيهِمْ وَهُمْ أَعْظَمُ النَّاسِ حَبِطَةً مِنْ وَرَائِهِ وَالْمُهْمُ لِشِعْتِهِ وَأَعْظَمُهُمْ عَلَيْهِ عِنْدَ نَازِلَةٍ إِذَا نَزَلَتْ بِهِ وَلِسَانُ الصِّدْقِ يَجْعَلُهُ اللَّهُ لِلْمَرْءِ فِي النَّاسِ خَيْرٌ لَهُ مِنَ الْمَالِ يَرْتُهُ غَيْرُهُ .

**ومنها :** أَلَا لَا يَعْدِلَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ عَنِ الْقَرَابَةِ بَرَى بِهَا الْخِصَاصَةَ أَنْ يَسُدَّهَا بِالَّذِي لَا يَزِيدُهُ إِنْ أَمْسَكَهُ وَلَا يَنْقُصُهُ إِنْ أَهْلَكَهُ وَمَنْ يَقْبِضْ يَدَهُ عَنْ عَشِيرَتِهِ فَإِنَّمَا نَقْبِضُ مِنْهُ عَنْهُمْ يَدٌ وَاحِدَةٌ وَتُقْبِضُ مِنْهُمْ عَنْهُ أَيْدٍ كَثِيرَةٌ وَمَنْ تَلَّنَ حَاشِيَتَهُ يَسْتَنْدِمُ مِنْ قَوْمِهِ الْمَوَدَّةَ .

قال السيد الشريف : أقول الغفيرة هاهنا الزيادة و الكثرة من قولهم للجمع الكثير الجم الغفير و الجماء الغفير و

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Tabari in his *Tārīkh al-Umam wal Mulūk* (famous as *Tārīkh*), Vol. 4, p. 407, where the author details this man, Na`thal, on p. 477 of Vol. 3 of the same reference which is also available in my library. The following references also quote it: Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fil Tārīkh* (famous as *Al-Kāmil*), Vol. 3, p. 206; Ibn al-Jawzi, *Tadhkirat Khawāss al-Umma fi Khasā'is al-A'imma* (famous as *Tadhkirat al-Khawāss*), pp. 61, 64; Ibn Qutaybah, *Al-Imāma wal Siyāsa*, Vol. 1, p. 49; Ibn Manzour al-Misri, *Lisān al-‘Arab* (lexicon), Vol. 14, p. 193 (old edition); al-Fayrooz Abādī, *Taj al-‘Arūs min Jawāhir al-Qāmūs* (famous as *Taj al-‘Arūs*), Vol. 8, p. 141 and Ibn Abd Rabbih al-Andalusī, *Al-‘Iqd al-Farīd*, Vol. 4, p. 290. Remember that the numbers of volumes and pages apply to these sources’ original Arabic texts. I have done my part, now it is your turn to do yours!



يروى عفوة من أهل أو مال و العفوة الخيار من الشيء يقال أكلت عفوة الطعام أي خياره. و ما أحسن المعنى الذي أرادته ( عليه السلام ) بقوله و من يقبض يده عن عشيرته... إلى تمام الكلام فإن الممسك خيرته عن عشيرته إنما يمسك نفع يد واحدة فإذا احتاج إلى نصرته و اضطر إلى مرافقتهم قعدوا عن نصرته و تناقلوا عن صوته فمنع ترافد الأيدي الكثيرة و تناهض الأقدام الجمّة .

### Sermon 23

#### About keeping aloof from envy, well treating the kith and kin

“Verily the Divine commandments descend from the heavens to earth like drops of rain, bringing everyone what is destined for him, be it prosperity or paucity. So, if any one of you observes for his brother plenty of progeny or wealth or numbers, it should not worry him. So long as a Muslim does not commit such an act that if it is disclosed, he has to lower his gaze (in shame) and by which low people are emboldened, he is like the gambler who expects the first draw of his arrow to secure him gain and also cover up his past loss.

“Likewise, a Muslim who is free of dishonesty expects one of two good things: either a call from Allāh (death), and in that case whatever is with Allāh is the best for him, or livelihood from Allāh. He has already children and property while his faith and respect are with him. Certainly, wealth and children are the plantations of this world, while virtuous deeds are the plantations of the next world. Sometimes, Allāh joins all these in some groups.

“Beware of Allāh against what He has cautioned you, and keep your fear of Him to the extent that no excuse is needed for it. Act without show or intention of being recognised, for if a man acts for someone else, Allāh turns him over to him. We ask Allāh to grant us the positions of the martyrs, the company of the virtuous, and the friendship of the prophets.

“O people! Surely no one (even though he may be rich) can do without his kinsmen and their support by hands or tongues. They alone are his support from behind him and can ward off from him troubles. They are the most kind to him when tribulations befall him. The good memory of a man that Allāh retains among people is better than the property which others inherit from him.”

#### In the same sermon, he says the following:

“Behold! If any one of you finds your near ones in want or starving, he should not desist from helping them with that which will not increase, if this help is not extended, nor does it decrease by thus spending it. Whoever holds up his hand from (helping) his kinsmen, he holds only one hand, but at the time of his need, many hands will remain held up from helping him. One who is sweet-tempered can retain the love of his people for good.”

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says the following: “In this sermon, *al-ghāfira* means plenitude or abundance, and this is derived from the Arab term ‘al-jam` al-ghafir’, the thick crowd. In some versions for *al-ghāfira*, the word *afwatān* appears. *Afwa* means the good and selected part of anything. It is said: *akaltu afwatat-ta`ām*, that is, ‘I ate a choice meal.’” About “Awa man yaqbid yadahu `an `ashīratihi” which appears near the end of the sermon, the Imām عليه السلام points out how beautiful the meaning of this sentence is.



Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام implies that he who does not help his own tribesmen withholds only his hand, but when he is in need of their assistance and will be looking for their sympathy and support, he will remain deprived of the sympathies and succor of so many of their extending hands and marching feet.



ومن خطبة له عليه السلام وهي كلمة جامعة له، فيها تسويغ قتال المخالف، والدعوة إلى طاعة الله، والترقي فيها لضمان الفوز

وَلَعَمْرِي مَا عَلَيَّ مِنْ قِتَالٍ مَنْ خَالَفَ الْحَقَّ وَخَابَطَ الْعَيَّ مِنْ إِذْهَانٍ وَلَا إِبْهَانٍ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ وَفِرُّوا إِلَى اللَّهِ مِنْ اللَّهِ وَامْضُوا فِي الَّذِي نَهَجَهُ لَكُمْ وَقَوْمُوا بِمَا عَصَبَهُ بِكُمْ فَعَلَيَّ ضَامِنٌ لِفُلْجِكُمْ أَجَلًا إِنَّ لَمْ تُنْجُوهُ عَاجِلًا.

#### Sermon 24 Exhorting people for *jihād*

“By my life (do I swear), there will be no regard for anyone, nor will be slackening from me, in fighting against who opposes right or gropes in misguidance! O creatures of Allāh, fear Allāh and flee to Allāh from His wrath (seek protection from His mercy)! Tread on the path which He has laid down for you. Stand by what He has enjoined you. In that case (if you do so), Ali will ensure your success (salvation) eventually, even though you may not get it immediately (i.e. in the life in this world).”



من خطبة له عليه السلام

وقد تواترت عليه الأخبار باستيلاء أصحاب معاوية على البلاد و قدم عليه عاملاه على اليمن وهما عبيد الله بن عباس وسعيد بن نمران لما غلب عليهما بسر بن أبي أريطة فقام عليه السلام على المنبر ضجرا بتناقل أصحابه عن الجهاد و مخالفتهم له في الرأي فقال:

مَا هِيَ إِلَّا الْكُوفَةُ أَقْبِضُهَا وَأَبْسُطُهَا إِنَّ لَمْ تَكُونِي إِلَّا أَنْتِ تَهْبُ أَعَاصِيرُكَ فَفَبَحَكَ اللَّهُ

وَتَمَثَّلَ بِقَوْلِ الشَّاعِرِ :

لَعَمْرُ أَيْبِكَ الْخَيْرِ يَا عَمْرُو إِنَّنِي \* عَلَى وَضْرٍ مِنْ دَا الْإِنَاءِ قَلِيلٍ

ثُمَّ قَالَ (عليه السلام):

أُنْبِئْتُ بِسُرِّاً قَدْ أَطَّلَعَ الْيَمَنَ وَإِنِّي وَاللَّهِ لَأُظُنُّ أَنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ سَيَدُ الْوَنِ مِنْكُمْ بِاجْتِمَاعِهِمْ عَلَيَّ بَاطِلِهِمْ وَتَفَرُّقِكُمْ عَنِّي حَقِّكُمْ وَبِمَعْصِيَتِكُمْ إِمَامَكُمْ فِي الْحَقِّ وَطَاعَتِهِمْ إِمَامَهُمْ فِي الْبَاطِلِ وَيَأْدَائِهِمْ الْأَمَانَةَ إِلَيَّ صَاحِبِيهِمْ وَخِيَانَتِكُمْ وَبِصَلَاحِهِمْ فِي بِلَادِهِمْ وَفَسَادِكُمْ فَلَوْ أَنْتَمَنْتُمْ أَحَدَكُمْ عَلَيَّ فَعَبَّ لَحْشِيئْتِ أَنْ يَذْهَبَ بِعِلَاقَتِهِ إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّنِي قَدْ مَلَلْتُهُمْ وَمَلُونِي وَسَيَمُنُّهُمْ

وَسَيُّمُونِي فَأَبْدِلْنِي بِهِمْ خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَأَبْدِلْهُمْ بِي شَرًّا مَنِّي اللَّهُمَّ مِثْ قُلُوبِهِمْ كَمَا يُمَاتُ الْمِلْحُ فِي الْمَاءِ أَمَا وَاللَّهِ لَوَدِدْتُ  
أَنْ لِي بِكُمْ أَلْفَ فَارِسٍ مِنْ بَنِي فِرَاسٍ بِنِ عَنَمٍ .

هُنَالِكَ لَوْ دَعَوْتَ أَتَاكَ مِنْهُمْ \* فَوَارِسٌ مِثْلُ أَرْمِيَةِ الْحَمِيمِ

تُمَّ نَزَلَ (عليه السلام) مِنَ الْمُنْبَرِ.

قال السيد الشريف: أقول الأرمية جمع رمي و هو السحاب و الحميم هاهنا وقت الصيف و إنما خص الشاعر سحاب الصيف بالذكر لأنه أشد جفولا و أسرع خفوفا لأنه لا ماء فيه و إنما يكون السحاب ثقيل السير لامتلانه بالماء و ذلك لا يكون في الأكثر إلا زمان الشتاء و إنما أراد الشاعر وصفهم بالسرعة إذا دعوا و الإغاثة إذا استغيثوا و الدليل على ذلك قوله : "هنالك لو دعوت أذاك منهم..."

## Sermon 25

**When Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ received successive news that Mu`āwiyah's men were occupying cities and that the Imām's officials in Yemen, namely `Ubaydullāh ibn `Abbās and Sa`id ibn `Imrān, came to him retreating after being defeated by Bīsr ibn Abū Arta`ah, he was very disturbed by the slackness of his own men in *jihād* and their differing from his opinion. Proceeding in the pulpit, he said:**

"Nothing (is left to me) but Kūfa which I can hold and extend. (O Kūfa!) If it is your condition that whirlwinds continue blowing through you, then may Allāh destroy you."

**Then he ﷺ cited a verse of a poetry the gist of which is:**

"O `Amr! By your good father's life, I have received only a small bit of fat from this pot (fat that remains sticking to it even after it has been emptied)."

**Then he went on to say:**

"I have been informed that Bīsr has overpowered Yemen. By Allāh, I have begun thinking about these people that they will shortly snatch away the whole country while being united in doing what is wrong versus your disunity (from your own right) and separation, your disobedience of your Imām in matters of right versus their obedience of their leader in matters of wrongdoing, their fulfillment of the trust in favor of their master versus your betrayal, their god work in their cities versus your mischief. Even if I give you charge of a wooden bowl, I fear you will run away with its handle.

"O Lord! They are disgusted with me and I am with them. They are weary of me and I am weary of them. Replace them, Lord, for me with better ones, and replace me for them with a worse one. O my God! Melt their hearts as salt melts in water. By Allāh, I wish I had only a thousand horsemen of Banū Fīras ibn Ghanm (as the poet says):

*If you call them, the horsemen will come to you like summer clouds."*

**Thereafter, Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ stepped down the pulpit.**

Sayyid ar-Radi says the following: "In this verse of poetry, the word *armiyah* is the

plural of *ramiyy* which means cloud, and *hamin* here means summer. The poet has particularized the cloud of summer because it moves swiftly. This is so because it is devoid of water, while a cloud moves slowly when it is laden with rain water. Such clouds generally appear (in Arabia) in winter. By this verse, the poet intends to convey that when they are called on and requested for help, they approach speedily, and this is obvious from the first line “If you call them, they will reach you.”



[26]

البيعة ثم يصف حاله قبل البيعة له ومن خطبة له عليه السلام وفيها يصف العرب قبل

#### العرب قبل البيعة

إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَعَثَ مُحَمَّدًا (صلى الله عليه وآله) نَذِيرًا لِلْعَالَمِينَ وَ أَمِينًا عَلَى التَّنْزِيلِ وَ أَنْتُمْ مَعْشَرَ الْعَرَبِ عَلَى شَرِّ دِينٍ وَ فِي شَرِّ دَارٍ مُنْبِخُونَ بَيْنَ حِجَارَةٍ خُشْنٍ وَ حَيَاتٍ صُمٍّ تَشْرَبُونَ الْكِدْرَ وَ تَأْكُلُونَ الْجَشِيبَ وَ تَسْفِكُونَ دِمَاءَكُمْ وَ تَقْطَعُونَ أَرْحَامَكُمْ الْأَصْنَامُ فِيكُمْ مَنْصُوبَةٌ وَ الْأَثَامُ بِكُمْ مَعْصُوبَةٌ .

#### و منها صفته قبل البيعة له

فَنظَرْتُ فَإِذَا لَيْسَ لِي مُعِينٌ إِلَّا أَهْلُ بَيْتِي فَصَنَنْتُ بِهِمْ عَنِ الْمَوْتِ وَ أَعْضَيْتُ عَلَى الْقَدَى وَ شَرِبْتُ عَلَى الشَّجَا وَ صَبَرْتُ عَلَى أَخْذِ الْكُظْمِ وَ عَلَى أَمْرٍ مِنْ طَعْمِ الْعَلَقَمِ

و منها: وَ لَمْ يُبَايِعْ حَتَّى شَرَطَ أَنْ يُؤَيِّبَهُ عَلَى الْبَيْعَةِ تَمْنًا فَلَا ظَفِرَتْ يَدُ الْبَائِعِ وَ خَزِيَتْ أَمَانَةُ الْمُبْتَاعِ فَخُدُوا لِلْحَرْبِ أَهْبَتْهَا وَ أَعْدُوا لَهَا عَدَّتْهَا فَقَدْ شَبَّ لُظَاهَا وَ عَلَا سَنَاهَا وَ اسْتَشْعَرُوا الصَّبْرَ فَإِنَّهُ أَدْعَى إِلَى النَّصْرِ .

#### Sermon 26

#### Arabia before the proclamation of Prophethood

“Allāh sent Muhammed ﷺ to warn (about vice) for all the worlds and as the trustee of His revelation, while you, people of Arabia, were following the worst religion: You resided among rough stones and venomous serpents. You drank dirty water and ate filthy food. You shed the blood of each other and cared not for relationships. Idols were fixed among you and sins were clinging to you.”

#### A portion of the same sermon on the “attentiveness” of people after the death of the Holy Prophet ﷺ:

“I looked and found that there was no supporter for me except my family, so I refrained from thrusting them into death. I kept my eyes closed despite motes in them. I drank despite a choking of the throat. I exercised patience despite trouble in breathing and despite having to take bitter colocynth as food.”

## Part of the same sermon on the settlement between Mu`āwiyah and `Amr ibn al-`Ās:

“He did not swear the oath of allegiance till he got him to agree that he would pay him its price. The hand of this buyer (of allegiance) may not be successful, and the seller’s contract may face disgrace. Now you should take up arms for war and arrange equipment for it. Its flames have grown high and its brightness has increased. Clothe yourself with patience for it is the best for victory.”<sup>25</sup>

ومن خطبة له عليه السلام و قد قالها يستنهض بها الناس حين ورد خبر غزو الأنبار بجيش معاوية فلم ينهضوا. و فيها يذكر فضل الجهاد، ويستنهض الناس، و يذكر علمه بالحرب، و يلقى عليهم التبعة لعدم طاعته

### فضل الجهاد

أَمَا بَعْدُ فَإِنَّ الْجِهَادَ بَابٌ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ فَتَحَهُ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ أَحْبَبَهُ وَأَوْلِيَانِهِ وَهُوَ لِبَاسُ النَّقْوَى وَدَرْعُ اللَّهِ الْحَصِينَةُ وَجُنَّةُ الْوَثِيقَةِ فَمَنْ تَرَكَهُ رَغْبَةً عَنْهُ أَلْبَسَهُ اللَّهُ تَوْبَ الذُّلِّ وَشِمْلَةَ الْبَلَاءِ وَدَيْتَ بِالصَّعَارِ وَالْقَمَاءِ وَضْرِبَ عَلَى قَلْبِهِ بِالْإِسْهَابِ وَأَدِيلَ الْحَقِّ مِنْهُ بِتَضْيِيعِ الْجِهَادِ وَسِيمَ الْخُسْفِ وَمُنَعَ النَّصْفِ.

### استنهاض الناس

أَلَا وَإِنِّي قَدْ دَعَوْتُكُمْ إِلَى قِتَالِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ لَيْلًا وَنَهَارًا وَسِرًّا وَإِعْلَانًا وَقُلْتُ لَكُمْ اغْزَوْهُمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَغْزَوْكُمْ فَوَاللَّهِ مَا غَزَى قَوْمٌ قَطُّ فِي عَقْرِ دَارِهِمْ إِلَّا دَلُّوا فَتَوَاكَلْتُمْ وَتَخَادَلْتُمْ حَتَّى شَبَّتَ عَلَيْكُمْ الْعَارَاتُ وَمَلِكَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْأَوْطَانُ وَهَذَا أَحْوَجُ غَامِدٍ [وَ] قَدْ وَرَدَتْ خَيْلُهُ الْأَنْبَارَ وَقَدْ قَتَلَ حَسَّانُ بْنُ حَسَّانِ الْبُكْرِيَّ وَأَزَالَ خَيْبَلَكُمْ عَنْ مَسَالِحِهَا وَلَقَدْ بَلَّغَنِي أَنَّ الرَّجُلَ مِنْهُمْ كَانَ يَدْخُلُ عَلَى الْمَرْأَةِ الْمُسْلِمَةِ وَالْأُخْرَى الْمُعَاهِدَةَ فَيَنْتَرِخُ حَجَلَهَا وَقَلْبَهَا وَقَلَابِدَهَا وَرُغْبَتَهَا مَا تَمْتَنِعُ مِنْهُ إِلَّا بِالْإِسْتِرْجَاعِ وَالْإِسْتِرْحَامِ ثُمَّ انْصَرَفُوا وَافْرَيْنَ مَا نَالَ رَجُلًا مِنْهُمْ كَلِمٌ وَلَا أَرِيْقُ لَهُمْ دَمٌ قَلَوْ أَنَّ امْرَأَةً مُسْلِمًا مَاتَ مِنْ بَعْدِ هَذَا أَسْفًا مَا كَانَ بِهِ مَلُومًا بَلْ كَانَ بِهِ عِنْدِي جَدِيرًا فَيَا عَجَبًا عَجَبًا وَاللَّهِ يُمِيتُ الْقَلْبَ وَيَجْلِبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنَ اجْتِمَاعِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ عَلَى بَاطِلِهِمْ وَتَفَرُّقِكُمْ عَنْ حَقِّكُمْ فَفُتِحَ لَكُمْ وَتَرَحَّأَ حِينَ صِرْتُمْ غَرَضًا يُرْمَى يُعَارُ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا تُغَيِّرُونَ وَتُغَزَوْنَ وَلَا تُغَزَوْنَ وَيُعَصَى اللَّهُ وَتَرْضَوْنَ فَيَا أَمْرَتُكُمْ بِالسَّيْرِ إِلَيْهِمْ فِي أَيَّامِ الْحَرِّ فَلَنْتُمْ هَذِهِ حِمَارَةَ الْقَيْظِ

<sup>25</sup> Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع) had delivered a sermon before setting off for Nahrawān (then twelve miles south of today's Baghdad). These are three excerpts from it. In the first, he describes Arabia's condition before the Proclamation (of Prophethood). In the second, he refers to circumstances which forced him to keep quiet, while in the third, he has described the conversation and agreement between Mu`āwiyah and `Amr ibn as. The status of this mutual agreement was that when Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع) sent Jarīr ibn Abdullāh al-Bajalī to Mu`āwiyah to secure his oath of allegiance, the latter detained Jarīr under the pretext of giving him his reply. In the meantime, he began exploring how far the people of Syria would support him. When he succeeded in making them his supporters by instigating them to avenge `Othmān's blood, he consulted with his brother `Utbah ibn Abū Sufyān. The latter suggested thus: "If in this matter `Amr ibn as is associated, he will solve most of the difficulties through his sagacity, but he will not be easily prepared to stabilize your authority unless he gets the price which he desires for it. If you are ready for this, he will prove to be the best counselor and helper." Mu`āwiyah liked this suggestion, sent for `Amr ibn As, discussed it with him and eventually it was settled that he would "avenge `Othmān's blood" by holding Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع) liable for it. What was the price? Mu`āwiyah was to appoint him provincial governor of Egypt. By whatever means possible, he would not let Mu`āwiyah's authority in Syria endure. Consequently, both of them fulfilled the agreement and kept their words.

أَمْهَلْنَا يُسَبِّحُ عَنَّا الْحَرَّ وَإِذَا أَمَرْتُمْكَم بِالسَّيْرِ إِلَيْهِمْ فِي الشِّتَاءِ قُلْتُمْ هَذِهِ صَبَارَةٌ الْقُرَّ أَمْهَلْنَا يَنْسَلِخُ عَنَّا الْبَرْدُ كُلُّ هَذَا  
فِرَاراً مِنَ الْحَرِّ وَالْقُرَّ فَإِذَا كُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْحَرِّ وَالْقُرَّ تَفِرُونَ فَأَنْتُمْ وَاللَّهِ مِنَ السَّيْفِ أَقْرُ .

## Sermon 27

### Exhorting People for Jihād

“Now then, surely Jihād is one of the gates of Paradise which Allāh has opened for His main friends. It is the outfit of piety and the protective armor of Allāh, His trustworthy shield. One who abandons it is covered by Allāh with the outfit of disgrace and is clothed with distress. He is kicked out (of the mercy of Allāh) with contempt and scorn. His heart is covered with screens (of neglect). Truth is taken away from him because of missing Jihād. He has to suffer ignominy and justice is denied to him.

“Beware! I have called you (insistently) to fight these people night and day, secretly and openly, exhorting you to attack them before they attack you because, by Allāh, no people have been attacked in the hearts of their houses except that they suffered disgrace. But you put it off for others and forsook it till destruction befell you and your cities were occupied. The horsemen of Banū Ghamid have reached al-Anbār and killed Hassan ibn Hassan al-Bakri. They have removed your horsemen from their garrison.

“I have come to know that everyone of them forced himself on Muslim women and other women under the protection of Islam, taking away their jewelry from their legs, arms, necks and ears. No woman could tolerate it except by remembering and pronouncing this verse, ‘We belong to Allāh, and to Him shall we return’ (Qur’ān, 2: 156). Then they returned, laden with wealth, without any wound or loss of life. If any Muslim individual dies of grief after all this, he is not blamed, but rather I justify it.

“How strange! How strange! By Allāh! My heart sinks to see the unity of these people in their wrongdoings and your dispersion from doing what is right. May woe and grief befall you. You have become the target at which arrows are shot. You are being killed and you do not kill. You are being attacked but you do not attack. Allāh is being disobeyed and you remain satisfied with it. When I ask you to move against them in the summer, you say that it is too hot, spare us until the heat subsides from us. When I order you to march in the winter, you say that it is severely cold, give us time until the cold clears away. These are just excuses of evading heat or cold because if you run away from heat and cold, you will be, by Allāh, running away (in a greater degree) from the sword (war).

“O you semblance of men, not men: Your intelligence is that of children, your wits are those of the occupants of the curtained canopies (women kept in seclusion from the outside world). I wish I had neither seen you nor come to know you. By Allāh, this acquaintance has brought about shame and resulted in repentance. May Allāh fight you! You have filled my heart with pus and loaded my bosom with rage. You made me drink mouthful after mouthful of grief. You shattered my counsel by disobeying and leaving me, so much so that Quraish started saying that the son of Abū Tālib is brave but does not know the (tactics of) war. Allāh bless them! Is there anyone among them who is fiercer in the war and more experienced in it than I am?! I rose for it although still in my twenties, and here I am, having passed sixty, but one

who is not obeyed can have no opinion.”

After the battle of Siffin, Mu`āwiyah had spread killing and bloodshed all around. He started encroachments on cities within Amīr al-Mu`minīn's domain. In this regard, he tricked Sufyān ibn `Awf al-Ghamidi, supplying him with a force of six thousand, to attack Hīt, al-Anbār and al-Madā'in (all located in western and northern Iraq). First, he reached al-Madā'in (ancient Ctesiphon, now located south of Baghdad). Finding it deserted, he proceeded to the al-Anbār area. There, a contingent of five hundred soldiers was posted as guards from Amīr al-Mu`minīn's side, but it could not resist Mu`āwiyah's fierce army. Only a hundred men held their positions, facing the invaders as stoutly as they could. But, collecting together, the enemy's force made such a severe attack that these men, too, could no more resist. The chief of the contingent, Hassan ibn Hassan al-Bakri, was killed along with thirty others. When the battlefield was clear, the enemy ransacked al-Anbār at will and left the city completely destroyed.

When Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ received the reports of this attack, he ascended the pulpit and exhorted the people to crush the enemy, calling them to wage Jihād. Yet, from no quarter was there any voice or response. He descended from the pulpit utterly disgusted and worried. While still in the same mood, he set off for the enemy on foot. When people observed this, their sense of self-respect and shame were awakened and they, too, followed their leader and caliph. Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ stopped at an-Nukhayla (presently part of the Kifl city, Hilla, Babylon governorate, south of Baghdad)<sup>26</sup>. People then surrounded him and insisted that he should return as they had enough troops to face the enemy. When their insistence increased beyond reckoning, Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ consented to return and Sa`īd ibn Qays al-Hamdani proceeded forward with a force of eight thousand strong. But Sufyān ibn `Awf al-Ghamidi had by then gone; so, Sa`īd returned without any encounter. When Sa`īd reached Kūfa, according to the version of the incident narrated by Ibn Abūl Hadīd, Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ was very deeply grieved and indisposed during those days to the extent that he had no desire to enter the (Grand Kūfa) Mosque (which was used as the caliph's office). He instead sat in the corridor of his residence (which was then connected to the entrance of the mosque). He wrote down this sermon to the people and gave it to his slave, Sa`d, to read to them. But al-Mubarrad, on pp. 104 - 107, Vol. 1, quotes `Ubaydullāh ibn Hafs al-Taymi, Ibn `Ā'isha, saying that Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ delivered this sermon on a high place in an-Nukhayla. Ibn Maytham supports this statement, accepting it as a more preferable view.

ومن خطبة له عليه السلام و هو فصل من الخطبة التي أولها "الحمد لله غير مقتوط من رحمته" و فيه أحد عشر تنبيها

أَمَا بَعْدُ فَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا أَدْبَرَتْ وَأَدْنَتْ بِوَدَاعِ وَإِنَّ الْآخِرَةَ قَدْ أَقْبَلَتْ وَأَشْرَفَتْ بِاطِّلَاعِ أَلَا وَإِنَّ الْيَوْمَ الْمَضْمَارَ وَغَدَا السَّبَاقَ وَالسَّبْقَةَ الْجَنَّةَ وَالْعَايَةَ النَّارَ أَ فَلَا تَأْتِبُ مِنْ حَاطِبِيَّتِهِ قَبْلَ مَنِيَّتِهِ أَلَا عَامِلٌ لِنَفْسِهِ قَبْلَ يَوْمِ بُؤْسِهِ أَلَا وَاتَّكُمُ فِي أَيَّامِ أَمَلٍ مِنْ وَرَائِهِ أَجَلٌ فَمَنْ عَمِلَ فِي أَيَّامِ أَمَلِهِ قَبْلَ حُضُورِ أَجَلِهِ فَقَدْ نَفَعَهُ عَمَلُهُ وَلَمْ يَضُرُّهُ أَجَلُهُ وَمَنْ قَصَرَ فِي أَيَّامِ أَمَلِهِ قَبْلَ حُضُورِ أَجَلِهِ فَقَدْ خَسِرَ عَمَلُهُ وَضُرَّ أَجَلُهُ أَلَا فَاعْمَلُوا فِي الرَّغِيَةِ كَمَا تَعْمَلُونَ فِي الرَّهْنَةِ أَلَا وَإِنِّي لَمْ أَرَ كَالْجَنَّةِ نَامَ طَالِبُهَا وَلَا كَالنَّارِ نَامَ هَارِبُهَا أَلَا وَإِنَّهُ مَنْ لَا يَنْفَعُهُ الْحَقُّ يَضُرُّهُ الْبَاطِلُ وَمَنْ لَا يَسْتَقِيمُ بِهِ الْهُدَى يَجْرُ

<sup>26</sup>This Nukhaila should not be confused with another area in Egypt bearing the same name. Iraqi Nukhaila area is near Dhul-Kifl town where the prophet Dhul-Kifl (ع) is buried, and a mosque stands where Imām Ali ibn Abū Tālib (ع) once performed his prayers.



بِهِ الضَّلَالُ إِلَى الرَّدَى أَلَا وَإِنَّكُمْ قَدْ أُمِرْتُمْ بِالظَّنِّ وَدُلِّمْتُمْ عَلَى الزَّادِ وَإِنَّ أَخَوْفَ مَا أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ اثْنَتَانِ اثْبَاغُ الْهَوَى وَطُولُ الْأَمَلِ فَتَرَوُودُوا فِي الدُّنْيَا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا مَا تَحْرُزُونَ بِهِ أَنْفُسَكُمْ عَدَاً.

قال السيد الشريف رضي الله عنه : و أقول إنه لو كان كلام يأخذ بالأعناق إلى الزهد في الدنيا و يضطر إلى عمل الآخرة لكان هذا الكلام و كفى به قاطعا لعلائق الآمال و قادحا زناد الاعتاظ و الازدجار و من أعجبه قوله ( عليه السلام ) ألا و إن اليوم المضمار و غدا السباق و السبقة الجنة و الغاية النار فإن فيه مع فخامة اللفظ و عظم قدر المعنى و صادق التمثيل و واقع التشبيه سرا عجيبا و معنى لطيفا و هو قوله ( عليه السلام ) و السبقة الجنة و الغاية النار فخالف بين اللفظين لاختلاف المعنيين و لم يقل السبقة النار كما قال السبقة الجنة لأن الاستباق إنما يكون إلى أمر محبوب و غرض مطلوب و هذه صفة الجنة و ليس هذا المعنى موجودا في النار نعوذ بالله منها فلم يجز أن يقول و السبقة النار بل قال و الغاية النار لأن الغاية قد ينتهي إليها من لا يسره الانتهاء إليها و من يسره ذلك فصلح أن يعبر بها عن الأمرين معا فهي في هذا الموضع كالمصير و المال قال الله تعالى قُلْ تَمَتُّعُوا فَإِنَّ مَصِيرَكُمْ إِلَى النَّارِ و لا يجوز في هذا الموضع أن يقال سبقتكم بسكون الباء إلى النار فتأمل ذلك فباطنه عجيب و غوره بعيد لطيف و كذلك أكثر كلامه ( عليه السلام ) و في بعض النسخ و قد جاء في رواية أخرى و السبقة الجنة بضم السين و السبقة عندهم اسم لما يجعل للسابق إذا سبق من مال أو عرض و المعنيان متقاربان لأن ذلك لا يكون جزاء على فعل الأمر المذموم و إنما يكون جزاء على فعل الأمر المحمود .

## Sermon 28

### About the transient nature of this world and the importance of the next

“So now, surely this world has turned its back and announced its departure while the next world has approached and announced its arrival. Today is the day of preparation, while tomorrow is the day of racing. The anticipated destination is Paradise, while the place of doom is Hell. Is there anyone to offer repentance over his faults before his death? Or is there anyone to perform virtuous acts before the day of trial?”

“Beware, surely you are in the days of hopes behind which stands death. Whoever acts during the days of his hope before the approach of his death, his good deed will benefit him and his death will not harm him. But he who fails to act during the period of hope before the approach of death, his deed is a loss and his death will harm him. Beware and act during a period of attraction just as you act during a period of dread. Beware, surely I have not seen one who covets Paradise sleeps, nor does one who dreads Hell fall asleep. Beware, he whom right does not benefit must suffer the harm of the wrong, and he whom guidance does not keep firm will be led away by misguidance towards destruction.

“Beware, you have been ordered insistently to march and have been guided as how to provide for the journey. Surely the most frightening thing, which I am afraid of in your regard, is to follow desires and to widen the hopes. Provide for yourself from this world what will save you tomorrow (on the Day of Judgment).”

Sayyid ar-Radi says the following: “If there could be an utterance which will drag the neck towards renunciation of this world and force deed for the next, it is this sermon. It is enough to cut one off the entanglements of hopes, ignite the flames of preaching (for virtue) and warning (against vice). His most wonderful words in this sermon are: ‘Today is the day of preparation, while tomorrow is the day of racing.’ The anticipated destination is Paradise, while the place of doom is Hell.’ Besides the sublimity of these words, the greatness of their meaning, the true similes and factual illustrations, there are wonderful secrets and delicate implications therein.”

It is his saying that the anticipated place of destination is Paradise, whereas the place of doom is Hell. Here, he has used two different words to convey two different meanings. For Paradise, he has used the expression “destination”, but for Hell this word has not been used. One proceeds to a place which he likes and desires, and this can be true for Paradise only. Hell does not have the attractiveness that it may be liked or proceeded to. We seek Allāh’s protection from it. Since for Hell it was not proper to say “to be proceeded to,” Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام employed the word doom, implying the last place of stay where one reaches even though it may mean grief and worry, or it may be happiness and pleasure.

This word is capable of conveying both meanings. However, it should be taken in the sense of *al-masīr* or *al-ma’āl*, that is, the last resort. The Qur’ānic verse is: “Say: Enjoy (your pleasures for a while), for your last resort is (hell) fire” (Qur’ān, 14: 30). Here, to say *sabqatakum*, that is, “the place for you to proceed to,” instead of the word “maSīrakum,” that is, your doom or last resort, will not be proper in any way. Think and ponder over it and see how wondrous its inner implication is and how far its depth of beauty. Amīr al-Mu’minīn’s utterance is generally on these lines. In some versions, the word *sabqah* is shown as *subqah*, which is applied to a reward fixed for the winner in a race. However, both meanings are close to each other because a reward is not for an undeSirable deed but for a good and commendable performance.



[29]

من خطبة له عليه السلام

بعد غارة الضحاك بن قيس صاحب معاوية على الحاج بعد قصة الحكمين و فيها يستنهض أصحابه لما حدث في الأطراف

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ الْمُجْتَمِعَةُ أَبْدَانُهُمُ الْمُخْتَلِفَةُ أَهْوَاؤُهُمْ كَلَامُهُمْ يُوْهِي الصُّمَّ الصَّلَابَ وَفِعْلُكُمْ يُطْمَعُ فِيكُمْ الْأَعْدَاءُ تَقُولُونَ فِي الْمَجَالِسِ كَيْتَ وَكَيْتَ فَإِذَا جَاءَ الْقِتَالُ قُلْتُمْ جِيْدِي حَيَادٍ مَا عَزَتْ دَعْوَةٌ مِنْ دَعَاكُمْ وَلَا اسْتِرَاحَ قَلْبٌ مِنْ فَاَسَاكُمْ أَعَالِيْلُ بِأَضَالِيْلٍ وَسَأَلْتُمُونِي النَّصُوِيْلَ دِفَاعَ ذِي الدِّينِ الْمَطْوُوْلِ لَا يَمْنَعُ الضَّيْمَ الدَّلِيْلَ وَلَا يُدْرِكُ الْحَقُّ إِلَّا بِالْجِدِّ أَيَّ دَارٍ بَعْدَ دَارِكُمْ تَمْنَعُونَ وَمَعَ أَيِّ إِمَامٍ بَعْدِي تُفَاتِلُونَ الْمَعْرُوْرُ وَاللَّهِ مِنْ غَرَّرْتُمُوْهُ وَمَنْ فَازَ بِكُمْ فَقَدْ فَازَ وَاللَّهِ بِالسَّهْمِ الْأَخْيَبِ وَمَنْ رَمَى بِكُمْ فَقَدْ رَمَى بِأَفْوَقٍ نَاصِلٍ أَصْبَحْتُ وَاللَّهِ لَا أَصْدَقُ قَوْلَكُمْ وَلَا أَطْمَعُ فِي نَصْرِكُمْ وَلَا أُوْعِدُ الْعَدُوَّ بِكُمْ مَا بَالُكُمْ مَا دَوَاؤُكُمْ مَا طِبُّكُمْ الْقَوْمُ رَجَالٌ أَمْتَالِكُمْ أَقْوَالًا بَعِيْرَ عِلْمٍ وَغَفْلَةً مِنْ عَيْرٍ وَرَعٍ وَطَمَعًا فِي غَيْرِ حَقٍّ .

## Sermon 29

### About those who found pretexts at the time to perform *jihād*

“O people! Your bodies are together, but your desires are divergent. Your talk softens the hard stones, while your deeds attract your enemy towards you. You claim in your meetings that you will do this and that, but when fighting approaches, you say (to war), “turn away” (i.e. you flee). If one calls on you (for help), the call receives no heed. And he who deals harshly with you, his heart has no solace. The excuses are

amiss like those of a debtor unwilling to pay. The ignoble cannot ward off oppression. Right cannot be achieved without effort. What is the house besides this one to protect? And with which leader (Imām) will you go for fighting after me? By Allāh! Deceived is one whom you have deceived while, by Allāh, he who is successful with you receives only useless arrows! You are like broken arrows thrown over the enemy. By Allāh! I am now in the status that I neither confirm your views nor hope for your support, nor challenge the enemy through you. What is the matter with you? What is your ailment? What is your cure? The other party is also comprised of men of your shape (but they are so different). Will there be talk without deed, carelessness without piety and greed for things that are not right?<sup>27</sup>



من كلام له عليه السلام  
في معنى قتل عثمان و هو حكم له على عثمان و عليه و على الناس بما فعلوا و براءة له من دمه

لَوْ أَمَرْتُ بِهِ لَكُنْتُ قَاتِلًا أَوْ نَهَيْتُ عَنْهُ لَكُنْتُ نَاصِرًا غَيْرَ أَنَّ مَنْ نَصَرَهُ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يَقُولَ خَذَلَهُ مَنْ أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ  
وَمَنْ خَذَلَهُ لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ أَنْ يَقُولَ نَصَرَهُ مَنْ هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِنِّي وَأَنَا جَامِعٌ لَكُمْ أَمْرَهُ اسْتَأْثَرَ فَاسَاءَ الْأَثَرَةَ وَجَزَعْتُمْ فَأَسَأْتُمْ  
الْجَزَعُ وَاللَّهُ حَكْمٌ وَقَعُ فِي الْمُسْتَأْثِرِ وَالْجَارِعِ.

### Sermon 30

**Disclosing facts about the assassination of `Othmān ibn `Affān, Amīr al-Mu`minīn** عليه السلام **said:**

“Had I ordered his assassination (as you claim), I should have been his killer, but if I had restrained others from killing him, I would have been his helper.

“The status is that he who helped him cannot now say that he is better than the one who deserted him, while he who deserted him cannot say that he is better than the one who helped him. I am putting before you his case. He appropriated (wealth) and did it

<sup>27</sup>After the Battle of Nahrawān, Mu`āwiyah sent ad-Dahhāk ibn Qays al-Fihri with a force of four thousand towards Kūfa with the purpose that he should create disorder in the area, killing whomever he found and keeping them busy with bloodshed and destruction so that Amīr al-Mu`minān (ع) should find no rest or peace of mind. He set off for the achievement of this aim and shedding innocent blood and spreading destruction all around reached the way up to the place of athTha`labiyya. He attacked a caravan of pilgrims (to Mecca) and looted all their wealth and belongings. Then at al-Qutqutana, he killed the nephew of Abdullāh ibn Mas`ūd, the Holy Prophet’s companion, namely `Amr ibn Uways ibn Mas`ūd together with his followers. In this manner he created havoc and bloodshed all around. When Amīr al-Mu`minīn (ع) came to know of this wreck and ruin he called his men to battle in order to put a stop to this vandalism, but people seemed to avoid war. Being disgusted with their lethargy and lack of enthusiasm he ascended the pulpit and delivered this sermon. He roused the men to feel shame and not to try and avoid war but to rise for the protection of their country like brave men without employing wrong and lame excuses. At last, Hijr ibn `Adiy al-Kindi rose with a force of four thousand for crushing the enemy and overtook them at Tadmur. Only a small encounter has taken place between the parties when night came on and they fled with only nineteen killed on their side. In Amīr al-Mu`minīn’s army, two persons fell as martyrs.

badly (distributing it to his family and relatives). You protested against it and committed excesses. With Allāh lies the real verdict between the one who appropriates and that who protests.”

ʿOthmān (574 - 656 A.D., although many other dates are suggested) is the first Umayyad caliph in Islam’s history. He ascended to the caliphate on the first of Muharram, 24 A.H. (Sunday, November 10, 644 A.D. according to the Gregorian calendar or the 7<sup>th</sup> of November of the same year according to the Julian calendar) at the age of seventy. After having wielded full control and authority over the affairs of the Muslims for twelve years, he was killed at their own hands on the 18th of Dhul-Hijja, 35 A.H. (Friday, June 20 according to the Gregorian calendar or the 17<sup>th</sup> according to the Julian calendar of the year 656) and was buried in Medīna at night at Hashsh Kawkab, then a Jewish cemetery, without funeral prayers performed for him or the ceremonial bathing...

One fact cannot be denied: The tragedy of ʿOthmān’s killing was the result of his own weaknesses and the vices of the officials whom he appointed; otherwise, there is no reason that Muslims, some of whom went to Medīna from as far as North Africa, should unanimously agree on killing their caliph, while no one, except a few of his own relatives, stood to support and defend. Muslims will have certainly given consideration to his age, seniority, prestige and the distinction of being a companion (*sahābi*) of the Prophet ﷺ. But his ways and deeds had so much marred the atmosphere that no one seemed prepared to sympathize and side with him. The oppression and excesses perpetrated by some high-ranking companions of the Prophet ﷺ had stirred a wave of grief and anger among various Arab tribes throughout the Islamic world at the time. Everyone was infuriated. Muslims looked at his haughtiness and wrongdoings with disdain and anger. Thus, due to ʿOthmān disgracing the great *sahābi* Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī (رض), whom he dishonored and banished to the arid Rabadha Desert where he died, to the resentment this created among the tribesmen of populous Banū Ghifār, Abū Dharr’s tribe, as well as among their associates and allies from other tribes, to the merciless beating of Banū Hudhayl at the hands of Abdullāh ibn Masʿūd, the breaking of the ribs of the great *sahābi* ʿAmmār ibn Yāsir, the mistreatment of Banū Makhzūm and their associates, Banū Zuhrah, the plot to kill Muhammed ibn Abū Bakr..., and the list goes on and on, Banū Taym and all these other tribes were hurled into a storm of outrage which they felt in their hearts against ʿOthmān and his government. The Muslims of other Islamic cities also had many complaints and grievances against him and his officers. Some of those officers were under the intoxication of wealth and the effects of luxury, doing whatever they wanted without restrictions, crushing whoever stood in their way. They had fear of neither the punishment from the government’s center nor the apprehension of any enquiry into their wrongdoings. People were fluttering to get out of their talons of oppression, but no one was ready to listen to their cries of pain and restlessness. Feelings of hatred were rising, but nobody cared to put them down. The companions of the Prophet ﷺ were also sick of him as they saw that peace was destroyed, the administration was topsy-turvy and Islam’s features were being metamorphosed. The poor and the starving were craving for dried bread crumbs, while Banū Umayyah were rolling in wealth. The caliphate had become a means for bellyfilling and for amassing wealth. Consequently, they, too, did not lag behind in preparing the grounds for getting rid of him. Rather, their letters and messages to each other and to the government indicated the resentment of people from Kūfa, Basra and Egypt, that these people would pour

into Medīna to force some change. Observing this behavior of the people of Medīna, `Othmān wrote Mu`āwiyah saying, “So now, certainly the people of Medīna have turned *heretics*, have replaced allegiance with obedience, thus breaking their oath. Send me the warriors of Syria mounted on brisk and sturdy horses.”

On receipt of this letter, Mu`āwiyah adopted a policy of focusing the light on the conditions of the Prophet’s companions in particular. Al-Tabari, the renown historian, writes the following after this: “When this letter reached Mu`āwiyah, he pondered over it. He regarded it as a bad judgment to openly oppose the companions of the Prophet ﷺ since he was aware of their unanimity (against `Othmān).”

In view of these circumstances regarding killing `Othmān as a consequence of timely enthusiasm and temporary feelings, and in order to hurl it at some insurgents was, in his view, an attempt to veil the fact: All factors of `Othmān’s opposition existed within Medīna itself, while those coming from outside it had assembled seeking redress of their grievances. Their aim was only to improve the status, not to kill or shed anyone’s blood. Had their complaints been heard, an occasion avoiding all this bloodshed would have risen. What exactly happened? Having been disgusted with the oppression and excesses of Abdullāh ibn Sa’d ibn Abū Sahr, foster brother of `Othmān, the people of Egypt proceeded towards Medīna and camped in the valley of Dhakhushub near the city. They sent a man with a letter to `Othmān demanding the caliph to stop the oppression, that the existing ways should be changed and that repentance should be offered for future policies. But instead of giving a reply, `Othmān turned these men out of his mansion, considering their demands unworthy of any attention.

People entered the city to raise their voice against this arrogance and haughtiness. They complained to the Medīna people about this behavior as well as about many other excesses. On the other side, many people from Kūfa and Basra had also arrived with their complaints. After joining ranks, they together proceeded with additional backing of the people of Medīna. They confined `Othmān within the walls of his mansion, although there was no restriction on his going out and coming from the Mosque. But in his sermon on that Friday, he severely and with a total lack of sensitivity rebuked all those people and even cursed them, whereupon people became infuriated. They pelted him with pebbles even without letting him finish his sermon. As a result, he lost control and fell from the pulpit. Few days later, he was banned by the angry corwds that surrounded his residence from going anywhere.

When `Othmān saw matters deteriorating to this extent, he implored Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام very submissively to find some way out for him, to rescue him from the siege and to disperse the crowds in whatever way he could. Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام said to him, “On what terms can I ask them to leave since their demands are justified?” `Othmān said, “I authorize you to take care of this matter. Whatever terms you will settle with them, I will be bound by them.” So, Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام went and met the Egyptians and talked to them. They consented to return on the condition that all the tyrannies should come to an end, and that Muhammed ibn Abū Bakr should be made their governor after the removal of the present governor, Ibn Abū Sahr. Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام came back and put their demands before `Othmān who accepted them without any hesitation. He said that in order to eliminate existing excesses and unfair policies, time was needed. Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام pointed out that



for matters concerning Medīna, delay did not make any sense. However, for other Islamic lands, time could be allowed so that the caliph's message could reach them. `Othmān insisted that three days were also needed for Medīna itself. After holding discussions with the Egyptians, Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ agreed to it and took all the responsibility thereof. Then they dispersed at his suggestion. Some of them returned to Egypt in the company of Muhammed ibn Abū Bakr, while some others went to the Valley of Dhakhushub and stayed there until this whole matter would come to an end.

The next day of this event, Marwān ibn al-Hakam (cousin of `Othmān and bearer of his seal) said to `Othmān, "It is good that these people have gone. But in order to stop people from coming from other cities, you should issue an order that they should not come but should sit quietly at home." That is, a statement should be issued stating that some people gathered in Medīna after hearing some irresponsible rumors. But when they came to know that whatever they had heard was wrong, they were satisfied and have now gone back. `Othmān did not want to make such an obvious lie, but Marwān pressured him, so he relented. Speaking at the Holy Prophet's Mosque, `Othmān said, "These Egyptians had received some reports about their caliph, and when they became satisfied that what they had heard was baseless and wrong, they went back to their cities."

No sooner had he said this when there a great deal of mourning at the mosque was heard, and people began to shout at `Othmān saying: "Repent! Fear Allāh! What is this lie you are uttering?!" `Othmān was confused in the midst of this new commotion and had to express his repentance. Consequently, he turned to the Ka'ba, moaned then returned home.

After this very event, Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ advised `Othmān saying, "You should openly offer repentance about your past misdeeds so that these uprisings should subside for good. Otherwise, if tomorrow the people of some other places come here, you will again cling to my neck to rid you of them." Consequently, `Othmān delivered a speech at the Prophet's Mosque wherein he admitted his mistakes, offering repentance and swearing to remain careful in future. He told the people, as he was stepping down the pulpit, that their representatives should meet him, and that he would remove their grievances and meet their demands. On this, people acclaimed his deed and washed their ill-feelings away with abundant tears.

When `Othmān reached his mansion, Marwān sought permission to say something, but `Othmān's wife Nā'ila daughter of Qarafisah intervened. Turning to Marwān, she said, "For Allāh's sake, you should keep quiet. You will surely say only such a thing as will bring nothing but death to him." Marwān felt offended and retorted, "You have no right to interfere in these matters. You are the daughter of that very person who did not know till his death how to perform his ablution." Nā'ila replied with fury, "You are wrong and are laying a false blame. Before uttering anything about my father, you should have cast a glance at the features of your own father. Had it not been for my consideration for that old man, I would have spoken things at which people will have shuddered. And I will prove every word." When `Othmān saw how the conversation between his cousin and wife was getting prolonged and becoming nastier, he stopped them and asked Marwān to tell him what he wanted. Marwān said, "What is it with you saying at the mosque what you said, and what repentance have you offered?! In my view, sticking to the sin was a thousand times better than such repentance because



no matter how great the sins might have been, they may multiply there, and there is always room for repentance still, but repentance by force is no repentance at all. You have said what you have, but now see the consequences of this open announcement: The crowds of people are now at your door. Now go forward and fulfill their demands.” `Othmān then said, “Well, I have said what I have said. Now you must deal with these people. It is not in my power to deal with them.” Consequently, finding out his implied consent, Marwān came out. Addressing the angry people, he spoke out thus: “Why have you assembled here? Do you intend to attack or to ransack? Remember, you cannot easily snatch away power from our hands, take that idea out of your minds that you will subdue us. We are not to be subdued by anyone. Take away your black faces from here. May Allāh disgrace and dishonor all of you.”

When people noticed this changed attitude and altered government stance, they rose from there angrily and went straight to Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام to whom they related their complaints. On hearing them, Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام was infuriated and immediately went to `Othmān to whom he said, “Good Heavens! How badly you have behaved with the Muslims! You have forsaken faith for the sake of a faithless and characterless man (referring, of course, to Marwān ibn al-Hakam) and have lost all wisdom. At least you should have some regard and consideration for your own word. What is this that at Marwān’s beckoning you set off with your eyes folded? Remember this: He will throw you in such a dark well from which you will never be able to come out. You have become like a beast of burden for Marwān, so he can now ride on you as he pleases and put you on whatever wrong way he wishes. In the future, I shall never intervene, nor shall I tell people anything. Now you should manage your affairs on your own.”

Saying all this, Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام went home. When Nā’ila had her opportunity, she said to `Othmān, “Did I not tell you to get rid of Marwān or else he would put such a stain on you that it will not be removed despite all your efforts? Well, what is the good in following the words of one for whom people have no respect at all and is held as being lowly in their eyes? Come to agreeable terms with Ali; otherwise, remember that restoring the disturbed state of affairs is neither within your power nor in that of Marwān.” `Othmān was impressed by this statement, so he sent a man after Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام, but the Imām عليه السلام refused to meet with `Othmān. There was now a siege around `Othmān, but those who laid it were deterred from staging an assault. With what face could `Othmān come out? There was no way out even if he wanted to. Consequently, he managed to come out quietly in the darkness of the night. Reaching Amīr al-Mu`minīn’s residence, he moaned his helplessness and loneliness, offered excuses and assured him of keeping promises now, but Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام said, “You make a promise in the Prophet’s Mosque standing before all the people, yet you fulfill it this way. When people go to you, they are rebuked, and even abuses are hurled at them. When this is the state of your undertakings which the world has seen, then how and on what grounds can I trust any word of yours in the future? Do not have any expectation from me now. I am not prepared to accept any responsibility on your behalf. The tracks are open before you. Adopt whichever way you like and tread whatever track you choose.” After this talk, `Othmān came back and began blaming Amīr al-Mu`minīn عليه السلام, saying that all the disturbances were rising at his instance and that he was not doing anything despite being able to do everything.

Now let us see the other side. Having crossed into Hijāz, Muhammed ibn Abū Bakr

reached a place called Aylah on the coast of the Red Sea. People caught sight of a camel rider who was making his camel run so fast as though the enemy was chasing him. Those people had some misgivings about him; therefore, they called him and inquired as to who he was. He said that he was the slave of `Othmān. They inquired as to where he was bound. He said, "Egypt." They inquired to whom he was going. He replied, "To the Governor of Egypt." People said that the Governor of Egypt was with them. To whom was he going then? He said that he was to go to Ibn Abū Sarh. People asked him if any letter was with him. He denied. They asked for what purpose he was going. He said that he did not know that. One of those people thought that his clothes should be searched. The search was made, but nothing was found on him. Kinanah ibn Bishr at-Tujibi said, "See his water-skin." People said, "Leave him, how can there be a letter in the water?!" Kinanah said, "You do not know what tricks these people play." Consequently, the water-skin was opened and seen. There was a lead pipe in it in which a letter was hidden. When it was opened and read, the caliph's order in it was the following: "When Muhammed ibn Abū Bakr and his party reach you, then from among them kill so-and-so, arrest so-and-so, and put-so-and so in jail. But you must remain at your post." On reading this, all were stunned and began to look at one another in astonishment. As a Persian axiom says, "Mind was just burst in astonishment as to what wonder it was!"

Those who were proceeding forward were riding into the mouth of death, consequently they returned to Medīna, taking the slave with them. Arriving there, they placed that letter before a number of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ. Whoever heard this incident remained stunned with astonishment, and everyone was verbally abusing `Othmān. Afterwards, a few companions went to `Othmān along with these people and asked whose seal was there on the letter. He replied that it was his own. They inquired whose writing it was. He said it was his secretary's (a reference, again, to Marwān ibn al-Hakam). They inquired whose slave that man was. `Othmān replied that he was his. They inquired whose riding beast it was. He replied that it was that of the government. They inquired who had sent it. He said he had no knowledge of it. People then said, "Good Heavens! Everything is yours, but you do not know who had sent it?! If you are so helpless, you must leave this caliphate and get away from it so that such a man would come to administer the affairs of the Muslims." He replied, "It is not possible that I should put off the outfit of caliphate which Allāh has put on me. Of course, I will offer repentance." People said, "Why should you speak of repentance which has already been flouted on the day when Marwān was representing you on your door, and whatever was missing has been compensated by this letter. Now we are not going to be fooled into these bluffs. Leave the caliphate, and if our brethren stand in our way, we will hold them up; but if they prepare for fighting, we, too, will fight. Neither our hands are stiff, nor are our swords blunt. If you regard all Muslims as being equal, if you uphold justice, hand over Marwān to us and let us inquire from him on whose strength and support he wanted to play with the precious lives of Muslims by writing this letter." But `Othmān rejected this demand, refusing to hand over Marwān to them, whereupon people said that the letter had been written at his own behest.

Improving conditions, however, again deteriorated, and they ought to have deteriorated because despite the lapse of the required time, everything was just as it had been, and there was not a jot of difference that had occurred. Consequently, the people who had stayed behind in the valley of Dhakhushub waiting for the result of

the “repentance” again advanced like a flood and spread over the streets of Medīna, closing the borders from every side and surrounding his mansion.

During those days when a companion of the Prophet ﷺ was besieged by the Muslims, Niyar ibn Iyad wanted to talk to `Othmān. He went to his mansion. When he peeped through an a door opening, he said, “O `Othmān! For the sake of Allāh give up this caliphate and save the Muslims from this bloodshed.” While he was thus conversing, one of `Othmān’s men killed him with an, whereupon people were infuriated and shouted that Niyar’s killer should be handed over to them. `Othmān said it was not possible that he should hand over his own supporters to them. This stubbornness worked like a fan on fire. In the height of fury, people set fire to his mansion’s gate and started advancing. When Marwān ibn al-Hakam, Sa`īd ibn al-`Ās and al-Mughīrah ibn al-Akhnas together with their contingents pounced on the besiegers, killing and bloodshed started at that gate. People wanted to enter, but they were kept at bay. In the meantime, `Amr ibn Hazm al-Ansāri, whose house was adjacent to `Othmān’s mansion, opened his door and shouted for the assailants to advance from that side. Thus, through his house, the besiegers climbed on the roof of `Othmān’s mansion and descended down from there, drawing their swords. Only a few scuffles had taken place when all except the people of `Othmān’s mansion, his well-wishers and Banū Umayyah, ran away in the streets of Medīna. A few men hid in the house of Umm Habība daughter of Abū Sufyān, sister of Mu`āwiyah. The rest were killed with `Othmān as the latter kept defending himself to the last. In order to verify the accuracy and authenticity of this account, the reader is referred to these well-known sources: Ibn Sa`d, *Al-Tabaqāt*, Vol. 3, Part 1, pp. 50-58; Tabari, *Tārīkh*, Vol. 1, pp. 2998-3025; Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil*, Vol. 3, pp. 167-180; Ibn Abul-Hadīd, *Sharh Nahjul-Balāgha*, Vol. 2, pp. 144-161.

At his killing, several poets wrote eulogies. One of them, a beneficiary of the Umayyads, was Abū Hurayra. A couplet from the elegy composed by Abū Hurayra is summed up thus:

*Today people have only one grief, but I have two:  
The loss of my bag of money and the killing of `Othmān (in that order!).*

After observing these events, the status of Amīr al-Mu`minīn ؑ became clear, that is, he was neither supporting the group that was instigating `Othmān’s killing nor could he be included among those who stood to support and defend him<sup>28</sup>. Rather, when he saw that what was said was not acted on, he kept himself aloof.

From among the people who had raised their hands from supporting `Othmān, `Ā’isha was one. And according to the popular versions (which are not right), the then living persons out of the “al-`ashra al-mubashara,” the ten persons who allegedly were pre-

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<sup>28</sup>Actually, this statement may not be entirely true. Some sources, such as Taha Hussain’s famous book *Al-Fitna Al-Kubra* (the greater sedition), indicate that Commander of the Faithful Ali (ع) sent both of his sons, al-Hassan and al-Hussain (ع), to defend `Othmān as he was under siege, and that in the melee, al-Hassan received a wound on his forehead inflicted by a sword’s blow. Also, Ali (ع) instructed his Banū Hāshim relatives to smuggle water and food to `Othmān because none of these rations was permitted from entering `Othmān’s opulent mansion.

informed by the Prophet ﷺ that they would be admitted into Paradise, those who took part in the *shūra* “consultative committee” (formed for the purpose of getting `Othmān selected for the office of caliph), there were the Ansār, original Muhājirūn, people who took part in the battle of Badr and other conspicuous and dignified individuals. On the side (that supports `Othmān), there were only a few slaves of the caliph and some individuals from Banū Umayyah. If people like Marwān and Sa`īd ibn al-`Ās cannot be given precedence over the original Muhājirūn, their deeds, too, cannot be given precedence over the deeds of the latter. Again, if *ijma`* (consensus) is not meant for particular occasions..., it is only then that it will be difficult to question this overwhelming unanimity of the companions’ opinion (against `Othmān and his policies).



[31]

ومن كلام له عليه السلام لما أنفذ عبد الله بن عباس إلى الزبير يستفتيه إلى طاعته قبل حرب الجمل

لَا تَلْقَيْنِ طَلْحَةَ فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ تَلَقْتَهُ تَجِدُهُ كَالثَّوْرِ عَاقِصاً قَرْنَهُ يَرْكَبُ الصَّعْبَ وَيَقُولُ هُوَ الذَّلُولُ وَلَكِنَّ الْقَ الزُّبَيْرَ فَإِنَّهُ أَلَيْنُ عَرِيكَةٌ قُلْتُ لَهُ يَقُولُ لَكَ ابْنُ خَالِكَ عَرَفْتَنِي بِالْحِجَازِ وَأَنْكَرْتَنِي بِالْعِرَاقِ فَمَا عَدَا مِمَّا بَدَأَ .

قال السيد الشريف : و هو (عليه السلام) أول من سُمعت منه هذه الكلمة ، أعني "فما عدا مما بدأ".

### Sermon 31

Delivered before the commencement of the Battle of Jamal

Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ sent Abdullāh ibn Abbās to az-Zubayr ibn al-`Awwām with the purpose that he should advise him to obey the newly elected caliph (Ali ﷺ). Ali ﷺ said the following to Abdullāh ibn Abbās on that occasion:

“Do not meet Talhah (ibn Ubaydillāh). If you meet him, you will find him like an unruly bull whose horns are turned towards its ears. He rides a ferocious beast and says it has been tamed. Instead, meet with az-Zubayr because he is soft-tempered. Tell him that your maternal cousin [Ali ﷺ] says, ‘(It looks as if) in the Hijāz, you knew me (accepted me), but (on coming here to) Iraq, you do not know me (do not accept my authority). So, what has dissuaded (you) from what was shown (by you previously)?”

Sayyid ar-Radi says the following: “The last sentence of this sermon, i.e. *fama `ada minna bada*, has been heard articulated only by Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ.”



من خطبة له عليه السلام و فيها يصف زمانه بالجور، و يقسم الناس فيه خمسة أصناف، ثم يزهّد في الدنيا

### معنى جور الزمان

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا قَدْ أَصْبَحْنَا فِي دَهْرٍ عَنُودٍ وَزَمَنٍ كَنُودٍ يُعَدُّ فِيهِ الْمُحْسِنُ مُسِيئًا وَيَزْدَادُ الظَّالِمُ فِيهِ عُنُودًا لَا نَنْتَفِعُ بِمَا عَلِمْنَا وَلَا نَسْأَلُ عَمَّا جَهِلْنَا وَلَا نَتَّخِذُ قَارِعَةً حَتَّى تَحُلَّ بِنَا .

### أصناف المسيئين

وَالنَّاسُ عَلَى أَرْبَعَةِ أَصْنَافٍ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ لَا يَمْنَعُهُ الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا مَهَانَةً نَفْسِهِ وَكَلَالَةً حَدَّهُ وَنَضِيضُ وَفِرَهُ وَمِنْهُمْ الْمُصَلِّتُ لِسَيْفِهِ وَالْمُعَلِّنُ بِشَرِّهِ وَالْمُجَلِّبُ بِخَيْلِهِ وَرَجُلُهُ قَدْ أَشْرَطَ نَفْسَهُ وَأُوبَقَ دِينَهُ لِحُطَامٍ يَنْتَهِرُهُ أَوْ مَقْتَبٍ يَفُودُهُ أَوْ مُنْبِرٍ يَفْرَعُهُ وَلَيْبَسَ الْمُنْجِرُ أَنْ تَرَى الدُّنْيَا لِنَفْسِكَ ثَمَنًا وَمِمَّا لَكَ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ عِوَضًا وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَطْلُبُ الدُّنْيَا بِعَمَلِ الْآخِرَةِ وَلَا يَطْلُبُ الْآخِرَةَ بِعَمَلِ الدُّنْيَا قَدْ طَامَنَ مِنْ شَخْصِهِ وَقَارَبَ مِنْ خَطْوِهِ وَشَمَرَ مِنْ تَوْبِهِ وَرَخَّرَفَ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ لِلْأَمَانَةِ وَاتَّخَذَ سِنْرَ اللَّهِ دَرِيْعَةً إِلَى الْمُعْصِيَةِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ أَبْعَدَهُ عَنِ طَلَبِ الْمُلْكِ ضُؤْلُهُ نَفْسِهِ وَأَنْقَطَاعُ سَبَبِهِ فَقَصَرَتْهُ الْحَالُ عَلَى حَالِهِ فَتَحَلَّى بِاسْمِ الْفَنَاعَةِ وَتَزَيَّنَ بِلِبَاسِ أَهْلِ الرَّهَادَةِ وَلَيْسَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ فِي مَرَاحٍ وَلَا مَعْدَى .

### الراغبون في الله

وَبَقِيَ رَجَالٌ غَضَّ أَبْصَارَهُمْ ذِكْرُ الْمَرْجِعِ وَأَرَأَقَ دُمُوعَهُمْ خَوْفُ الْمَحْشَرِ فَهُمْ بَيْنَ شَرِيْدٍ نَادٍ وَخَائِفٍ مَقْمُوعٍ وَسَاكِتٍ مَكْعُومٍ وَدَاعٍ مُخْلِصٍ وَتَكْلَانٍ مُوجِعٍ قَدْ أَحْمَلَتْهُمْ التَّقِيَّةَ وَتَسَمَّلَتْهُمْ الدَّلَّةُ فَهُمْ فِي بَحْرِ أَجَاجٍ أَفْوَاهُهُمْ ضَامِرَةٌ وَقُلُوبُهُمْ قَرِحَةٌ قَدْ رَعَطُوا حَتَّى مَلُّوا وَقَهَرُوا حَتَّى دَلُّوا وَقَتَّلُوا حَتَّى قَلُّوا .

### التزهيد في الدنيا

فَلْتَكُنِ الدُّنْيَا فِي أَعْيُنِكُمْ أَصْعَرَ مِنْ حُنَالَةِ الْقَرْظِ وَقُرَاضَةِ الْجَلْمِ وَاتَّعِظُوا بِمَنْ كَانَ قَبْلَكُمْ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَنْعِظَ بِكُمْ مَنْ بَعْدَكُمْ وَارْفُضُوهَا دَمِيمَةً فَإِنَّهَا قَدْ رَفُضَتْ مَنْ كَانَ أَشْعَفَ بِهَا مِنْكُمْ .

قال الشريف رضي الله عنه : أقول و هذه الخطبة ربما نسبها من لا علم له إلى معاوية و هي من كلام أمير المؤمنين ( عليه السلام ) الذي لا يشك فيه ، و أين الذهب من الرغام ، و أين العذب من الأجاج ، و قد دل على ذلك الدليل الخريت ، و نقد الناقد البصير عمرو بن بحر الجاحظ ، فإنه ذكر هذه الخطبة في كتاب البيان و التبیین ، و ذكر من نسبها إلى معاوية ، ثم تكلم من بعدها بكلام في معناها جملته أنه قال ، و هذا الكلام بكلام علي ( عليه السلام ) أشبه ، و بمذهبه في تصنيف الناس و في الإخبار عما هم عليه من القهر و الإذلال و من التقية و الخوف أليق ، قال : و متى وجدنا معاوية في حال من الأحوال يسلك في كلامه مسلك الزهاد و مذاهب العباد .

### Sermon 32

#### About the disparagement of the world and categories of its people

“O people! We have been born in such a wrongful and thankless period wherein a virtuous person is deemed vicious and the oppressor continues his excesses. We do not make use of what we know and do not discover what we do not know. We do not fear calamity till it afflicts us.

“People are of four categories: Among them is one who is prevented from mischief only by his low status, lack of means and paucity of wealth.

“Then there is one who has drawn his sword and openly commits mischief, collecting his horsemen and foot-men and devoting himself to securing wealth, leading troops, rising on the pulpit and allowing his faith to perish. How bad is the transaction that



you allow, (the enjoyment of) this world as the price for yourself, the alternative for what there is with Allāh for you?!

“And among them is he who seeks (benefits of) this world through deeds meant for the next world, but does not seek (the goodness of) the next world through deeds in this world. He keeps his body calm (dignified), makes small steps, holds up his clothes, embellishes his body for a show of trust-worthiness, using the status of Allāh’s connivance as means for committing sins.

“Then there is one whose weakness and lack of means have held him back from conquering lands. This keeps his status down, and he calls it contentment. He clothes himself with the robe of renunciation although he has never had any connection with these qualities.

“Then there remain a few people in whose case the remembrance of their return (to Allāh on the Last Day) keeps their eyes bent and the fear of resurrection brings about their tears. Some of them are scared away (from this world), so they disperse. Some are frightened and subdued; some are quiet as if they are muzzled; some pray sincerely. Some are grief-stricken and pain-ridden whom fear has confined to namelessness and disgrace has shrouded them, so they are in (the sea of) bitter water. Their mouths are closed and hearts bruised. They preached till they became tired, they were oppressed till they were disgraced, and they were killed till they remained few in number.

“The world in your eyes should be smaller than the acacia bark and wool clippings. Seek instruction from those who preceded you before those who follow you take instruction from you, and keep aloof from it realizing its evil, because it cuts off even from those who were more attached to it than you.”

Sayyid ar-Radi says the following: “Some ignorant persons attributed this sermon to Mu`āwiyah, but it is the speech of Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ; there should be no doubt about it. What comparison is there between gold and clay, or sweet and bitter water?” This has been pointed out by the skillful guide and the expert critic, namely `Amr ibn Bahr al-Jāhiz, as he has cited this sermon on pp. 59-61, Vol. 2, of his book *Al-Bayān wal-Tbyin*. He has also mentioned some of those who attributed it to Mu`āwiyah then stated that it is most akin to the speech of Ali ﷺ and in most accord with his way of categorizing people and information about their oppression, disgrace, apprehension and fear. (On the other hand) we never found Mu`āwiyah speaking on the lives of those who renounce this world or who worship...



من خطبة له عليه السلام  
عند خروجه لقتال أهل البصرة و فيها حكمة مبعث الرسل، ثم يذكر فضله و يذم الخارجين

قَالَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَبَّاسٍ دَخَلْتُ عَلَى أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ بِذِي قَارٍ وَهُوَ يَخْصِفُ نَعْلَهُ فَقَالَ لِي مَا قِيمَةُ هَذَا النِّعْلِ فَقُلْتُ لَا قِيمَةَ لَهَا فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ وَاللَّهِ لَهِيَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ إِمْرَتِكُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ أَقِيمَ حَقًّا أَوْ أَدْفَعُ بَاطِلًا ثُمَّ خَرَجَ فَخَطَبَ النَّاسَ فَقَالَ :



### حكمة بعثة النبي

إِنَّ اللَّهَ بَعَثَ مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَلَيْسَ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْعَرَبِ يَقْرَأُ كِتَابًا وَلَا يَدَّعِي نُبُوَّةَ فَسَاقِ النَّاسِ حَتَّى بَوَّأَهُمْ مَحَلَّتَهُمْ وَبَلَّغَهُمْ مَنْجَاتَهُمْ فَاسْتَقَامَتْ قَنَاتُهُمْ وَأَطْمَأَنَّتْ صَفَاتُهُمْ .

### فضل علي

أَمَا وَاللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُ لَفِي سَاقَتِهَا حَتَّى تَوَلَّيْتُ بِحَدَائِيرِهَا مَا عَجَزْتُ وَلَا جَبُنْتُ وَإِنَّ مَسِيرِي هَذَا لِمِثْلِهَا فَلَأَنْفُئَنَّ الْبَاطِلَ حَتَّى يَخْرُجَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ جَنْبِهِ .

### توبيخ الخارجين عليه

مَا لِي وَلِقُرَيْشٍ وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ قَاتَلْتُهُمْ كَافِرِينَ وَلَا قَاتَلْتَهُمْ مَفْتُونِينَ وَإِنِّي لَصَاحِبُهُمْ بِالْأَمْسِ كَمَا أَنَا صَاحِبُهُمْ الْيَوْمَ وَاللَّهِ مَا تَنْقِمُ مِنَّا قُرَيْشٌ إِلَّا أَنَّ اللَّهَ اخْتَارَنَا عَلَيْهِمْ فَأَدْخَلْنَاهُمْ فِي حَيْرِنَا فَكَانُوا كَمَا قَالَ الْأَوَّلُ :

أَدَمَّتْ لِعَمْرِي شُرْبُكَ الْمَحْضَ صَابِحًا \* وَأَكَلَكِ بِالزُّبْدِ الْمُقَشَّرَةَ الْبُجْرَا

وَنَحْنُ وَهَبْنَاكَ الْعَلَاءَ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ \* عَلِيًّا وَحُطْنَا حَوْلَكَ الْجُرْدَ وَالسُّمْرَا

### Sermon 33

Abdullāh ibn Abbās says that when Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ set out to fight the people of Basra, he personally went to see him at Dhi-Qar. Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ saw how Abdullāh [ibn Abbās] was stitching his shoe. Then Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ said to him, "What is the price of this shoe?" He said: "It has no value now." The Imām ﷺ then said,

"By Allāh! It would have been more dear to me than ruling over you except for the fact that I have established right and warded off wrong." Then the Imām ﷺ came out and spoke thus:

"Verily, Allāh sent Muhammed ﷺ when none among the Arabs read a book or claimed Prophethood. He guided the people till he took them to their (correct) status and salvation. Their spears (ie. officers) became straight, and their conditions settled down.

"By Allāh, surely I was in their lead till it took shape with its walls. I did not show weakness or cowardice. My existing march is also like that. I shall certainly pierce the wrong till right comes out of its side.

"What (cause of conflict) is there between the tribesmen of Quraish and me? By Allāh, I fought them when they were unbelievers, and I shall fight them when they are misled. I shall be the same for them today as I was for them yesterday.

"By Allāh, the tribesmen of Quraish only seek revenge against us because Allāh has given us (i.e. the Holy Prophet ﷺ and his progeny) preference over them. So, we have allowed them into our domain, whereupon they have become as the former poet says:

*By my life, you continued to drink fresh milk every morning, and (continued to) eat*

*fine stoned dates with butter. We have given you the nobility which you did not possess before and surrounded (protected) you with thoroughbred horses and tawny colored (strong) spears.”*

The fact is that the poet’s aim here is to say that the condition of the addressee’s life, from the moral and material point of view, had been worse in the past and that the poet and his tribe had given him the best means of leading their lives. But as a result of this improved condition, the addressee has completely lost himself and forgotten his past condition, thinking that he had led this kind of life before.

Now, Amīr al-Mu’minīn عليه السلام wants to convey the same idea here to the tribesmen of Quraish as Fātima عليها السلام, the holy daughter of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, said in her speech about Fadak:

“(O People!) *You were on the brink of the pit of Hell Fire* (Qur’ān, 3: 103). You were as worthless as the mouth of a waterskin. You were of a minority like a greedy handful, a spark of the hasty. You were as downtrodden as the dust under your feet. You drank dirty water. You ate untanned skin. You were abased and condemned. But Allāh has rescued you through my father Muhammed ﷺ.”



من خطبة له عليه السلام

في استنصار الناس إلى أهل الشام بعد فراغه من أمر الخوارج وفيها يتأفف بالناس وينصح لهم بطريق السداد

أَفْ لَكُمْ لَقَدْ سَمَّمْتُ عَنَابِكُمْ أَرْضِيئُمْ بِالْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا مِنَ الْأَجْرَةِ عَوْضًا وَبِالدُّلِّ مِنَ الْعِزِّ خَلْفًا إِذَا دَعَوْتُكُمْ إِلَى جِهَادٍ  
عَدُوَّكُمْ دَارَتْ أَعْيُنُكُمْ كَأَنَّكُمْ مِنَ الْمَوْتِ فِي غَمْرَةٍ وَمِنَ الذُّهُولِ فِي سَكْرَةٍ يُرْتَجُّ عَلَيْكُمْ حَوَارِي فَتَعْمَهُونَ وَكَأَنَّ  
قُلُوبَكُمْ مَالُوسَةٌ فَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْقِلُونَ مَا أَنْتُمْ لِي بِثِقَةٍ سَجِيسِ اللَّيَالِي وَمَا أَنْتُمْ بِرُكْنِ يَمَالٍ بِكُمْ وَلَا زَوَافِرٍ عِزٍّ يُفْتَقَرُ إِلَيْكُمْ مَا  
أَنْتُمْ إِلَّا كَابِلٍ ضَلَّ رِعَاتُهَا فَكُلَّمَا جُمِعَتْ مِنْ جَانِبٍ انْتَشَرَتْ مِنْ آخَرٍ لَيْسَ لِعَمْرِ اللَّهِ سَعْرُ نَارِ الْحَرْبِ أَنْتُمْ تَكَادُونَ  
وَلَا تَكِيدُونَ وَتُنْتَفِصُ أَطْرَافَكُمْ فَلَا تَمْتَعِضُونَ لَا يَنَامُ عَنْكُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ فِي غَفْلَةٍ سَاهُونَ غَلِبَ وَاللَّهُ الْمُتَخَادِلُونَ وَإِنَّمَا اللَّهُ  
إِنِّي لَأَظُنُّ بِكُمْ أَنْ لَوْ حَمِسَ الْوَعَى وَاسْتَحَرَّ الْمَوْتُ قَدِ انْفَرَجْتُمْ عَنِ ابْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ انْفِرَاجَ الرَّأْسِ وَاللَّهُ إِنْ أَمْرًا يُمَكِّنُ  
عَدُوَّهُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ يَعْزُقُ لَحْمَهُ وَيَهْتِمُ عَظْمَهُ وَيَفْرِي جِلْدَهُ لِعَظِيمِ عَجْزِهِ ضَعِيفٌ مَا ضُمَّتْ عَلَيْهِ جَوَانِحُ صَدْرِهِ أَنْتَ  
فَكُنْ ذَلِكَ إِنْ شِئْتَ فَأَمَّا أَنَا فَوَاللَّهِ دُونَ أَنْ أُعْطِيَ ذَلِكَ ضَرَبٌ بِالْمَشْرِفِيَّةِ تَطِيرُ مِنْهُ فَرَّاشُ الْهَامِ وَتَطْيِخُ السَّوَادُ  
وَالْأَقْدَامُ وَيَفْعَلُ اللَّهُ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ مَا يَشَاءُ .

طريق السداد

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ لِي عَلَيْكُمْ حَقًّا وَلَكُمْ عَلَيَّ حَقٌّ فَأَمَّا حَقُّكُمْ عَلَيَّ فَالنَّصِيحَةُ لَكُمْ وَتَوْفِيرُ قَبِيضِكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ وَتَعْلِيمُكُمْ كَيْلًا  
تَجْهَلُوا وَتَأْدِيبُكُمْ كَيْمَا تَعْلَمُوا وَأَمَّا حَقِّي عَلَيْكُمْ فَالْوَفَاءُ بِالنَّبِيَّةِ وَالنَّصِيحَةُ فِي الْمَشْهَدِ وَالْمَغِيبِ وَالْإِجَابَةُ حِينَ أَدْعُوكُمْ  
وَالطَّاعَةُ حِينَ أَمُرُكُمْ.

### Sermon 34

To prepare the people for fighting the people of Syria (Sham), Amīr al-Mu’minīn

عليه السلام said:

“Woe to you! I am tired of rebuking you... Do you accept this worldly life in preference over the next? Or do you accept disgrace in place of dignity? When I invite

you to fight your enemy, your eyes revolve as though you are in the clutches of death, in the stupor of the last moments. My pleadings are not understood by you, so you remain stunned. It is as though your hearts are affected with madness, so you do not understand. I have lost confidence in you for good. Neither are you a support for me to lean on, nor are you means to achieve honor and victory. Your example is that of the camels whose protector has disappeared, so when they are collected from one side, they disperse from the other.

By Allāh, how bad you are for igniting the flames of war! You are intrigued against but do not intrigue (your enemy). Your boundaries are shrinking, yet you do not feel outraged about it. Those who are against you do not sleep, while you remain unmindful. By Allāh, those who leave matters one for the other are subdued. By Allāh, I believed about you that if battle rages and death hovers around you, you will cut away from the son of Abū Tālib like the severing of head from the trunk.<sup>29</sup>

By Allāh, he who makes it possible for his adversary to thus overpower him, as to remove the flesh (from the bones), crush the bones and cut the skin into pieces, then it means that his helplessness is quite serious, and that his heart which is within the sides of his chest is weak. You may become like this if you wish. But for me, before I allow it, I shall use my sharp-edged swords of al-Mushrafiyyah which will cut under the bones of the head and cause arms and feet to fly. Thereafter, Allāh will do whatever He will s.

O people! I have an obligation over you and you have one over me. As for your obligation over me, it is to advise you, to pay your dues fully, to teach you so that you may not remain ignorant and instruct you in acceptable behavior so that you may act on it. As for my obligation over you, it is fulfillment of (the entitlement of) allegiance, well-wishing in my presence or absence, response when I call on you and obedience when I order you.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>*Ash-Sham* was a name used for a vast geographical area inhabited by Muslims in those days. This area included present-day Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine. Its capital was Damascus. Wherever the word “Syria” is mentioned (in this book), it should be understood as referring to its larger geographical context.

<sup>30</sup>This sentence is employed for such severance after which there is no occasion or possibility of rejoining. The author of *Al-Durra al-Najafiyya* has quoted several views in its explanation:

i. Ibn Durayd’s view is that it means “Just as the head is severed, its rejoining is impossible. Likewise, you, folks, will not rejoin me once you have deserted me.”

ii. Al-Mufaddal says that *ar-ra’s* (head) was the name of a man and a village in Syria, *Bayt ar-ra’s* is named after him. This man left his house and went away somewhere never to return to his village after which the proverb sprang up: “You went like Ar-ra’s had gone.”

iii. One meaning of it is that “Just as the joints of the bones of the head are separated, they cannot be rejoined; likewise, you will not rejoin me after cutting yourselves away from me.”

iv. It has also been said that this sentence is in the sense of separating completely. After copying this meaning from the *Sharh* of Shaikh Qutbud-Dīn ar-Rawandi, the commentator Ibn Abul-Hadīd has written that this meaning is not correct because when the word *ar-ra’s* is used in this sense of a whole, it is not preceded by *alif* and *lam*.

من خطبة له عليه السلام  
بعد التحكيم و ما بلغه من أمر الحكمين و فيها حمد الله على بلانه، ثم بيان سبب البلوى

### الحمد على البلاء

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَإِنْ أَتَى الدَّهْرُ بِالْخَطْبِ الْفَاحِ وَالْحَدَثِ الْجَلِيلِ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ لَيْسَ مَعَهُ إِلَهٌ غَيْرُهُ  
وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ.

### سبب البلوى

أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَإِنَّ مَعْصِيَةَ النَّاصِحِ الشَّفِيقِ الْعَالِمِ الْمَجْرَبِ ثَوْرَتْ الْحَسْرَةَ وَتُعَقِبُ النَّدَامَةَ وَقَدْ كُنْتُ أَمَرْتُكُمْ فِي هَذِهِ  
الْحُكُومَةِ أَمْرِي وَتَخَلَّتْ لَكُمْ مَخْزُونٌ رَأَيْتُمْ لَوْ كَانَ يُطَاعُ لِقَصِيرٍ أَمْرٌ فَأَتَيْتُمْ عَلَيَّ إِبَاءَ الْمُخَالِفِينَ الْجَفَاءِ وَالْمُنَابِذِينَ  
الْعَصَاةِ حَتَّى ارْتَابَ النَّاصِحُ بِنُصْحِهِ وَضَنَّ الرَّئِدُ بِفِدْجِهِ فَكُنْتُ أَنَا وَإِيَّاكُمْ كَمَا قَالَ أَخُو هَوَازِنَ :

أَمَرْتُكُمْ أَمْرِي بِمُنْعَرَجِ اللَّوَى \* فَلَمْ تَسْتَبِينُوا النَّصْحَ إِلَّا ضَحَى الْعَدِ

### Sermon 35

Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام delivered this sermon after the “arbitration”

“All praise is due to Allāh, even though time has brought (to us) crushing calamity and great occurrence. And I testify that there is no god but Allāh the One One and only, there is no partner with Him, nor is there with Him any god other than He, and that Muhammed ﷺ is His slave and Prophet. So now, certainly the disobedience of a sympathetic counselor who has knowledge as well as experience brings about disappointment, and this results in repentance. I had given you my orders about this arbitration and put forth before you my view, only if such orders were fulfilled, but you rejected (my orders) like rough opponents and disobedient insurgents till the counselor himself fell in doubt about his counsel, and the flint (of his wit) ceased to give flame. Consequently, my status and yours became as the poet of Hawazin says:

*I gave you my orders at Mun'arajil-Liwa' but you did not  
See the good of my counsel till the noon of next day (when it was too late).”*

When the Syrians' spirit was broken by the bloody swords of the Iraqis, and when the continuous night attacks of the *harir* lowered their morale, ending their aspirations, `Amr ibn al-`Ās suggested to Mu`āwiyah the trick that the Holy Qur`ān should be raised on spears, and that there should be calls to treat the matter (of the ongoing war) through arbitration. Its effect would be that some people would try to stop the war while others would like to continue it. “We (Mu`āwiyah and his hosts) will thus divide them and be able to postpone the war till another occasion,” `Amr suggested.

v. It is also taken to mean that “You will so run away from me like one (fleeing for life) to save his head. Besides, one or two other meanings have also been stated, but being remote (from the meaning), they are disregarded.”

First of all, it was used by the philosopher of Arabia, al-Aktham ibn Sayfī, while teaching unity and concord to his children. He says the following: “O my children! Do not cut away (from each other) at the time of calamities like the cutting of the head because after that, you will never get together.”

Consequently, copies of the Holy Qur'ān were raised on spears. The result was that some brainless persons raised their cries and created division and disturbance in the army. The efforts of some simple-minded Muslims were discouraged although victory was quite near. Without giving it much thought, they began to shout that they preferred the verdict of the Holy Qur'ān over fighting.

When Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ saw the Holy Qur'ān being the instrument of their scheming activities, he said:

“O people! Do not fall in this trap of deceit and trickery. They are putting up this device only to escape the ignominy of defeat. I know the character of each one of them. They neither adhere to the Holy Qur'ān, nor do they have any connection with the faith or creed. The very purpose of our fighting has been that they should follow the Holy Qur'ān and act on its injunctions. For the sake of Allāh, do not fall in their deceitful trap. Go ahead with determination and courage, and stop only after defeating the dying foe.” But this deceitful instrument of wrongdoing had already worked on them.

People disobeyed and rebelled against their leader, the Imām ﷺ. Mis'ar ibn Fadaki at-Tamīmi and Zaid ibn Hussain at-Tā'i, each with twenty thousand men, came forward and said to Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ, “O Ali! If you do not respond to the call of the Qur'ān, we will deal with you in the same manner as we did with `Othmān. Put an end to the battle at once and bow before the verdict of the Holy Qur'ān.” Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ tried his best to make them understand the trick, but Satan was standing before them dressed in the garbs of the Holy Qur'ān. He did not allow them to do so. They compelled Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ to send someone to recall Mālik ibn al-Hārith al-Ashtar (the commander of the troops) from the battlefield. Being thus coerced, Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ sent Yazīd ibn Hāni to call Mālik back. When Mālik heard this order, he was bewildered. Mālik said to Hāni, “Please tell him that this is not the occasion to leave the status as is. He may wait for a short while, then I will come to his audience with the tidings of victory.” Hāni conveyed this message on his return, but people shouted that Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ must have sent word to him secretly to continue. Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ said that he never had any opportunity to send any secret message to Mālik. Whatever he said was the same that was said before them. People said that he should be sent the message again, and that if Mālik delayed his return, Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ should put him to death. Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ again sent Yazīd ibn Hāni with word that mutiny had taken place, that he should return in whatever condition he was. So Hāni went and said to Mālik, “Do you hold victory dear or the life of Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ? If his life is dearer to you, raise your hands from the battle and go to him.” Leaving the chances for victory, Mālik stood and went to meet with Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ with grief and disappointment. The Aws tribesmen were outraged. The Imām ﷺ rebuked the people very much, but matters had taken such a turn that they could no longer be corrected.

It was then settled that either party should nominate an arbitrator in order to settle the matter according to the Holy Qur'ān. From the side of Mu'āwiyah, `Amr ibn al-`Ās was chosen, and from Amīr al-Mu'minīn's side, people proposed the name of Abū Mūsa al-Ash`ari. Seeing this wrong selection being made, Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ said, “Since you have not accepted my order about arbitration, at least you should

now agree not to make Abū Mūsa the arbitrator. He is not a man to be trusted. Here is Abdullāh ibn Abbās (the Islamic nation's scribe and narrator of hadīth), and here is Mālik al-Ashtar. Choose one of them." But they did not listen to him and stuck to the name of (Abū Mūsa al-Ash`ari). Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ said, "Alright, do whatever you want. The day is not far when you will cut your own hands with your misdeeds."

After the nomination of arbitrators, once the agreement was written, the name of Ali ibn Abū Tālib ﷺ was also written down in it. `Amr ibn al-`Ās said, "This name should be erased. If we regard him (Ali) as being the *Amīr alMu`minīn*, why should this battle have been fought in the first place?" At first, Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ refused to erase it, but when they did not in any way agree to his suggestions, he rubbed it out himself and said, "This incident is just similar to the one at al-Hudaybiya when the unbelievers stuck to the point that the words 'the Prophet of Allāh' next to the name of the Prophet ﷺ should be removed, so the Prophet ﷺ did remove it." On this, `Amr ibn al-`Ās became angry and said, "Do you treat us as unbelievers?" Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ asked him, "On what day did you have anything to do with belief, and when have you ever been the supporter of believers?!" However, after this settlement, people dispersed. After mutual consultations, these two arbitrators decided to remove the names of both of Ali `Ash`ari and Mu`āwiyah, indicating that people should be granted power to choose whomever they desired.

When time came to make the announcement, there was a meeting at Dawmatul-Jandal, a place between Iraq and Syria, which the two arbitrators reached to announce the agreement that determined the fate of the Muslims. Acting cunningly, `Amr ibn al-`Ās said to Abū Mūsa al-Ash`ari, "I regard it as ill manners to go ahead of you. You are older in years and age; so, you should make the announcement yourself." Abū Mūsa succumbed to his flattery and came out proudly. Standing before the gathering, he addressed them thus: "O Muslims! We have jointly settled that Ali ibn Abū Tālib and Mu`āwiyah should be removed, and the right to choose a caliph should be left to the Muslims. They should choose whomsoever they like." Saying this, he sat down. Now the turn came for `Amr ibn al-`Ās who said, "O Muslims! You have heard that Abū Mūsa al-Ash`ari has removed Ali ibn Abū Tālib; I, too, agree to it. As for Mu`āwiyah, there is no question about removing him. Therefore, I keep him in his position." Immediately after hearing these words, there was shouting everywhere in protest. Abū Mūsa cried with a hoarse voice that this was a trick, a deception. He said to `Amr ibn al-`Ās, "You have played a trick, and your example is that of a dog which gasps if you load something on it or even if you do not." `Amr ibn al-`Ās said, "Your example is like the ass on which books are loaded." However, the trickery of `Amr ibn al-`Ās was effective, and Mu`āwiyah's shaking feet were again stabilized.

The above is a short sketch of the "arbitration" the basis of which was the Holy Qur`ān and the Sunnah... or was it?! Was it a verdict of the Holy Qur`ān or the result of deceitful contrivances which people of this world always employ to retain power? Could these pages of history be made a guiding torch for the future, and can the Holy Qur`ān and Sunnah be thus used as means for securing power or as instruments for attaining worldly benefits?

When Amīr al-Mu`minīn ﷺ heard the news of this lamentable result of "arbitration," he ascended the pulpit and delivered this sermon every word of which savors his grief and sorrow and, at the same time, it sheds light on the soundness of



his thinking, correctness of opinion and foresighted sagacity.

A proverb used in this sermon is borrowed from an occasion where the advice of a counselor is rejected and afterwards repented. The fact is that the ruler of Hira, namely Jazimah al-Abrash, killed the ruler of Jazira, `Amr ibn Zarib. Thereafter, his daughter, Zabba, was made ruler of Jazira. Soon after accession to the throne, she thought out a plan to avenge her father's blood. She sent a message to Jazimah that she could not alone carry on the affairs of the state and that if he could become her patron by accepting her as his wife, she would be grateful. Jazimah was more than puffed up at this marriage proposal, so he prepared himself to set off for Jazira escorted by a thousand horsemen. His slave, Qasir (who is mentioned in this sermon above), advised him repeatedly that this was just a sign of deceit and trickery, that he should not place himself in such danger. But the man's wits had been so blinded that he could not consider why Zabba should select the murderer of her father as her life's companion. He set off and reached the border of Jazira. Although Zabba's army was present to welcome him, she neither gave him any special reception, nor did she offer him a warm welcome. Seeing this, Qasir was again suspicious; he advised Jazimah to return, but nearness to the goal had further fanned his passion. Jazimah paid no heed and, stepping further, entered the city. Soon after his arrival, he was killed there and then. When Qasir saw this, he said, "Had the advice of Qasir been followed..., etc. Since then, this proverb gained circulation.

The poet of Hawazin referred to in this sermon is Durayd ibn as-Simmah. He wrote the above-cited couplet after the death of his brother, Abdullāh ibn as-Simmah. Its facts are that Abdullāh, along with his brother, led an attack on two groups of Banū Jusham and Banū Nasr who were both from Hawazin, looting many camels. On their return, when they intended to rest at Mun'arajil-Liwa, Durayd said that it was not advisable to stay there lest the enemy should attack them from the rear, but Abdullāh did not agree and stayed there. As soon as dawn appeared, the enemy did, indeed, attack, killing Abdullāh on the spot. Durayd also received wounds, but he managed to slip away alive. After this, composed few couplets out of which one couplet is this wherein he refers to the destruction resulting from his advice having been rejected.



من خطبة له عليه السلام في تخويف أهل النهروان

فَأَنَا نَذِيرٌ لَكُمْ أَنْ تُصْبِحُوا صَرَغَى بِأَتْنَاءِ هَذَا النَّهْرِ وَبِأَهْضَامِ هَذَا الْعَائِطِ عَلَى غَيْرِ بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَلَا سُلْطَانَ مُبِينٍ  
مَعَكُمْ قَدْ طَوَّحْتُ بِكُمْ الدَّارَ وَاحْتَبَلْتُكُمْ الْمَقْدَارُ وَقَدْ كُنْتُ نَهَيْتُكُمْ عَنْ هَذِهِ الْحُكُومَةِ فَأَبَيْتُمْ عَلَيَّ إِبَاءَ الْمُتَابِذِينَ حَتَّى  
صَرَغْتُ رَأْيِي إِلَى هَوَاكُمُ وَأَنْتُمْ مَعَاشِرُ أَخْفَاءِ الْهَامِ سُفَهَاءُ الْأَحْلَامِ وَلَمْ آتِ لَا أَبَا لَكُمْ بُجْرًا وَلَا أَرَدْتُ لَكُمْ ضَرًّا .

### Sermon 36

#### Warning the people of Nahrawān of their fate

"I am warning you that you will be killed on the bend of this canal and on the levee of this low area while having no clear excuse before Allāh or any open authority with you. You have come out of your houses, then the Divine decree involved you. I had

advised you against this arbitration but you rejected my advice like adversaries and opponents till I steered my ideas in the direction of your wishes. You are a group whose heads are devoid of wit and intelligence. May you have no father! I have not put you in any calamity, nor have I wished you any harm.”

The reason behind the fighting of the Battle of Nahrawān (which took place in 37 A.H./657 A.D.) goes back to the time that followed the “arbitration”. Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ was returning to Kūfa. The people who were foremost in accepting this “arbitration,” yet they (namely the Khārijites) began to say that the appointment of anyone other than Allāh as arbitrator is heresy and, God forbid, that by accepting the arbitration, Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ had become a heretic. Consequently, by distorting the meaning of “There is no authority save with Allāh,” they made simple-minded Muslims share their view, separating them from Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ who camped at Hanira’ near Kūfa. When Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ learned of their scheme, he sent Sa’sa’ah ibn Suhān’ al-’Abdi and Ziyād ibn an-Nadr al-Hārithi accompanied by (Abdullāh) Ibn Abbās. Thereafter, he went to the place of their stay and dispersed them after holding a debate with them.

When these people reached Kūfa, they began to spread reports that Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ had violated the arbitration agreement and that he was again ready to fight the Syrians. When Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ learned about this, he refuted it, whereupon these folks stood up to rebel, camping twelve miles from Baghdad in the lowlands canal area of the Nahrawān.

On the other side, after hearing the verdict of arbitration, Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ prepared to fight the army of Syria. He wrote to the Khārijites that the verdict was passed by the two arbitrators in pursuance of their heart’s wishes instead of the dictates of the Holy Qur’ān and Sunnah, that it was not acceptable to him, that he, therefore, decided to fight them, and that they should support him in crushing the enemy. But the Khārijites gave him this reply: “Since you had agreed to the arbitration, in our view you had turned heretic. Now if you admit your heresy and offer repentance, we will think over this matter and decide what we should do.” Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ understood from their reply that their disobedience and misguidance had become quite serious. To rest any kind of hope on them was now futile. Consequently, ignoring them, he camped at the valley of an-Nukhaylah (in what is now Hilla, Babylon, Iraq) with the view to march to Syria. Once the army had been arrayed for battle, he came to know that the men desired to deal with the people of Nahrawān first and to move towards Syria thereafter. Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ, however, said that they should be left as they were, that they themselves should first move towards Syria while the people of Nahrawān could be dealt with later. People said that they were prepared to obey every order of his with all their might, whether he moved this way or that. The army had not moved when news about the mutiny of the Khārijites began to reach them. Then it was learned that they had butchered the governor of Nahrawān, Abdullāh ibn Khabbab ibn al-Aratt, and his pregnant bondmaid, killed three women of Banū Tay and Umm Sinan al-Saydawi as well. Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ sent al-Hārith ibn Murrah al-’Abdi to investigate, but he, too, was killed by them. When their rebellion reached this stage, it was necessary to deal with them. Consequently, the army turned in the direction of Nahrawān (instead of Syria). On reaching there, Amīr al-Mu’minīn ﷺ sent them word that those who had

killed Abdullāh ibn Khabbab ibn al-Aratt and innocent women should be handed over to him. Those people replied that they had killed all those individuals and that they considered it lawful to shed the blood of all the people on his own side. Even at this, Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ did not take the initiative for the battle but sent (the great *sahābi*) Abū Ayyūb al-Ansāri with a message of peace. The *sahābi* spoke to them loudly thus: “Whoever comes under this banner or separates himself from that party and goes to Kūfa or alMadā'in will receive amnesty, and he will not be questioned.” As a result, Farwah ibn Nawfal al-Ashja'i said that he did not know why they were at war with Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ. Saying this, he separated himself, along with five hundred men, from the rest. Similarly, one group after another began to defect, and some of them joined Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ. Those who remained numbered four thousand. According to al-Tabari's account, they numbered two thousand and eight hundred. Still, those people were not in any way prepared to listen to the voice of the truth and were ready to kill or be killed. Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ had stopped his men from taking the initiative to wage a battle, but the Khārijites put arrows in their bows and started shooting, throwing away the sheathes of their swords. Even at this juncture, Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ warned them of the dire consequences of war. This sermon is about that warning and admonition. But they were filled with enthusiasm, so much so that they leaped on Amīr al-Mu'minīn's force out of a sudden. Their onslaught was so severe, the footmen lost ground but soon regrouped so firmly that the attack of arrows and spears could not dislodge them from their positions. They soon cleared away the Khārijites except for nine persons who fled away for safety. Other than that, not a single person was left alive. From Amīr al-Mu'minīn's army, only eight persons were martyred. The battle took place on the Safar 9, 38 A.H. (Tuesday, July 17, according to the Julian calendar, or the 20<sup>th</sup> according to the Gregorian calendar, 658 A.D.).



من كلام له عليه السلام يجري مجرى الخطبة و فيه يذكر فضائله عليه السلام قاله بعد وقعة النهروان

فَقُمْتُ بِالْأَمْرِ حِينَ فَشَلُّوا وَتَطَلَّعْتُ حِينَ تَقَبَّعُوا وَنَطَقْتُ حِينَ تَعَنَّعُوا ، وَمَضَيْتُ بِنُورِ اللَّهِ حِينَ وَقَفُوا ، وَكُنْتُ أَحْفَظَهُمْ صَوْتًا ، وَأَعْلَاهُمْ قُوَّةً ، فَطَرْتُ بِعَنَانِهَا ، وَاسْتَبَدَّدْتُ بِرِهَانِهَا ، كَالْجَبَلِ لَا تُحَرِّكُهُ الْقَوَاصِفُ ، وَلَا تُزِيلُهُ الْعَوَاصِفُ ، لَمْ يَكُنْ لِأَحَدٍ فِيَّ مَهْمَزٌ ، وَلَا لِقَائِلٍ فِيَّ مَعْمَزٌ ، الدَّلِيلُ عِنْدِي عَزِيزٌ حَتَّى أَخَذَ الْحَقُّ لَهْ ، وَالْقَوِيُّ عِنْدِي ضَعِيفٌ حَتَّى أَخَذَ الْحَقُّ مِنْهُ ، رَضِينَا عَنِ اللَّهِ قَضَاءَهُ ، وَسَلَّمْنَا لِلَّهِ أَمْرَهُ ، أَتَرَانِي أَكْذِبُ عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ ، وَاللَّهُ لَأَنَا أَوْلَى مَنْ صَدَّقَهُ ، فَلَا أَكُونُ أَوْلَى مَنْ كَذَّبَ عَلَيْهِ ، فَتَنْظَرْتُ فِي أَمْرِي فَإِذَا طَاعَتِي قَدْ سَبَقَتْ بَيْعَتِي ، وَإِذَا الْمَيْتَاقُ فِي عُنُقِي لِعَيْرِي .

### Sermon 37

**Amīr al-Mu'minīn's statement, which runs like a sermon, about his own steadfastness in religion and precedence in (acceptance) conviction**

“I discharged duties when others lost courage (to do so), and I came forward when others hid themselves. I spoke when others remained mum. I struck with the Divine light when others remained standing by. I was the quietest of them with words but the highest in going forward with deed. I cleaved to its rein and applied myself solely to

its pledge, like the mountain which neither sweeping wind can move nor storms can shake. No one could find fault with me, nor could anyone speak ill of me.

“The lowly person is in my view worthy of honor till I secure (his) right for him, while the strong person is in my view weak till I take from him what does not belong to him. We are happy with the destiny ordained by Allāh and have submitted to the command of Allāh. Do you think that I will speak lies about the Prophet of Allāh ﷺ? By Allāh, I am surely the first to testify to him, so I will not be the first to falsify him. I looked at my affairs and found that my obedience should have precedence over my allegiance, while my pledge to him is a trust round my neck.”



من كلام له عليه السلام وفيها علة تسمية الشبهة شبهة ثم بيان حال الناس فيها

وَأِنَّمَا سُمِّيَتِ الشُّبُهَةُ شُبُهَةً لِأَنَّهَا تُسَبِّهُ الْحَقَّ فَأَمَّا أَوْلِيَاءُ اللَّهِ فَضِيَاؤُهُمْ فِيهَا الْبَيِّنُ وَدَلِيلُهُمْ سَمْتُ الْهُدَى وَأَمَّا أَعْدَاءُ اللَّهِ فَدَعَاؤُهُمْ فِيهَا الضَّلَالُ وَدَلِيلُهُمُ الْعَمَى فَمَا يَنْجُو مِنَ الْمَوْتِ مَنْ خَافَهُ وَلَا يُعْطَى الْبَقَاءَ مَنْ أَحَبَّهُ .

### Sermon 38

#### About the naming of doubt, the disparagement of those in doubt

“Doubt is named so because it looks like the truth. As for those who love Allāh, their conviction serves them like light, the direction of the right path (itself) serves as their guide, whereas the enemies of Allāh, in time of doubt they advocate misguidance in the darkness of doubt. Their guide is blindness. One who fears death cannot escape it, nor can one who fears for the eternal life secure it.”



من خطبة له عليه السلام

خطبها عند علمه بغزوة النعمان بن بشير صاحب معاوية لعين التمر، وفيها يبدي عذره، ويستنهض الناس لنصرتة

مُنِيْبٌ بِمَنْ لَا يُطِيعُ إِذَا أَمَرْتُ وَلَا يُجِيبُ إِذَا دَعَوْتُ لَا أَبَا لَكُمْ مَا تَنْتَظِرُونَ بِنَصْرِكُمْ رَبُّكُمْ أَمَا دِينٌ يَجْمَعُكُمْ وَلَا حَمِيَّةٌ تُحْمِسُكُمْ أَقَوْمٌ فِيكُمْ مُسْتَصْرَخًا وَأُنَادِيكُمْ مُتَعَوِّثًا فَلَا تَسْمَعُونَ لِي قَوْلًا وَلَا تُطِيعُونَ لِي أَمْرًا حَتَّى تَكْشِفَ الْأُمُورُ عَنِّي عَوَاقِبَ الْمَسَاءَةِ فَمَا يُدْرِكُ بِكُمْ نَارٌ وَلَا يُبْلَغُ بِكُمْ مَرَامٌ دَعَوْتُكُمْ إِلَيَّ نَصْرَ إِخْوَانِكُمْ فَجَرَّجْتُمْ جَرَجْرَةَ الْجَمَلِ الْأَسْرَى وَتَنَاقَلْتُمْ تَنَاقُلَ النَّصْوِ الْأَدْبَرِ ثُمَّ خَرَجَ إِلَيَّ مِنْكُمْ جُنَيْدٌ مُتَدَانِبٌ ضَعِيفٌ كَأَنَّمَا يُسَافِرُونَ إِلَى الْمَوْتِ وَهُمْ يَنْتَظِرُونَ .

قال السيد الشريف : أقول ، قوله ( عليه السلام ) " متدانب " أي مضطرب من قولهم تذاعبت الريح أي اضطرب هبوبها و منه سمي الذئب ذئبا لاضطراب مشيته .

### Sermon 39

## In disparagement of those who shrink from fighting

“I am faced with men who do not obey when I order them or respond when I call on them. May you have no father! (Woe unto you!) What are you waiting for so you would rise for the cause of Allāh? Does not faith join you together? Does the sense of shame not motivate you? I stand among you shouting, calling you for help, yet you do not listen to my word and do not obey till circumstances show their bad consequences. No blood can be avenged through you, no purpose can be achieved through you. I called on you to help your brethren, but you made noises like a camel having pain in the stomach, turning loose like a camel with a thin back. Then a wavering weak contingent came to me from among you: ... *as if they are being led to death as they look on* (Qur’ān, 8: 6).”<sup>31</sup>

Sayyid ar-Radi says the following: “Amīr al-Mu’minīn’s word *mutadha’ib* means *mudtarib* (i.e. moved or troubled), as they say *tadha’ abat ar-rih* (i.e. the winds blow in a troubled manner). Similarly the wolf is called *dhi’b* ذئب because of its troubled movement.”



من كلام له عليه السلام في الخوارج لما سمع قولهم "لا حكم إلا لله"

قَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: كَلِمَةٌ حَقٌّ يُرَادُ بِهَا بَاطِلٌ نَعَمْ إِنَّهُ لَا حُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ وَلَكِنَّ هَؤُلَاءِ يَقُولُونَ لَا أَمْرَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّهُ لَا بُدَّ

<sup>31</sup>Mu’wiyah sent a contingent of two thousand soldiers under the command of an-Nu’ mān ibn Bashir to assault Aynut-Tamr. This place was a defence base of Amīr al-Mu’minīn (ع) near Kūfa where Mālik ibn Ka’b al-Arhabi was in charge. Although there were a thousand combatants under his command, at that moment, only a hundred men were present. When Mālik noticed the advance of the enemy force, he wrote Amīr al-Mu’minīn (ع) for reinforcements. When Amīr al-Mu’minīn (ع) received his letter, he asked people to go to his relief, but only three hundred men responded. As a result, Amīr al-Mu’minīn (ع) was very much disgusted. He delivered this sermon to admonish them. When Amīr al-Mu’minīn (ع) reached his house after delivering the sermon, `Adiy ibn Hatim at-Tā’i came and said, “O Amīr al-Mu’minīn! A thousand men of Banū Tay’ are under my command. If you wish, I shall send them off.” Amīr al-Mu’minīn (ع) said, “It does not look good that people of only one tribe should meet the enemy. Prepare your force in the Valley of an-Nukhayla.” Accordingly, he went there and called people to *jihād*. Besides Banū Tay’, only one thousand combatants also assembled. They were still preparing to set off when word from Mālik ibn Ka’b reached them that there was no need for help since he had repulsed the enemy. The reason for this was: Mālik had hastily sent `Abdullāh ibn Hawalah al-Azdi off to Qarzah ibn Ka’b al-Ansāri and Mikhnaf ibn Sulaym al-Azdi so that if there was delay in the arrival of reinforcements from Kūfa, he could get help from here in time. Abdullāh went to both, but he secured no help from Qarzah. However, Mikhnaf ibn Sulaym had mobilized fifty persons under the command of `Abd ar-Rahmān ibn Mikhnaf, and they arrived almost in the evening. Until that time, the two thousand men (of the enemy) had not been able to subdue Mālik’s hundred men...! When an-Nu’man saw these fifty men, he thought that their forces had started coming in, so he fled away from the battlefield. Even in their retreat, Mālik attacked them from the rear and killed three of their men.



لِلنَّاسِ مِنْ أَمِيرٍ بَرٍّ أَوْ فَاجِرٍ يَعْمَلُ فِي إِمْرَتِهِ الْمُؤْمِنُ وَيَسْتَمْتِعُ فِيهَا الْكَافِرُ وَيُبْلَغُ اللَّهُ فِيهَا الْأَجَلَ وَيُجْمَعُ بِهِ الْفِيءُ وَيَقَاتَلُ بِهِ الْعَدُوَّ وَتَأْمَنُ بِهِ السُّبُلُ وَيُؤْخَذُ بِهِ لِلضَّعِيفِ مِنَ الْقَوِيِّ حَتَّى يَسْتَرِيحَ بَرٌّ وَيُسْتَرَاخَ مِنْ فَاجِرٍ . وَفِي رِوَايَةٍ أُخْرَى أَنَّهُ ( عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ ) لَمَّا سَمِعَ تَحْكِيمَهُمْ قَالَ : حُكْمَ اللَّهِ أَنْتَظِرُ فِيكُمْ . وَقَالَ : أَمَّا الْإِمْرَةُ الْبُرَّةُ فَيَعْمَلُ فِيهَا التَّقِيُّ وَأَمَّا الْإِمْرَةُ الْفَاجِرَةُ فَيَبْتَمَعُ فِيهَا الشَّقِيُّ إِلَى أَنْ تَنْقَطِعَ مَدَنُهُ وَتُدْرِكُهُ مَنِيئُهُ .

#### Sermon 40

**When Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام heard the cry of the Khārijites that the judgment belongs only to Allāh, he said:**

“The statement is right, but what (they think) it means is wrong. It is true that verdict lies only with Allāh, but these people say that (the function of) governance belongs only to Allāh. The fact is that there is no escape for men from rulers, be they good or bad. The faithful persons perform (good) deeds in his rule, while the unfaithful enjoy (worldly) benefits in it. During the rule, Allāh will carry everything to its end. Through the ruler, taxes are collected, the enemy is fought, roadways are protected and the right of the weak is taken from the strong till the virtuous enjoy peace and are allowed protection from (the oppression of) the wicked.”

**Another version of the same sermon:**

**When Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام heard the cry of the Khirijites on the aforementioned verdict, he said:**

“I expect the verdict of Allāh to be against you.” Then he went on to say, “As for a good government, the pious man performs good deeds in it, while in a bad government, the wicked person enjoys till his time is over and death overtakes him.”



ومن خطبة له عليه السلام وفيها ينهى عن الغدر ويحذر منه

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ الْوَفَاءَ تَوْأَمُ الصِّدْقِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ جُنَّةً أَوْقَى مِنْهُ وَمَا يَغْدِرُ مَنْ عَلِمَ كَيْفَ الْمَرْجِعِ وَلَقَدْ أَصْبَحْنَا فِي زَمَانٍ قَدْ اتَّخَذَ أَكْثَرُ أَهْلِ الْعَدْرِ كَيْسًا وَنَسَبَهُمْ أَهْلُ الْجَهْلِ فِيهِ إِلَى حُسْنِ الْحِيلَةِ مَا لَهُمْ قَاتَلَهُمُ اللَّهُ قَدْ بَرَى الْحَوْلَ الْقَلْبُ وَجَهَةَ الْحِيلَةِ وَدُونَهَا مَانِعٌ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ وَتَهْيِئِهِ فَيَدْعُهَا رَأْيَ عَيْنٍ بَعْدَ الْقُدْرَةِ عَلَيْهَا وَيُنْتَهزُ فُرْصَتَهَا مَنْ لَا حَرِيجَةَ لَهُ فِي الدِّينِ.

#### Sermon 41

**Condemning Treason**

“O people! Surely the fulfillment of a pledge is the twin of the truth. I do not know a better shield than it. One who realizes the reality of the return (to the other life) refuses (submission to the dynamic of) betrayal. We are in a period when most people regard betrayal as wisdom. These days, the ignorant call it excellence of cunning. What is the matter with them? May Allāh destroy them. One who has been through the thick and thin of life finds the excuses to be preventing him from acquiescing to the orders and prohibitions of Allāh. Yet he disregards them despite the capability (to succumb to them and to follow the commands of Allāh), while one who has no



restraints of religion seizes the opportunity (and accepts the excuses for not following the commands of Allāh).”



[42]

من كلام له عليه السلام وفيه يحذر من اتباع الهوى وطول الأمل في الدنيا

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّ أَخَوْفَ مَا أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ اثْنَانِ اتَّبَاعُ الْهَوَىٰ وَطُولُ الْأَمَلِ فَأَمَّا اتَّبَاعُ الْهَوَىٰ فَيَصُدُّ عَنِ الْحَقِّ وَأَمَّا طُولُ الْأَمَلِ فَيُنْسِي الْآخِرَةَ أَلَا وَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا قَدْ وَلَّتْ حَذَاءً فَلَمْ يَبْقَ مِنْهَا إِلَّا صُجَابَةٌ كَصُجَابَةِ الْإِنْيَاءِ اصْطَبَّهَا صَابُهَا أَلَا وَإِنَّ الْآخِرَةَ قَدْ أَقْبَلَتْ وَلِكُلِّ مِنْهُمَا بَنُونَ فَكُونُوا مِنْ أَبْنَاءِ الْآخِرَةِ وَلَا تَكُونُوا مِنْ أَبْنَاءِ الدُّنْيَا فَإِنَّ كُلَّ وَلَدٍ سَيُلْحَقُ بِأَبِيهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَإِنَّ الْيَوْمَ عَمَلٌ وَلَا حِسَابَ وَعَدَا حِسَابٍ وَلَا عَمَلٍ.

قال الشريف : أقول ، " الحذاء السريعة " ، و من الناس من يرويه " جذاء " .

#### Sermon 42

#### About heart's desires and extended hopes

“O people! What I fear most about you are two things: acting according to desires and extending hopes too far. Acting according to (personal) desires prevents (the admission of) truth; as regarding over-extended hope, it makes one forget the next life. You should know that this world is moving rapidly and nothing has remained of it except the last particles like dregs of a vessel which has already been emptied. Beware, the Hereafter is advancing, and each of these worlds (this and the one to come) has sons (followers). You should become sons of the Hereafter and not become sons of this world because on the Day of Judgment, every son will cling to his mother. Today is the day of deed, and there is no reckoning, while tomorrow will be the day of reckoning wherein there will be no (opportunity for) deed.”

Sayyid ar-Radi says the following: “*Al-hadhadha* means rapid, but some people have read it *jadhdha*. According to this version, the meaning could be that the cycle of worldly enjoyments will soon come to an end.”



ومن كلام له عليه السلام وقد أشار عليه أصحابه بالاستعداد لحرب أهل الشام بعد إرساله جرير بن عبد الله البجلي إلى معاوية ولم ينزل معاوية على بيعته

إِنَّ اسْتِعْدَادِي لِحَرْبِ أَهْلِ الشَّامِ وَجَرِيرٌ عِنْدَهُمْ إِغْلَاقٌ لِلشَّامِ وَصَرَفٌ لِأَهْلِهِ عَنِ خَيْرٍ إِنْ أَرَادُوهُ وَلَكِنْ قَدْ وَقَّتُ لِحَرْبِهِ وَقْتًا لَا يُقِيمُ بَعْدَهُ إِلَّا مَخْدُوعًا أَوْ عَاصِيًا وَالرَّأْيُ عِنْدِي مَعَ الْأُنثَاءِ فَارْوِدُوا وَلَا أَكْرَهُ لَكُمْ الْإِعْدَادَ وَلَقَدْ صَرَبْتُ أَنْفَ هَذَا الْأَمْرِ وَعَيْنُهُ وَقَلْبْتُ ظَهْرَهُ وَبَطْنُهُ فَلَمْ أَرِ لِي فِيهِ إِلَّا الْفِتَالَ أَوْ الْكُفْرَ بِمَا جَاءَ مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ إِنَّهُ

فَدَّ كَانَ عَلَى الْأُمَّةِ وَالِ أَحَدَثَ أَحَدَانًا وَأَوْجَدَ النَّاسَ مَقَالًا فَقَالُوا ثُمَّ نَقَمُوا فَغَيَّرُوا.

#### Sermon 43

After Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ had sent Jarīr ibn Abdullāh al-Bajali to Mu`āwiyah (for securing his oath of allegiance), some of his companions suggested preparation to fight him. He ﷺ said:

“My preparation for battling the people of Syria while Jarīr ibn Abdullāh al-Bajali is still there will be closing the door on Syria and thereby preventing its people from performing a good deed (i.e. swearing the oath of allegiance) if that, indeed, is their intention. However, I have fixed a deadline for Jarīr after which he will not stay there without either deception or disobedience.

“I am in favor of patience, so wait a while. (In the meantime) I do not dislike your preparations.

“I have observed this matter thoroughly from all sides, but I do not find any way except war or heresy. Certainly, there was a ruler over the people (before me) who brought about new (un-Islamic) things and compelled the people to speak out. So they did speak, then rose and changed the whole system.”



من كلام له عليه السلام: لما هرب مصقلة بن هبيرة الشيباني إلى معاوية، وكان قد ابتاع سبي بني ناجية من عامل أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام وأعتقهم، فلما طالبه بالمال خاس به وهرب إلى الشام

فَبَحَّ اللَّهُ مَصْقَلَةَ فَعَلَّ فِعْلَ السَّادَةِ وَفَرَّ فِرَارَ الْعَبِيدِ فَمَا أَنْطَقَ مَادِحَهُ حَتَّى أَسْكَنَتْهُ وَلَا صَدَّقَ وَاصِفَهُ حَتَّى بَكَّتْهُ وَلَوْ أَقَامَ لِأَخَذْنَا مَيْسُورَهُ وَانْتَطَرْنَا بِمَالِهِ وَفُورَهُ.

#### Sermon 44

Masqalah ibn Hubayrah ash-Shaybāni fled to Mu`āwiyah because he had purchased some prisoners of Banū Najiyah from an executive of Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ, but when he demanded the price, the latter thwarted it and ran away to Syria. Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ said:

“May Masqalah be condemned. He acted like the noble but fled like a slave. Before his admirer could speak (about him), he silenced them. Before his eulogist could testify to his good deeds, he shut his mouth. If he had stayed behind, we would have taken from him what he could easily pay and waited for payment of the balance till his money increased.”

Following the “arbitration”, the Khārijites rose in defiance. A Khārijite man of Banū Najiyah named al-Khirrit ibn Rashīd an-Naji began instigating people and set off towards al-Madā'in with a group killing and marauding. Amīr al-Mu'minīn ﷺ sent Ziyād ibn Khasafah with three hundred men to check him. When the two forces met at al-Madā'in they attacked each other with swords. Only one encounter or so had taken place when the gloom of evening prevailed and the battle had to be stopped. In the

morning, Ziyād's men indicated that five dead bodies of the Khārijites were lying down, and that they themselves had cleared off the battlefield. Seeing this, Ziyād set off for Basra along with his men. There, he came to know that the Khārijites had gone to Ahwaz. Ziyād did not move onwards for lack of force, informing Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام of it. Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام ordered Ziyād back and sent Ma'qil ibn Qays ar-Riyāhi with two thousand experienced combatants to Ahwaz (southern Iran) and wrote the governor of Basra, Abdullāh ibn Abbās, to send two thousand swordsmen of Basra to help Ma'qil. Consequently, the contingent from Basra also joined them at Ahwaz. Following proper organization, they were prepared to attack the enemy. But al-Khirrit marched on with his men to the hills of Ram-Hurmuz. These people also followed him and overtook him near these hills. Both arrayed their forces and started attacking each other. The result of this encounter was that three hundred and seventy Khārijites were killed on the battlefield, while the rest ran away. Ma'qil informed Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام of his performance and of the enemy's defeat which Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام directed him to chase them and to disintegrate their power so that they should not be able to raise heads again. On receipt of this order, Ma'qil moved on and overtook them on the coast of the Gulf where al-Khirrit had by persuasion secured people's cooperation, enlisting men from here and there till he had collected a considerable force. When Ma'qil reached there, he raised the flag of peace, announcing that those who had been collected from here and there should flee. They would not be assaulted. The effect of this announcement was that with the exception of al-Khirrit's own community, all others deserted him. He organized those very men and commenced the battle, but the brave combatants of Basra and Kūfa displayed such excellent in the use of their swords that in a short time one hundred and seventy men from among the insurgents were killed while an-Nu'mān ibn Suhban ar-Rasibi encountered al-Khirrit (ibn Rashīd an-Naji), eventually attacking and killing him. Soon after its fall, the enemy lost ground, fleeing away from the battlefield. Thereafter, Ma'qil collected all the men, women and children from their camps at one place. From among them, those who were Muslims were released after swearing the oath of allegiance. Those who had turned heretics were called on to re-embrace their submission to the will of Allāh (Islam). Consequently all except an old Christian secured their release by accepting Islam, but the old man was killed. Then, Ma'qil took with him those Christians of Banū Najiyah who had taken part in this rebellion together with their families. When Ma'qil reached Ardashir-Khurrah (a city in Iran), these prisoners wailed and cried before Governor Masqalah ibn Hubayrah ash-Shaybāni, beseeching in all humility to do something for their release. Masqalah sent word to Ma'qil through Dhuhl ibn al-Hārith to sell these prisoners to him. Ma'qil agreed and sold those prisoners to him for five hundred thousand Dirhams, telling him to dispatch the price immediately to Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام. He said that he was sending the first installment at once and the remaining installments will also be sent soon. When Ma'qil met Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام, he related the whole event to him. Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام ratified this deed and waited for the price for some time, but Masqalah observed such deep silence as if nothing was due from him. At last, Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام sent a messenger to him with word to either send the price or to go there himself. On Amīr al-Mu'minīn's order, he came to Kūfa and on demand of the price, he paid two hundred thousand dirhams. But in order to evade paying the balance, he went to Mu'āwiyah, who appointed him governor of Tabaristan. When Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام came to know all this, he spoke these words (as in this sermon). Its summary is: Had he stayed, we would have been considerate to him in

demanding the price and will have waited for an improvement of his financial condition. But he fled like slaves after displaying an act of show. Talk about his high perseverance had just started when people began to discuss his baseless and lowly origin.



من خطبة له عليه السلام وهو بعض خطبة طويلة خطبها يوم الفطر وفيها يحمد الله ويذم الدنيا

حمد الله

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ غَيْرَ مَقْنُوطٍ مِنْ رَحْمَتِهِ وَلَا مَخْلُوفٍ مِنْ نِعْمَتِهِ وَلَا مَأْيُوسٍ مِنْ مَغْفِرَتِهِ وَلَا مُسْتَنْكَفٍ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ الَّذِي لَا تَبْرَحُ مِنْهُ رَحْمَةٌ وَلَا تُفْقَدُ لَهُ نِعْمَةٌ.

ذم الدنيا

وَالدُّنْيَا دَارٌ مُنِي لَهَا الْفَنَاءُ وَلَا أَهْلَهَا مِنْهَا الْجَلَاءُ وَهِيَ حُلُوءٌ خَضِرَاءُ وَقَدْ عَجَلَتْ لِلطَّالِبِ وَالتَّبَسَّتْ بِقَلْبِ النَّاطِرِ فَارْتَحَلُوا مِنْهَا بِأَحْسَنِ مَا بَحَضَرَتْكُمْ مِنَ الزَّادِ وَلَا تَسْأَلُوا فِيهَا فَوْقَ الْكَفَافِ وَلَا تَطْلُبُوا مِنْهَا أَكْثَرَ مِنَ الْبَلَاحِ.

#### Sermon 45

#### About the Greatness of Allāh, the lowliness of this world

“Praise is due to Allāh from Whose mercy no one loses hope, from Whose bounty no one is deprived, from Whose forgiveness no one is disappointed and for Whose worship no one is too high. His mercy never ceases and His bounty is never missed.

“This world is a place for which destruction is ordained and the departure of its inhabitants is destined. It is sweet and green. It hastens towards its seeker and attaches itself to the viewer’s heart. So depart from here with the best of provision available with you, and do not ask herein more than what is enough, and do not demand from it more than subsistence.”



من كلام له عليه السلام عند عزمه على المسير إلى الشام وهو دعاء دعا به ربه عند وضع رجله في الركاب

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ وَعْثَاءِ السَّفَرِ وَكَآبَةِ الْمُنْقَلَبِ وَسُوءِ الْمُنْظَرِ فِي الْأَهْلِ وَالْمَالِ وَالْوَالِدِ اللَّهُمَّ أَنْتَ الصَّاحِبُ فِي السَّفَرِ وَأَنْتَ الْخَلِيفَةُ فِي الْأَهْلِ وَلَا يَجْمَعُهُمَا غَيْرُكَ لِأَنَّ الْمُسْتَخْلَفَ لَا يَكُونُ مُسْتَنْصَحاً وَالْمُسْتَنْصَحُ لَا يَكُونُ مُسْتَخْلَفاً.

قال السيد الشريف رضي الله عنه : و ابتداء هذا الكلام مروى عن رسول الله صلى الله عليه وآله وقد قفاه أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام بأبلغ كلام و تممه بأحسن تمام من قوله " و لا يجمعهما غيرك " إلى آخر الفصل .

## Sermon 46

**When Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام decided to march towards Syria, he made these statements:**

“Lord! I seek Your protection from the hardships of the journey, from the grief of returning and from the scene of devastation of property and lives. O Allāh! You are the companion in the journey, You protect the one who has left his family behind. None except You can join these two because one who is left behind cannot be a companion on a journey, nor can one who is in company on a journey be left behind.”

Sayyid ar-Radi says the following: “The earlier part of his sermon is related from the Prophet ﷺ, but Amīr al-Mu'minīn عليه السلام has completed it very aptly by adding most eloquent sentences at the end. This addition is from *None except You can join...* up to the end.”



من كلام له عليه السلام في ذكر الكوفة

كَأَنِّي بِكَ يَا كُوفَةَ تُمَدِّينَ مَدَّ الْأَيْمِ الْعُكَاظِيِّ تُعْرَكِينَ بِالتَّوَارِلِ وَتُرْكَبِينَ بِالرَّلازِلِ وَإِنِّي لِأَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ مَا أَرَادَ بِكَ جَبَّارٌ  
سُوءاً إِلَّا ابْتَلَاهُ اللَّهُ بِشَاغِلٍ وَرَمَاهُ بِقَاتِلٍ

## Sermon 47

**About calamities befalling Kūfa**

“O Kūfa! It is as though I see you being dragged like the tanned leather of `Ukaz<sup>32</sup> in the market, scraped by calamities and ridden by severe troubles. I certainly<sup>33</sup> know

<sup>32</sup>During pre-Islamic days, a market used to be organized every year near Mecca. Its name was `Ukaz where mostly hides were traded and, as a result, tanned leather was associated with it. Besides the sales and purchases, poetic contests were also arranged and Arabs used to attract admiration by reciting their poems some of which, the very best, used to be written down on deer skin and hung on the Ka`ba. After Islam, because of a better congregation during the *hajj*, this market gradually disappeared.

<sup>33</sup>This prediction of Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع) was fulfilled word for word, and the world saw how the people who had committed tyranny and oppression on the strength of their worldly power had to face a tragic end. The ways of their own destruction were engendered by their blood-shedding and homicidal activities. Consequently, the end of Ziyād ibn Abīh (son of his unknown father) was that when he intended to deliver a speech to vilify Amīr al-Mu'minīn (ع), he was suddenly struck with paralysis, so much so that he could never get out of his bed till his miserable death. The end of the bloodshed perpetrated by Ubaydullāh ibn Ziyād came when he fell prey to leprosy; eventually, blood thirsty swords put him to death. The ferocity and savagery of al-Hajjāj ibn Yousuf ath-Thaqafi drove him to the fate that snake-like worms cropped up inside his stomach as a result of which he died following a very severe pain. `Omar ibn Hubayrah al-Fizari died of leucoderma. Khālid ibn Abdullāh al-Qasri suffered the hardships of prison and was killed in a terrible way. Mis`ab ibn az-Zubayr and Yazīd ibn al-Muhallab ibn Abū Sufrah were also killed by the sword, just to name few.

that if any tyrant harbors evil for you, Allāh will afflict him with worry and fling him with a killer (set someone on him to finish him).”



من خطبة له عليه السلام عند المسير إلى الشام قيل إنه خطب بها وهو بالنخيلة خارجا من الكوفة إلى صفين

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كُلَّمَا وَقَبَ لَيْلٌ وَعَسَقَ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كُلَّمَا لَاحَ نَجْمٌ وَخَفَقَ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ غَيْرَ مَفْقُودِ الْإِنْعَامِ وَلَا مُكَافِئِ الْإِفْتِخَالِ أَمَّا بَعْدُ فَقَدْ بَعَثْتُ مُقَدَّمَتِي وَأَمَرْتُهُمْ بِالزُّومِ هَذَا الْمَلْطَاطِ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَهُمْ أَمْرِي وَقَدْ رَأَيْتُ أَنْ أَقْطَعَ هَذِهِ النُّطْفَةَ إِلَى شِرْذِمَةٍ مِنْكُمْ مُوْطِنِينَ أَكْنَافَ دِجْلَةَ فَأَنْهَضَهُمْ مَعَكُمْ إِلَى عَدُوِّكُمْ وَأَجْعَلُهُمْ مِنْ أَمْدَادِ الْقُوَّةِ لَكُمْ.

قال السيد الشريف: أقول يعني عليه السلام بالملطاط هاهنا سمت الذي أمرهم بلزومه وهو شاطئ الفرات ويقال ذلك أيضا لشاطئ البحر وأصله ما استوى من الأرض و يعني بالنطفة ماء الفرات وهو من غريب العبارات وعجيبها .

#### Sermon 48

Delivered at the time of marching towards Syria

“Praise is due to Allāh whenever night spreads its darkens. Praise is all due to Allāh whenever the stars shine and set. And Praise is all due to Allāh Whose bounty never misses and whose favors cannot be repaid.

“Well, I have sent forth my vanguard<sup>34</sup> and have issued orders to remain in the camp on this bank of the river till my further orders reach them. My intention is that I should cross this water over to the small habitation of people residing on the banks of the Tigris and motivate them to march with you towards the enemy, keeping them as an auxiliary force for you.”



من كلام له عليه السلام وفيه جملة من صفات الربوبية والعلم الإلهي

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي بَطَّنَ خَفِيَّاتِ الْأُمُورِ وَدَلَّتْ عَلَيْهِ أَعْلَامُ الظُّهُورِ وَامْتَنَعَ عَلَى عَيْنِ الْبَصِيرِ فَلَا عَيْنٌ مَنْ لَمْ يَرَهُ تُنْكِرُهُ وَلَا قَلْبٌ مَنْ أَنْبَتَهُ يُبْصِرُهُ سَبَقَ فِي الْعُلُوِّ فَلَا شَيْءَ أَعْلَى مِنْهُ وَقَرَّبَ فِي الدُّنُوِّ فَلَا شَيْءَ أَقْرَبَ مِنْهُ فَلَا اسْتِعْلَاؤُهُ بَاعَدَهُ عَنْ شَيْءٍ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ وَلَا قُرْبُهُ سَاوَاهُمْ فِي الْمَكَانِ بِهِ لَمْ يُطْلِعِ الْعُقُولَ عَلَى تَحْدِيدِ صِفَتِهِ وَلَمْ يَحْجِبْهَا عَنْ وَاجِبِ مَعْرِفَتِهِ فَهُوَ الَّذِي تَشْهَدُ لَهُ أَعْلَامُ الْوُجُودِ عَلَى إِقْرَارِ قَلْبِ ذِي الْجُودِ تَعَالَى اللَّهُ عَمَّا يَقُولُهُ الْمُشْبِهُونَ بِهِ وَالْجَاجِدُونَ لَهُ عُلُوًّا كَبِيرًا .

<sup>34</sup>Sayyid ar-Radi says the following: “Here by *mitat* (in the original Arabic text), *Amīr al-Mu’minīn* (ع) means the direction wherein he had ordered the men to camp, and that was the bank of the Euphrates. *Mitat* is used for a river bank, although its literal meaning is a level ground, whereas by *nutfā*, he means the water of the Euphrates, and these are amazing expressions.”



## Sermon 49

### About the Greatness and Exaltation of Allāh

“Praise is all due to Allāh Who knows what is inside all hidden things, and towards Whom all open things are guided. He cannot be seen by the eyes of onlookers, but the eyes which do not see Him cannot deny Him, while the mind that proves His existence cannot perceive Him. He is so high in sublimity, nothing can be more sublime. In nearness, He is so near that no one can be nearer than Him. But his sublimity does not put Him at a distance from anything of His creation, nor does His nearness bring them on an equal level with Him. He has not informed the (human) intelligence about the limits of His qualities, for they have no limits. Nevertheless, He has not prevented it from securing any essential knowledge of Him. He is such that all signs of existence testify for Him till a denying mind eventually believes in Him. Allāh is sublime beyond what is described by those who liken Him to things or those (atheists) who deny His existence.”

