

ومن خطبة له عليه السلام تسمي القاصعة. وهي تتضمن ذم إبليس لعنة الله، على استكباره، وتركه السجود لآدم (عليه السلام)، وأنه أول من أظهر العصبية وتبع الحمية، وتحذير الناس من سلوك طريقته.

Known as “al-Khuṭbah al-Qāṣi‘ah” (Sermon of Disparagement). It comprises disparagement of Satan [Iblīs] for his vanity and his refusing to prostrate before Adam [a.s.], and his being the first to display bigotry and to act through vanity; it comprises a warning to people treading in Satan’s path.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي لَيْسَ الْعِزُّ وَالْكَرْبَاءُ، وَاخْتَارَهُمَا لِنَفْسِهِ دُونَ خَلْقِهِ، وَجَعَلَهُمَا حِمَى وَحَرَمًا عَلَى غَيْرِهِ، وَاصْطَفَاهُمَا لِجَلَالِهِ

Praise be to Allāh who wears the apparel of Honour and Dignity and has chosen them for Himself instead of for His creation. He has made them inaccessible and unlawful for others. He has selected them for His own great self.

[رَأْسِ الْعَصِيَانِ:] وَجَعَلَ اللَّعْنَةَ عَلَيَّ مِنْ نَازِعِهِ فِيهِمَا مِنْ عِبَادِهِ، ثُمَّ اخْتَبَرَ بِذَلِكَ مَلَائِكَتَهُ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ، لِيَمِيزَ الْمُتَوَاضِعِينَ مِنْهُمْ مِنَ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ، فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ وَهُوَ الْعَالِمُ بِمُضْمَرَاتِ الْقُلُوبِ، وَمَحْجُوبَاتِ الْغُيُوبِ ﴿إِنِّي خَالِقُ بَشَرًا مِنْ طِينٍ. فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتَهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ. فَسَجَدَ الْمَلَائِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ أَجْمَعُونَ. إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ﴾

[Allāh’s trial and the vanity of Iblīs :] and He has hurled a curse on him who contests with Him concerning them. Then He put His angels on trial concerning these attributes in order to distinguish those who are modest from those who are vain. Therefore, Allāh, who is aware of whatever is hidden in the hearts and whatever lies behind the unseen said: “. . . ‘Verily I am about to create man from clay,’ And when I have completed and have breathed into him of My spirit, then fall ye prostrating in obeisance unto him. And did fall prostrating in obeisance the angels all together, Save Iblīs;...” (Qur’ān, 38:71-74)

اعْتَرَضَتْهُ الْحَمِيَّةُ، فَافْتَخَرَ عَلَى آدَمَ بِخَلْقِهِ، وَتَعَصَّبَ عَلَيْهِ لِأَصْلِهِ. فَعَدُوُّ اللَّهِ إِمَامُ الْمُتَعَصِّبِينَ، وَسَلَفُ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ، الَّذِي وَضَعَ أَسَاسَ الْعَصِيَّةِ، وَنَازَعَ اللَّهَ رِدَاءَ الْجَبْرِيتَةِ، وَادْرَعَ لِبَاسَ التَّعَزُّزِ، وَخَلَعَ قِنَاعَ التَّذَلُّلِ. أَلَا تَرَوْنَ كَيْفَ صَغَّرَهُ اللَّهُ بِتَكْبَرِهِ، وَوَضَعَهُ بِتَرْفَعِهِ، فَجَعَلَهُ فِي الدُّنْيَا مَدْحُورًا، وَأَعَدَّ لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ سَعِيرًا؟!

His vanity stood in his way. Consequently, he felt proud over Adam by virtue of his creation and boasted over him on account of his origin. Thus, this enemy of Allāh is the leader of those who boast, and the fore-runner of the vain. It is he who laid the foundation of factionalism, quarreled with Allāh about the robe of greatness, put on the dress of haughtiness and took off the covering of humility. Do you not see how Allāh made him low on account of his vanity and humiliated him for his feigning to be high? He discarded him in this world and provided for him burning fire in the next world.

[ابتلاء الله لخلقه:] ولو أراد الله سبحانه أن يخلق آدم من نور يخطف الأبصار ضياؤه، ويهز العقول رواؤه، وطيب يأخذ الأنفاس عرفه، لفعل، ولو فعل لظلت له الإعناق خاضعة، ولخفت البلوى فيه على الملائكة. ولكن الله سبحانه يتبلي خلقه ببعض ما يجهلون أصله، تمييزا بالاختبار لهم، ونفيا للاستكبار عنهم، وإيعادا للخيلاء منهم.

[Allāh's trial of His creatures :] If Allāh had wanted to create Adam from a light whose glare would have dazzled the eyes, whose handsomeness would have amazed the wits and whose fragrance would have caught the breath, He could have done so; and if He had done so, people would have bowed to him in humility and the trial of the angels through him would have become easier. But Allāh, the Glorified, tries His creatures by means of those things whose real nature they do not know in order to distinguish (good and bad) for them through the trial, and to remove vanity from them and keep them and keep them aloof from pride and self-admiration.

[طلب العبرة:] فاعتبروا بما كان من فعل الله بإبليس، إذ أحبط عمله الطويل، وجهده الجهد، وكان قد عبد الله ستة آلاف سنة، لا يدري أمن سني الدنيا أم من سني الآخرة، عن كبر ساعة واحدة. فمن بعد إبليس يسلم على الله بمثل معصيته؟ كلا، ما كان الله سبحانه ليدخل الجنة بشرا بأمر أخرج به منها ملكا، إن حكمه في أهل السماء وأهل الأرض لواحد، وما بين الله وبين أحد من خلقه هوادة في إباحة حمي حرمة على العالمين.

You should take a lesson from what Allāh did with Satan; namely He nullified his great acts and extensive efforts on account of the vanity of one moment, although Satan had worshipped Allāh for six thousand years - whether by the reckoning of this world or of the next world is not known. Who now can remain safe from Allāh after Satan by committing a similar disobedience? None at all. Allāh, the Glorified, cannot let a human being enter Paradise if he does the same thing for which Allāh turned out from it an angel. His command for the inhabitants in the sky and of the earth is the same. There is no friendship between Allāh and any individual out of His creation so as to give him license for an undesirable thing which He has held unlawful for all the worlds.

[التحذير من الشيطان:] فاحذروا عدو الله أن يعديكم بدائه، وأن يستفزكم [بندائه، وأن يجلب عليكم] بخيله ورجله. فلعمري لقد فوق لكم سهم الوعيد، وأغرق لكم بالنزع الشديد، ورماكم من مكان قريب، وقال رب بما أغويتني لأزينن لهم في الأرض ولأغوينهم أجمعين

[Warning against Satan :] Therefore, you should fear lest the enemy of Allāh (Satan) infects you with his disease, or 'leads you astray through his call, or marches on you with his horsemen and footmen', (ref. 17:64) because, by my life, he has put the menacing arrow in the bow for you, has stretched the bow strongly, and has aimed at you from a nearby position, and: "He (Satan) said: My Lord!

Because Thou hast left me to stray, certainly will I adorn unto them the path of error, and certainly will I cause them all to go astray.” (Qur’ān, 15:39)

قَدْ أَفْغَبَ بَعِيدٍ، وَرَجْمًا بَظَنٍّ غَيْرِ مُصِيبٍ، صَدَقَهُ بِهِ أَبْنَاءُ الْحَمِيَّةِ، وَإِخْوَانُ الْعَصَبِيَّةِ، وَفَرَسَانُ الْكِبَرِ وَالْجَاهِلِيَّةِ. حَتَّى إِذَا انْقَادَتْ لَهُ الْجَامِحَةُ مِنْكُمْ، وَاسْتَحْكَمَتِ الطَّمَاعِيَّةُ مِنْهُ فِيكُمْ، فَجَمَّتِ الْحَالُ مِنَ السَّرِّ الْخَفِيِّ إِلَى الْأَمْرِ الْجَلِيِّ، اسْتَفْحَلُ سُلْطَانُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَدَلَفَ بَجُنُودِهِ نَحْوَكُمْ،

Although he (Satan) had said so only by guessing about the unknown future and by wrong conjecturing, yet the sons of vanity, the brothers of haughtiness and the horsemen of pride and intolerance proved him to be true, so much so that when disobedient persons from among you bowed before him, and his greed about you gained strength; and what was a hidden secret turned into a clear fact, he spread his full control over you and marched with his forces towards you.

فَأَفْحَمُوكُمْ وَلِجَاتِ الذُّلُّ، وَأَحْدَثُكُمْ وَرَطَّاتِ الْقَتْلِ، وَأَوَّطَأُوكُمْ إِثْخَانَ الْجِرَاحَةِ، طَعْنَا فِي عَيْونِكُمْ، وَحَزَا فِي حُلُوقِكُمْ، وَدَقَّا لِمَنَاخِرِكُمْ، وَقَصِدًا لِمَقَاتِلِكُمْ، وَسَوْفًا بِخِزَائِمِ الْقَهْرِ إِلَى النَّارِ الْمَعْدَةِ لَكُمْ، فَأَصْبَحَ أَعْظَمُ فِي دِينِكُمْ جِرْحًا، وَأَوْرَلْنَا فِي دُنْيَاكُمْ قَدْحًا، مِنَ الَّذِينَ أَصْبَحْتُمْ لَهُمْ مَنَاصِينِ، وَعَلَيْهِمْ مَتَأَبِينِ.

Then they pushed you into the hollows of disgrace, threw you into the whirlpools of slaughter, and trampled you, wounding you by striking your eyes with spears, cutting your throats, tearing your nostrils, breaking your limbs and taking you in ropes of control towards the fire already prepared. In this way he became more harmful to your religion and a greater kindler of flames (of mischief) about your worldly matters than the enemies against whom you showed open opposition and against whom you marched your forces.

فَاجْعَلُوا عَلَيْهِ حَدَّكُمْ، وَلَهُ جَدَّكُمْ، فَلَعِمَرُ اللَّهِ لَقَدْ فَخِرَ عَلَيَّ أَصْلُكُمْ، وَوَقَعَ فِي حَسْبِكُمْ، وَدَفَعَ فِي نَسَبِكُمْ، وَأَجْلَبَ بِخَيْلِهِ عَلَيْكُمْ، وَقَصَدَ بِرِجْلِهِ سَبِيلَكُمْ، يَقْتَصِونَكُمْ بِكُلِّ مَكَانٍ. وَيَضْرِبُونَ مِنْكُمْ كُلَّ بَنَانٍ، لَا تَمْتَنِعُونَ بِحَيْلَةٍ، وَلَا تَدْفَعُونَ بِعَزِيمَةٍ، فِي حَوْمَةِ ذُلٍّ، وَحَلْقَةٍ ضَيْقٍ، وَعَرَصَةِ مَوْتٍ، وَجَوْلَةٍ بَلَاءٍ.

You should therefore spend all your force against him, and all your efforts against him, because, by Allāh, he boasted over your (i.e., Adam’s) origin, questioned your position and spoke lightly of your lineage. He advanced on you with his army, and brought his footmen towards your path. They are chasing you from every place, and they are hitting you at every finger joint. You are not able to defend by any means, nor can you repulse them by any determination. You are in the thick of disgrace, the ring of straitness, the field of death and the way of distress.

فَأَطْفَنُوا مَا كَمَنَّ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ مِنْ نِيرَانِ الْعَصَبِيَّةِ، وَأَحْقَادِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ، وَإِنَّمَا تِلْكَ الْحَمِيَّةُ تُكُونُ فِي الْمُسْلِمِ مِنْ خَطَرَاتِ الشَّيْطَانِ

وَنَخَوَاتِهِ، وَنَزَغَاتِهِ وَنَفَثَاتِهِ. وَاعْتَمِدُوا وَضِعَ التَّذَلُّلِ عَلَي رُؤُوسِكُمْ. وَإِلْقَاءَ التَّعَازِلِ تَحْتَ أَقْدَامِكُمْ، وَخَلْعَ التَّكْبَرِ مِنْ أَعْنَاقِكُمْ. وَاتَّخِذُوا التَّوَاضِعَ مَسْلُحَةً بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَ عَدُوِّكُمْ وَإِبْلِيسَ وَجُنُودِهِ، فَإِنَّ لَهُ مِنْ كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جُنُودًا وَأَعْوَانًا، وَرِجَالًا وَفَرَسَانًا، وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالْمَتَكَبِّرِ عَلَي ابْنِ أُمِّهِ مِنْ غَيْرِ مَا فَضَّلَ جَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ فِيهِ سِوَى مَا أَحَقَّتْ الْعِظَمَةَ بِنَفْسِهِ مِنْ عِدَاوَةِ الْحَسَدِ، وَقَدَحَتْ الْحَمِيَّةَ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِنْ نَارِ الْغَضَبِ، وَنَفَخَ الشَّيْطَانُ فِي أَنْفِهِ مِنْ رِيحِ الْكِبَرِ الَّذِي أَعْقَبَهُ اللَّهُ بِهِ النَّدَامَةَ، وَأَلْزَمَهُ آثَامَ الْقَاتِلِينَ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ.

You should therefore put out the fires of haughtiness and the flames of intolerance that are hidden in your hearts. This vanity can exist in a Muslim only by the machinations of Satan, his haughtiness, mischief and whisperings. Make up your mind to have humility over your heads, to trample self-pride under your feet and to cast off vanity from your necks. Adopt humility as the weapon between you and your enemy, Satan and his forces. He certainly has, from every people, fighters, helpers, footmen and horsemen. Do not be like him who feigned superiority over the son of his own mother without any distinction given to him by Allāh except the feeling of envy which his feeling of greatness created in him and the fire of anger that vanity kindled in his heart. Satan blew into his nose his own vanity, after which Allāh gave him remorse and made him responsible for the sins of all killers up to the Day of Judgement.

[التحذير من الكبر:] أَلَا وَقَدْ أَمَعْتُمْ فِي الْبَغْيِ، وَأَفْسَدْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ، مُصَارِحَةً لِلَّهِ بِالْمُنَاصِبَةِ، وَمُبَارِزَةً لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِالْمُجَارِبَةِ. فَاللَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي كِبَرِ الْحَمِيَّةِ، وَفَخْرِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ! فَإِنَّهُ مَلَأَ الشَّيْطَانَ وَمَنَافِعِ الشَّيْطَانِ، اللَّاتِي خَدَعَ بِهَا الْأُمَمَ الْمَاضِيَةَ، وَالْقُرُونِ الْخَالِيَةَ، حَتَّى أَعْنَقُوا فِي حِنَادِ جِهَالَتِهِ، وَمَهَاوِي ضَلَالَتِهِ، ذَلَالًا عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ، سَلْسَلًا فِي قِيَادِهِ، أَمْرًا تَشَابَهَتْ الْقُلُوبُ فِيهِ، وَتَتَابَعَتْ الْقُرُونُ عَلَيْهِ، وَكَبْرًا تَضَايَقَتْ الصُّدُورُ بِهِ.

[Caution against vanity and boasting about ignorance :] Beware! you strove hard in revolting and created mischief on the earth in open opposition to Allāh and in challenging the believers over fighting. (You should fear) Allāh! Allāh! in feeling proud of your vanity and boasting over ignorance, because this is the root of enmity and the design of Satan wherewith he has been deceiving past peoples and bygone ages, with the result that they fell into the gloom of his ignorance and the hollows of his misguidance, submitting to his driving and accepting his leadership. In this matter the hearts of all the people were similar, and centuries passed by, one after the other, in just the same way, and there was vanity with which chests were tightened.

[التحذير من طاعة الكبراء:] أَلَا فَالْحَذَرِ الْحَذَرِ مِنَ طَاعَةِ سَادَاتِكُمْ وَكِبَرَاتِكُمْ! الَّذِينَ تَكْبَرُوا عَنْ حَسِبِهِمْ، وَتَرَفَعُوا فَوْقَ نَسَبِهِمْ، وَأَلْقُوا الْهَجِيئَةَ عَلَي رَبِّهِمْ، وَجَاحَدُوا اللَّهَ مَا صَنَعَ بِهِمْ، مَكَابِرَةَ لِقَضَائِهِ، وَمَغَالِبَةَ لِأَلَانِهِ، فَإِنَّهُمْ قَوَاعِدُ أُسَاسِ الْعَصِيَّةِ، وَدَعَائِمُ أَرْكَانِ الْفِتْنَةِ، وَسِوْفِ إِعْتِرَاءِ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَلَا تَكُونُوا لِنِعْمِهِ عَلَيْكُمْ أُضْدَادًا، وَلَا لِفَضْلِهِ عِنْدَكُمْ حَسَادًا، وَلَا تَطِيعُوا الْأَدْعِيَاءَ الَّذِينَ شَرِبْتُمْ بِصَفْوِكُمْ كَدْرَهُمْ، وَخَلَطْتُمْ بِصِحَّتِكُمْ مَرَضَهُمْ، وَأَدْخَلْتُمْ فِي حَقِّكُمْ بَاطِلَهُمْ.

[Caution against obeying haughty leaders and elders :] Beware! Beware of obeying your leaders and elders who felt proud of their achievements and boasted about their lineage. They hurled the (liability for) things on Allāh and quarrelled with Allāh in what He did with them, contesting His decree and disputing His favours. Certainly, they are the main foundation of obstinacy, the chief pillars of mischief and the swords of pre-Islamic boasting over forefathers. Therefore, fear Allāh, do not become antagonistic to His favours on you, nor jealous of His bounty over you [1] and do not obey the claimants (of Islam) whose dirty water you drink along with your clean one, whose ailments you mix with your healthiness and whose wrongs you allow to enter into your rightful matters.

وَهُمْ أَسَاسُ الْفُسُوقِ، وَأَحْلَاسُ الْعُقُوقِ، اتَّخَذَهُمْ إِبْلِيسُ مَطَايَا ضَلَالٍ، وَجُنُودًا بِهِمْ يَصُولُ عَلَى النَّاسِ، وَتَرَاجِمَةً يَنْطِقُ عَلَى أَلْسِنَتِهِمْ، اسْتِرَاقًا لِعُقُولِكُمْ، وَدُخُولًا فِي عَيْونِكُمْ، وَنَفْثًا فِي أَسْمَاعِكُمْ، فَجَعَلَكُمْ مَرْمَى نَبَلِهِ، وَمَوْطِئًا قَدَمِهِ، وَمَأْخُذَ يَدِهِ.

They are the foundation of vice and the linings of disobedience. Satan has made them carriers of misguidance and the soldiers with whom he attacks men. They are interpreters through whom he speaks in order to steal away your wits, enter into your eyes and blow into your ears. In this way he makes you the victim of his arrows, the treading ground of his footsteps and source of strength for his hands.

فَاعْتَبِرُوا بِمَا أَصَابَ الْأُمَمَ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ مِنْ بَأْسِ اللَّهِ وَصَوْلَاتِهِ، وَوَقَائِعِهِ وَمِثْلَاتِهِ، وَاتَّعَظُوا بِمِثَاوِي خُلُودِهِمْ، وَمَصَارِعِ جَنُوبِهِمْ، وَاسْتَعِينُوا بِاللَّهِ مِنَ لَوَاقِحِ الْكِبْرِ، كَمَا تَسْتَعِينُونَ مِنْ طَوَارِقِ الدَّهْرِ،

[Taking lessons from the past peoples :] Take instruction from how Allāh's wrath, violence, chastisement and punishment fell upon the arrogant nations before you. Take admonition from the resting places of their cheeks and their bodies, and seek Allāh's protection from the dangers of pride, as you seek His protection from calamities.

فَلَوْ رَخِصَ اللَّهُ فِي الْكِبْرِ لِأَحَدٍ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ لَرَخِصَ فِيهِ لِحَا صَدَةِ أَنْبِيَائِهِ [وَأَوْلِيَائِهِ]، وَلَكِنَّهُ سَبَّحَانَهُ كَرِهَ إِلَيْهِمُ التَّكَابُرَ، وَرَضِيَ لَهُمُ التَّوَاضِعَ، فَالْبَصِقُوا بِالْأَرْضِ خُلُودِهِمْ، وَعَفَرُوا فِي التُّرَابِ وَجُوهَهُمْ، وَخَفَضُوا أَجْنِحَتَهُمْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ، وَكَانُوا قَوْمًا مُسْتَضْعَفِينَ، قَدْ اخْتَبَرَهُمُ اللَّهُ بِالْمَخْمَصَةِ، وَابْتَلَاهُمْ بِالْمَجْهَدَةِ، وَامْتَحَنَهُمْ بِالْمَخَاوِفِ، وَمَخَضَهُمْ بِالْمَكَارِهِ.

Certainly, if Allāh were to allow anyone to indulge in pride He would have allowed it to his selected prophets and vicegerents. But Allāh, the Sublime, disliked vanity for them and liked humbleness for them. Therefore, they laid their cheeks on the ground, smeared their faces with dust, bent themselves down for the believers and remained humble people. Allāh tried them with hunger, afflicted them with difficulty, tested them with fear, and upset them with troubles.

فَلَا تَعْتَبِرُوا الرِّضَى وَالسُّخْطَ بِالْمَالِ وَالْوَلَدِ جَهْلًا بِمَوَاقِعِ لَفْتِنَةٍ، وَالِاخْتِبَارِ فِي مَوَاضِعِ الْغَيْبِ وَالِاِفْتِقَارِ، فَقَدْ قَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ ﴿يُحْسِبُونَ أَنَّمَا نُمِدُّهُم بِهِ مِنْ مَالٍ وَبَنِينَ نَسَارِعَ لَهُمْ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ﴾ بَلْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ﴿، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ يَخْتَبِرُ عِبَادَهُ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِينَ فِي أَنفُسِهِمْ بِأَوْلِيَائِهِ الْمُسْتَضَعْفِينَ فِي أَعْيُنِهِمْ.

Therefore, do not regard wealth and progeny the criterion for Allāh's pleasure and displeasure, as you are not aware of the chances of mischief and trials during richness and power as Allāh, the Glorified, the Sublime, has said: "What! Think they that what We aid them with of wealth and children, We are hastening unto them the good things? Nay! They (only) perceive not." (Qur'ān, 23:55-56) Certainly, Allāh the Glorified, tries His creatures who are vain about themselves through His beloved persons who are humble in their eyes.

[تَوَاضِعِ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ:] وَلَقَدْ دَخَلَ مُوسَى بْنُ عِمْرَانَ وَمَعَهُ أَخُوهُ هَارُونَ (عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ) عَلَيَّ فِرْعَوْنَ، وَعَلَيْهِمَا مِدَارِعُ الصُّوفِ، وَيَأْيِدِيهِمَا الْعِصِي، فَشَرَطَا لَهُ - إِنْ أَسْلِمَ - بَقَاءَ مَلِكِهِ، وَدَوَامَ عِزِّهِ، فَقَالَ: أَلَا تَعْجَبُونَ مِنْ هَذَيْنِ يَشْرِطَانِ لِي دَوَامَ الْعِزِّ، وَبَقَاءَ الْمَلِكِ، وَهُمَا بِمَا تَرُونَ مِنْ حَالِ الْفَقْرِ وَالذَّلِّ، فَهَلَا أَلْقَيْ عَلَيْهِمَا أَسَاوِرَةَ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ؟ إِعْظَامًا لِلذَّهَبِ وَجَمْعَهُ، وَاحْتِقَارًا لِلصُّوفِ وَلِبْسِهِ!

[The humility of the Prophets (peace be on them):] When Mūsā son of 'Imrān went to Pharaoh along with his brother Hārūn (Aaron) wearing (coarse) shirts of wool and holding sticks in their hands, they guaranteed him retention of his country and continuity of his honour if he submitted; but he said: "Do you not wonder at these two men guaranteeing me the continuity of my honour and the retention of my country although you see their poverty and lowliness. Otherwise, why do they not have gold bangles on their wrists?" He said so feeling proud of his gold and collected possessions, and considering wool and its cloth as nothing.

وَلَوْ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ بِأَنْبِيَائِهِ حَيْثُ بَعَثَهُمْ أَنْ يَفْتَحَ لَهُمْ كُنُوزَ الذُّهَبِ، وَمَعَادِنَ الْعَقِيَانِ، وَمِغَارِسَ الْجِنَانِ، وَأَنْ يَحْشُرَ مَعَهُمْ طَيْرَ السَّمَاءِ وَوُجُوشَ الْأَرْضِينَ لَفَعَلَ، وَلَوْ فَعَلَ لَسَقَطَ الْبَلَاءُ، وَبَطَلَ الْجَزَاءُ، وَاضْمَحَلَّتِ الْأَنْبَاءُ، وَلَمَّا وَجِبَ لِلْقَابِلِينَ أَجُورُ الْمِتْلِينَ، وَلَا اسْتَحَقَّ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ثَوَابَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ، وَلَا لَزِمَتْ الْأَسْمَاءُ مَعَانِيهَا، وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ جَعَلَ رِسَالَهُ أُولَى قُوَّةٍ فِي عَزَائِمِهِمْ، وَضَعْفَةً فِي مَا تَرَى الْأَعْيُنَ مِنْ حَالَاتِهِمْ، مَعَ قَنَاعَةِ تَمَلُّ الْقُلُوبِ وَالْعْيُونَ غِنَى، وَخِصَاصَةَ تَمَلُّ الْأَبْصَارِ وَالْأَسْمَاعِ أَدَى.

When Allāh, the Glorified, deputed His prophets, if He had wished to open for them treasures and mines of gold and (surround them with) planted gardens and to collect around them birds of the skies and beasts of the earth, He could have done so. If He had done so then there would have been no trial, nor recompense and no tidings (about the affairs of the next world). Those who accepted (His message) could not be given the recompense falling due after trial and the believers could not deserve the reward for good acts, and all these words [2] would not have retained their meanings. But Allāh, the Glorified, makes His Prophets firm in their determination and gives them weakness of appearance as seen from the eyes,

along with contentment that fills the hearts and eyes resulting from care-freeness, and with want that pains the eyes and ears.

وَلَوْ كَانَتِ الْإِنْبِيَاءُ أَهْلَ قُوَّةٍ لَا تَرَامُ، وَعِزَّةٍ لَا تَضَامُ، وَمُلْكٍ تَمُدُّ نَحْوَهُ أَعْنَاقَ الرِّجَالِ، وَتَشُدُّ إِلَيْهِ عَقَدَ الرِّجَالِ، لَكَانَ ذَلِكَ أَهْوَنَ عَلَى الْخَلْقِ فِي الْأَعْتَابِ، وَأَبْعَدَ لَهُمْ مِنَ الْإِسْتِكْبَارِ، وَلَا مَنَوا عَنْ رَهْبَةٍ قَاهِرَةٍ لَهُمْ، أَوْ رَغْبَةٍ مَائِلَةٍ بِهِمْ، فَكَانَتِ الذِّيَاتُ مَشْتَرِكَةً، وَالْحَسَنَاتُ مَقْتَسِمَةً. وَلَكِنْ اللهُ سَبَّحَانَهُ أَرَادَ أَنْ يَكُونَ الْإِتْبَاعَ لِرَسُولِهِ، وَالتَّصَدِيقَ بِكُتُبِهِ، وَالْخُشُوعَ لَوَجْهِهِ، وَالِاسْتِكَانَةَ لِأَمْرِهِ، وَالِاسْتِسْلَامَ لَطَاعَتِهِ، أُمُورًا لَهُ خَاصَّةٌ، لَا تَشْوِبُهَا مِنْ غَيْرِهَا شَائِبَةٌ، وَكَلِمًا كَانَتِ الْبَلَاوِي وَالِاخْتِبَارُ أَعْظَمَ كَانَتِ الْمَثُوبَةُ وَالْجَزَاءُ أَجْزَلَ.

If the prophets possessed authority that could not be assaulted, or honour that could not be damaged or domain towards which the necks of people would turn and the saddles of mounts could be set, it would have been very easy for people to seek lessons and quite difficult to feel vanity. They would have then accepted belief out of fear felt by them or inclination attracting them, and the intention of them all would have been the same, although their actions would have been different. Therefore, Allāh, the Glorified decided that people should follow His prophets, acknowledge His books, remain humble before His face, obey His command and accept His obedience with sincerity in which there should not be an iota of anything else; and as the trial and tribulation would be stiffer the reward and recompense too should be larger.

[الكعبة المقدسة:] أَلَا تَرَوْنَ أَنَّ اللهُ سَبَّحَانَهُ، اخْتَبَرَ الْأَوَّلِينَ مِنْ لَدُنْ آدَمَ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ، إِلَى الْآخِرِينَ مِنْ هَذَا الْعَالَمِ، بِأَحْجَارٍ لَا تَضُرُّ وَلَا تَنْفَعُ، وَلَا تَبْصُرُ وَلَا تَسْمَعُ، فَعَجَّلَهَا بَيْنَهُ الْحَرَامَ الَّذِي جَعَلَهُ لِلنَّاسِ قِيَامًا. ثُمَّ وَضَعَهُ بِأَوْعَرِ بَقَاعِ الْأَرْضِ حِجْرًا، وَأَقْلَ تَنَائِقِ الدُّنْيَا مَدْرًا، وَأَصْبِقَ بَطُونَ الْأَوْدِيَةِ قَطْرًا، بَيْنَ جِبَالٍ خَشْنَةٍ، وَرِمَالٍ دَمْتَةٍ، وَعَيُونَ وَشَلَّةٍ، وَقَرَى مَنْقُطَةً، لَا يَزْكُو بِهَا خَفٌّ وَلَا حَافِرٌ وَلَا ظَلْفٌ.

[The Holy Ka'bah:] Do you not see that Allāh, the Glorified, has tried all the people among those who came before, beginning with Adam, upto the last ones in this world with stones which yield neither benefit nor harm, which neither see nor hear. He made those stones into His sacred house which He made a standby for the people. He placed it in the most rugged stony part of the earth and on a highland with least soil thereon, among the most narrow valleys between rough mountains, soft sandy plains, springs of scanty water and scattered habitants, where neither camels nor horses nor cows and sheep can prosper.

ثُمَّ أَمَرَ آدَمَ وَوَلَدَهُ أَنْ يَشْنُوا أَعْطَافَهُمْ نَحْوَهُ، فَصَارَ مَثَابَةً لِمَنْتَجِعِ أَسْفَارِهِمْ، وَغَايَةً لِمَلَقِي رِحَالِهِمْ، تَهْوِي إِلَيْهِ ثَمَارُ الْإِفْتِدَاءِ مِنْ مَفَاوِزِ قِفَارِ سَحَابَةٍ، وَمَهَاوِي فِجَاجِ عَمِيقَةٍ، وَجَزَائِرِ بَحَارٍ مَنْقُطَةٍ، حَتَّى يَهْزُوا مَنَاكِبَهُمْ ذُلَالًا يَهْلِكُونَ لِلَّهِ حَوْلَهُ، وَيَرْمِلُونَ عَلَى أَقْدَامِهِمْ شَعْنًا غَيْرًا لَهُ، قَدْ نَبَذُوا السَّرَابِيلَ وَرَاءَ ظُهُورِهِمْ، وَشَوْهُوا بِأَعْفَاءِ الشُّعُورِ مُحَاسِنِ خَلْقِهِمْ، ابْتِلَاءً عَظِيمًا، وَامْتِحَانًا شَدِيدًا، وَاخْتِبَارًا مَبِينًا، وَتَمَحِيصًا بَلِيغًا، جَعَلَهُ اللهُ تَعَالَى سَبَبًا لِرَحْمَتِهِ، وَوَصَلَةَ إِلَى جَنَّتِهِ.

Then He commanded Adam and his sons to turn their attention towards it. In this way it became the centre of their journey in seeking pastures and the rendezvous for meeting of their carrier-beasts, so that human spirits hasten towards it from distant waterless deserts, deep and low lying valleys and scattered islands in the seas. They shake their shoulders in humbleness, recite the slogan of having reached His audience, march with swift feet, and have dishevelled hair and dusted faces. They throw their pieces of cloth on their backs, they have marred the beauty of their faces by leaving the hair uncut as a matter of great test, severe tribulation, open trial, and extreme refining. Allāh has made it a means to His mercy and an approach to His Paradise.

وَلَوْ أَرَادَ سُبْحَانَهُ أَنْ يَضَعَ بَيْتَهُ الْحَرَامَ، وَمِشَاعِرَهُ الْعِظَامَ، بَيْنَ جَنَاتٍ وَأَنْهَارٍ، وَسَهْلٍ وَقَرَارٍ، جَمَّ الْأَشْجَارَ، دَانِي الشُّمَارِ، مُلْتَفِّ الْبَنِي،
مَتَّصِلِ الْقَرَى، بَيْنَ بَرَّةِ سَمْرَاءَ، وَرَوْضَةِ خَضْرَاءَ، وَأَرْيَافِ مَحْدِقَةٍ، وَعِرَاصِ مَغْدِقَةٍ، وَزُرُوعِ نَاصِرَةٍ، وَطَرَقِ عَامِرَةٍ، لَكَانَ قَدْ صَغُرَ قَدْرُ
الْجَزَاءِ عَلَى حَسَبِ ضَعْفِ الْبَلَاءِ.

If Allāh, the Glorified, had placed His sacred House and His great signs among plantations, streams, soft and level plains, plenty of trees, an abundance of fruits, a thick population, close habitats, golden wheat, lush gardens, green land, watered plains, thriving orchards and crowded streets, the amount of recompense would have decreased because of the lightness of the trial.

وَلَوْ كَانَ الْإِسَاسُ الْمَحْمُولِ عَلَيْهَا، وَالْأَحْجَارِ الْمَرْفُوعِ بِهَا، بَيْنَ زَمْرَدَةِ خَضْرَاءَ، وَيَاقُوتَةِ حَمْرَاءَ، وَنُورِ ضِيَاءَ، لَخَفَّفَ ذَلِكَ
مُضَارَعَةَ الشُّدْكِ فِي الصُّبُورِ، وَلَوْضَعَ مَجَاهِدَةَ إِبْلِيسَ عَنِ الْقُلُوبِ، وَلَنَفَى مَعْتَلِجَ الرِّيبِ مِنَ النَّاسِ. وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ يَخْتَبِرُ عِبَادَهُ
بِأَنْوَاعِ الشَّدَائِدِ، وَيَتَعَبَّدُهُمْ بِالْوَأَنِ الْمَجَاهِدِ، وَيَبْتَلِيهِمْ بِضُرُوبِ الْمَكَارِهِ، إِخْرَاجًا لِلتَّكْبَرِ مِنْ قُلُوبِهِمْ، وَإِسْكَانًا لِلتَّلَذُّلِ فِي نَفْسِهِمْ،
وَلِيَجْعَلَ ذَلِكَ أَبْوَابًا فَتْحًا إِلَى فَضْلِهِ، وَأَسْبَابًا ذَلَالًا لِعَفْوِهِ.

If the foundation on which the House is borne and the stones with which it has been raised had been of green emerald and red rubies, and there had been brightness and effulgence, then this would have lessened the action of doubts in the breasts, would have dismissed the effect of Satan's activity from the hearts, and would have stopped the surging of misgivings in people. But Allāh tries His creatures by means of different troubles, wants them to render worship through hardships and involves them in distresses, all in order to extract out vanity from their hearts, to settle down humbleness in their spirits and to make all this an open door for His favours and an easy means for His forgiveness (for their sins).

[عُودَ إِلَى التَّحْذِيرِ:] فَاللَّهُ اللَّهُ فِي عَاجِلِ الْبَغْيِ، وَآجِلِ وَخَامَةِ الظُّلْمِ، وَسَوْءِ عَاقِبَةِ الْكِبْرِ، فَإِنَّهَا مَصِيدَةُ إِبْلِيسَ الْعُظْمَى، وَمَكِيدَتُهُ
الْكَبِيرَى، الَّتِي تَسَاوِرُ قُلُوبَ الرِّجَالِ مَسَاوِرَةَ السَّمُومِ الْقَاتِلَةِ، فَمَا تَكْدِي أَبْدَاءَ، وَلَا تَشْوِي أَحْدَاءَ، لِأَعَالِمَا لِعَلْمِهِ، وَلَا مَقْلًا فِي طَمْرِهِ.
وَعَنْ ذَلِكَ مَا حَرَسَ اللَّهُ عِبَادَهُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ، وَمَجَاهِدَةِ الصِّيَامِ فِي الْإِيَامِ الْمَفْرُوضَاتِ، تَسْكِينًا لِأَطْرَافِهِمْ،

وَتَخْشِعًا لِإِبْصَارِهِمْ، وَتَذَلِيلًا لِنَفْسِهِمْ، وَتَخْفِيزًا لِقُلُوبِهِمْ، وَإِذْهَابًا لِلْخِيَلِ عَنْهُمْ، وَلِمَا فِي ذَلِكَ مِنْ تَغْيِيرِ عِتَاقِ الْوُجُوهِ بِالتُّرَابِ تَوَاضِعًا، وَالتَّصَاقِ كِرَائِمِ الْجَوَارِحِ بِالْأَرْضِ تَصَاغِرًا، وَلِحُوقِ الْبَطُونِ بِالْمَتُونِ مِنَ الصِّيَامِ تَذَلُّلًا، مَعَ مَا فِي الزَّكَاةِ مِنْ صَرْفِ ثَمَرَاتِ الْأَرْضِ وَغَيْرِ ذَلِكَ إِلَى أَهْلِ الْمَسْكِنَةِ وَالْفَقْرِ.

(Fear) Allāh! Allāh! from the immediate consequence of rebellion (to accrue in this world), and the eventual consequence of weighty oppressiveness (to accrue in the next world), and from the evil result of vanity, because it is the great trap of Satan and his big deceit which enters the hearts of the people like a fatal poison. It never goes waste, nor misses anyone — neither the learned because of his knowledge, nor the destitute [3] in his rags. This is the thing against which Allāh has protected His creatures who are believers by means of prayers, and alms-giving, and suffering the hardships of fasting in the days in which it has been made obligatory, in order to give their limbs peacefulness, to cast fear in their eyes, to make their spirits humble, to give their hearts humility and to remove haughtiness from them. All this is achieved through the covering of their delicate cheeks with dust in humility, prostrating their main limbs on the ground in humbleness, and retracting of their bellies so as to reach to their backs due to fasting by way of lowliness (before Allāh), besides giving all sorts of products of the earth to the needy and the destitute by way of alms.

[فضائل الفرائض]: انظروا إلى ما في هذه الأفعال من قمع نواجيم الفخر، وقدر طوابع الكبر! ولقد نظرت فما وجدت أحداً من العالمين يتعصب لشيء من الأشياء إلا عن علة تحتل تمويه الجهلاء، أو حجة تليط بعقول السفهاء غيركم، فإذا كنتم تتعصبون لأمور ما يعرف له سبب ولا علة. أما إبليس فتعصب على آدم لا صله، وطعن عليه في خلقته، فقال: أنا ناري وأنت طيني.

Look what there is in these acts by way of curbing the appearance of pride and suppressing the traces of vanity. I cast my glance and noticed that no one in the world, except you, feels vanity for anything without a cause which may appeal to the ignorant, or a reason which may cling to the minds of the foolish, because you feel vanity for something for which no reason is discernable, nor any ground. As for Satan, he felt proud over Adam because of his origin and taunted at him about his creation, since he said: “I am of fire while you are of clay.”

[عصبية المال]: وأما الأغنياء من مترفة الأمم، فتعصبوا لإثار مواقع النعم. فـ ﴿قَالُوا نَحْنُ أَكْثَرُ أَمْوَالًا وَأَوْلَادًا وَمَا نَحْنُ بِمُعَذَّبِينَ﴾

In the same way the rich among the prosperous communities have been feeling vanity because of their riches, as (Allāh) said: And said they: “We are more (than you) in wealth and in children, and we shall not be chastised.” (Qur’ān, 34:35)

فَإِنْ كَانَ لَا بُدَّ مِنَ الْعَصْبِيَّةِ، فَلْيَكُنْ تَعَصُّبُهُمْ لِمَكَارِمِ الْخِصَالِ، وَمَحَامِدِ الْأَفْعَالِ، وَمَحَاسِنِ الْأُمُورِ، الَّتِي تَفَاضَلَتْ فِيهَا الْمَجْدَاءُ

وَالذُّجْدَاءُ مِنْ بِيُوتَاتِ الْعَرَبِ وَيَعَاسِبِ الْقَبَائِلِ، بِالْأَخْلَاقِ الرَّغِيْبَةِ، وَالْإِحْلَامِ الْعَظِيْمَةِ، وَالْأَخْطَارِ الْجَلِيْلَةِ، وَالْإِثَارِ الْمَحْمُودَةِ. فَتَعَصَّبُوا لِخِلَالِ الْحَمْدِ مِنَ الْحِفْظِ لِلجَوَارِ، وَالْوَفَاءِ بِالذِّمَامِ، وَالطَّاعَةِ لِلرِّبِّ، وَالْمَعْصِيَةِ لِلْكَبْرِ، وَالْإِخْذَ بِالْفَضْلِ، وَالْكَفَّ عَنِ الْبَغْيِ، وَالْإِعْظَامَ لِلْقَتْلِ، وَالْإِنْصَافَ لِلْخَلْقِ، وَالْكَظْمَ لِلغَيْظِ، وَاجْتِنَابَ الْفَسَادِ فِي الْأَرْضِ.

In case you cannot avoid vanity, your vanity should be for good qualities, praiseworthy acts, and admirable matters with which the dignified and noble chiefs of the Arab families distinguished themselves, such as attractive manners, high thinking, respectable position and good performances. You too should show vanity in praiseworthy habits like the protection of the neighbour, the fulfilment of agreements, obedience to the virtuous, opposition to the haughty, extending generosity to others, abstention from rebellion, keeping aloof from blood-shed, doing justice to people, suppressing anger and avoiding trouble on the earth.

وَاحْذَرُوا مَا نَزَلَ بِالْإِمَمِ قَبْلَكُمْ مِنَ الْمَثَلَاتِ بِسُوءِ الْأَفْعَالِ، وَذَمِيمِ الْأَعْمَالِ، فَتَذَكَّرُوا فِي الْخَيْرِ وَالشَّرِّ أَحْوَالِهِمْ، وَاحْذَرُوا أَنْ تَكُونُوا أَمْثَالِهِمْ. فَإِذَا تَفَكَّرْتُمْ فِي تَفَاوُتِ حَالِهِمْ، فَالزَّمُوا كُلَّ أَمْرٍ لَزِمَتْ الْعِزَّةُ بِهِ حَالَهُمْ، وَزَاحَتْ الْإِعْدَاءُ لَهُ عَنْهُمْ، وَمَدَّتِ الْعَافِيَةَ فِيهِ عَلَيْهِمْ، وَانْقَادَتِ النُّعْمَةُ لَهُ مَعَهُمْ، وَوَصَلَتِ الْكِرَامَةُ عَلَيْهِمْ حَيْلُهُمْ: مِنَ الْاجْتِنَابِ لِلْفِرْقَةِ، وَاللِّزْوَمِ لِلْأَلْفَةِ، وَالتَّحَاضُرِ عَلَيْهَا، وَالتَّوَاصِي بِهَا. وَاجْتَنِبُوا كُلَّ أَمْرٍ كَسَرَ قِفْرَتَهُمْ، وَأَوْهَنَ مَدْتَهُمْ: مِنْ تَضَاغِنِ الْقُلُوبِ، وَتَشَاغِنِ الصُّدُورِ، وَتَدَابُرِ النُّفُوسِ، وَتَخَاذُلِ الْأَيْدِي.

You should also fear what calamities befell peoples before you on account of their evil deeds and detestable actions. Remember, during good or bad circumstances, what happened to them, and be cautious that you do not become like them. After you have thought over both the conditions of these people, attach yourself to everything with which their position became honourable, on account of which enemies remained away from them through which safety spread over them, by reason of which riches bowed before them and as a result of which distinction connected itself with their rope. These things were abstention from division, sticking to unity, calling each other to it and advising each other about it. You avoid everything which broke their backbone and weakened their power, such as malice in the heart, hatred in the chest, turning away (from each other's help) and withholding the hand from one another's assistance.

وَتَدَبَّرُوا أَحْوَالَ الْمَاضِينَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ قَبْلَكُمْ، كَيْفَ كَانُوا فِي حَالِ التَّمَحِيصِ وَالْبَلَاءِ؟ أَلَمْ يَكُونُوا أَثْقَلَ الْخَلَائِقِ أَعْيَاءً، وَأَجْهَدَ الْعِبَادِ بَلَاءً، وَأَضْيَقَ أَهْلَ الدُّنْيَا حَالًا؟! اتَّخَذْتَهُمُ الْفِرَاعِنَةَ عَيْدًا فَسَامُوهُمْ سُوءَ الْعَذَابِ، وَجَرَّ عَوْهُمْ الْمِرَارَ، فَلَمْ تَبْرَحِ الْحَالُ بِهِمْ فِي ذَلِّ الْهَلَكَةِ وَقَهْرِ الْغَلْبَةِ، لَا يَجِدُونَ حِيلَةَ فِي امْتِنَاعِ، وَلَا سَبِيلًا إِلَى دِفَاعِ، حَتَّى إِذَا رَأَى اللَّهُ جِدَّ الصَّبْرِ مِنْهُمْ عَلَى الْإِذَى فِي مَجِبَتِهِ، وَالْإِحْتِمَالَ لِلْمَكْرُوهِ مِنْ خَوْفِهِ، جَعَلَ لَهُمْ مِنْ مَضَائِقِ الْبَلَاءِ فَرْجًا، فَبَدَّلَهُمُ الْعِزَّ مَكَانَ الذَّلِّ، وَالْأَمْنَ مَكَانَ الْخَوْفِ، فَصَارُوا مَلُوكًا حَكَامًا، وَأُئِمَّةً أَعْلَامًا، وَبَلَغَتِ الْكِرَامَةُ مِنَ اللَّهِ لَهُمْ مَا لَمْ تَذْهَبِ الْأَمَالُ إِلَيْهِ بِهِمْ.

Think about the condition of people from among the believers who passed before

you. What distresses and trials they were in! Were they not the most over-burdened among all the people and in the most straitened circumstances in the whole world? The Pharaohs took them as slaves. They inflicted on them the worst punishments and bitter sufferings. They continuously remained in this state of ruinous disgrace and severe subjugation. They found no method for escape and no way for protection. Till when Allāh, the Glorified, noticed that they were enduring troubles in His love and bearing distresses out of fear for Him, He provided escape from the distress of trials. So, He changed their disgrace into honour and fear into safety. Consequently, they became ruling kings and conspicuous leaders and Allāh's favours over them reached limits to which their own wishes had not reached.

فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانُوا حَيْثُ كَانَتِ الْأَمْلاءُ مُجْتَمِعَةً، وَالْأَهْوَاءُ مُؤْتَلِفَةً، وَالْقُلُوبُ مُعْتَدِلَةً، وَالْأَيْدِي مُتْرَادِفَةً، وَالسِّيُوفُ مُتَنَابِرَةً، وَالْبَصَائِرُ نَافِذَةً، وَالْعَزَائِمُ وَاحِدَةً، أَلَمْ يَكُونُوا أَرْبَابًا فِي أَقْطَارِ الْأَرْضِينَ، وَمَلُوكًا عَلَى رِقَابِ الْعَالَمِينَ؟ فَانظُرُوا إِلَى مَا صَارُوا إِلَيْهِ فِي آخِرِ أُمُورِهِمْ، حِينَ وَقَعَتِ الْفُرْقَةُ، وَتَشْتَبَتْ الْأَلْفَةُ، وَاخْتَلَفَتِ الْكَلِمَةُ وَالْإِفْتِدَاءُ، وَتَشَعَّبُوا مُخْتَلِفِينَ، وَتَفَرَّقُوا مُتَحَارِبِينَ، قَدْ خَلَعَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ لِبَاسَ كِرَامَتِهِ، وَسَلَبَهُمْ غَضَارَةَ نِعْمَتِهِ، وَبَقِيَ قِصَصُ أَخْبَارِهِمْ فِيكُمْ عِبْرًا لِلْمُعْتَبِرِينَ.

Look, how they were when their groups were united, their views were unanimous, their hearts were moderate, their hands used to help one another, their swords were intended for assisting one another, their eyes were sharp and their aims were the same. Did they not become masters of the corners of the earth and rulers over the neck of all the worlds? Thereafter, also see what happened to them towards the end when division overtook them, unity became fractured, and differences arose between their words and their hearts. They divided into various groups and were scattered fighting among themselves. Then Allāh took away from them the apparel of His honour and deprived them of the prosperity produced by His favours. Only their stories have remained among you for the guidance of those who may learn the lesson from them.

[الاعتبار بالأمم:] فَأَعْتَبِرُوا بِحَالِ وَلَدِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ وَبَنِي إِسْحَاقَ وَبَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ (عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ). فَمَا أَشَدَّ اعْتِدَالَ الْأَحْوَالِ، وَأَقْرَبَ اشْتِبَاهِ الْأَمْثَالِ! تَأَمَّلُوا أُمُورَهُمْ فِي حَالِ تَشْتَبَتِهِمْ، وَتَفَرَّقَتِهِمْ، لِيَأْتِيَكَ كَانَتِ الْأَكْأَسْرَةُ وَالْقَبِيصَةُ أَرْبَابًا لَهُمْ، يَحْتَازُونَهُمْ عَنْ رَيْفِ الْإِفَاقِ، وَبِحَرِّ الْعِرَاقِ، وَخَضْرَاءِ الدُّنْيَا، إِلَى مَنَابِتِ الشَّيْحِ، وَمَهَا فِي الرِّيحِ، وَنَكْدِ الْمَعَاشِ، فَتَرْكُوهُمْ عَالَةً مَسَاكِينَ إِخْوَانَ دَبْرٍ وَوَبْرٍ، أَذِلَّ الْأُمَّمِ دَارًا، وَأَجْدِبُهُمْ قِرَارًا، لَا يَأْوُونَ إِلَى جَنَاحِ دَعْوَةٍ يَعْتَصِمُونَ بِهَا، وَلَا إِلَى ظِلِّ أَلْفَةٍ يَعْتَمِدُونَ عَلَيْهَا، فَالْأَحْوَالُ مُضْطَرِبَةٌ، وَالْأَيْدِي مُخْتَلِفَةٌ، وَالْكَثْرَةُ مُتَفَرِّقَةٌ، فِي بَلَاءِ أَزَلٍ، وَأَطْبَاقِ جَهْلِ! مِنْ بَنَاتِ مَوْءُودَةٍ، وَأَصْنَامِ مَعْبُودَةٍ، وَأَرْحَامِ مَقْطُوعَةٍ، وَغَارَاتِ مَشْنُونَةٍ.

[Learning lessons from the past nations :] You should take a lesson from the fate of the progeny of Ismael, the children of Isaac and the children of Israel. How similar are their affairs and how akin are their examples. In connection with the details of their division and disunity, think of the days when Kistrās of Persia and the Caesars of Rome had become their masters. [4] They turned them out from the pastures of

their lands, the rivers of Iraq and the fertility of the world, towards thorny forests, the passages of (hot) winds and hardships in livelihood. In this way they turned them into just herders of camels. Their houses were the worst in the world and their places of stay were the most drought-stricken. There was not one voice towards which they could turn for protection, nor any shade of affection on whose strength they could repose trust. Their condition was full of distress. Their hands were scattered. Their majority was divided. They were in great anguish and under layers of ignorance. They buried their daughters alive, worshipped idols, disregarded kinship and practised robbery.

[النعمة برسول الله (صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم):] فانظروا إلى مواقع نعم الله سبحانه عليهم حين بعث إليهم رسولا، فعقد بملته طاعتهم، وجمع على دعوته ألفتهم، كيف نشرت النعمة عليهم جناح كرامتها، وأسالت لهم جداول نعيمها، والتفت الملة بهم في عوائد بركاتها، فأصبحوا في نعمتها غرقين، وفي خضرة عيشها فكهين، قد تردت الأمور بهم، في ظل سلطان قاهر، وأوتهم الحال إلى كنف عز غالب، وتعطفت الأمور عليهم في ذرى ملك ثابت، فهم حكام على العالمين، وملوك في أطراف الأرضين، يملكون الأمور على من كان يملكها عليهم، ويمضون الأحكام فيمن كان يمضيها فيهم! لا تغمز لهم قناة، ولا تفرع لهم صفاة!

[The blessing of the Messenger of Allāh, peace be on him :] Now, look at the various favours of Allāh upon them, that He deputed towards them a prophet who got them to pledge their obedience to him and made them unite at his call. (Look) how (Allāh's) bounty spread the wings of its favours over them and flowed for them streams of its blessing, and the whole community became wrapped in blissful prosperity. Consequently, they were submerged under its bounty and enjoyed its lush life. Their affairs were settled under the protection of a powerful ruler, and circumstances offered them overpowering honour, and all things became easy for them under the auspices of a strong country. They became rulers over the world and kings in the (various) parts of the earth. They became masters of those who were formerly their masters, and began issuing commands over those who used to command them. They were so strong that neither did their spears need testing nor did their weapons have any flaw.

[لوم العصاة:] ألا وإنكم قد نفضتم أيديكم من جبل الطاعة، وثلمتم حصن الله المضروب عليكم، بأحكام الجاهلية، فإن الله سبحانه قد امتن علي جماعة هذه الأمة فيما عقد بينهم من جبل هذه الألفة التي يتقلون في ظلها، ويأوون إلى كنفها، بنعمة لا يعرف أحد من المخلوقين لها قيمة، لأنها أرجح من كل ثمن، وأجل من كل خطر.

[Condemning the disobedient ones :] Beware! You have shaken your hands loose from the rope of obedience, and broken the divine fort around you by (resorting to) pre-Islamic rules. Certainly, it is a great blessing of Allāh, the Glorified, on this Ummah, that He has engendered among them unity through the cord of affection in whose shade they walk and take shelter. This is a blessing whose value no one in

the whole world realises, because it is more valuable than any price and higher than any wealth.

وَاعْلَمُوا أَذْكُمْ صَرْتُمْ بَعْدَ الْهَجْرَةِ أَعْرَابًا، وَبَعْدَ الْمَوَالِةِ أَحْزَابًا، مَا تَتَعَلَّقُونَ مِنَ الْإِسْلَامِ إِلَّا بِاسْمِهِ، وَلَا تَعْرِفُونَ مِنَ الْإِيمَانِ إِلَّا رِسْمَهُ، تَقُولُونَ: النَّارُ وَالْإِعَارُ! كَأَذْكُمْ تَرِيدُونَ أَنْ تَكْفُتُوا الْإِسْلَامَ عَلَيَّ وَجْهَهُ، انْتَهَاكَ لِجُرْمِهِ، وَنَقَضَا لِمِيثَاقِهِ الَّذِي وَضَعَهُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ حَرَمًا فِي أَرْضِهِ، وَأَمْنَا بَيْنَ خَلْقِهِ. وَإِذْكُمْ إِنْ لَجَأْتُمْ إِلَيَّ غَيْرِهِ حَارِبِكُمْ أَهْلَ الْكُفْرِ، ثُمَّ لَا جِبْرَائِيلَ وَلَا مِيكَائِيلَ وَلَا مَهَاجِرُونَ وَلَا أَنْصَارَ يَنْصُرُونَكُمْ إِلَّا الْمَقَارَعَةَ بِالسِّيفِ حَتَّى يَحْكُمَ اللَّهُ بَيْنَكُمْ.

You should know that you have again reverted to the position of the Bedouin Arabs after migration (to Islam), and have become different parties after having been once united. You do not possess anything of Islam except its name, and know nothing of belief save its show. You say, "The Fire yes, but no shameful position," as if you would throw down Islam on its face in order to defame its honour and break its pledge (for brotherhood) which Allāh gave you as a sacred trust on His earth and (a source of) peace among the people. Be sure that if you incline towards anything other than Islam, the unbelievers will fight you. Then there will be neither Gabriel nor Michael, neither muhājirūn nor anṣār to help you, but only the clashing of swords, till Allāh settles the matter for you.

وَإِنْ عِنْدَكُمْ الْإِمْتَالُ مِنْ بَأْسِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى وَقَوَارِعِهِ، وَأَيَّامِهِ وَوَقَائِعِهِ، فَلَا تَسْتَبْطِنُوا وَعَيْدَهُ جَهْلًا بِأَخْذِهِ، وَتَهَاوُنًا بِطُشْتِهِ، وَيَأْسًا مِنْ بَأْسِهِ، فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ سَبَّحَانَهُ لَمْ يَلْعَنِ الْقُرْنَ الْمَاضِي بَيْنَ أَيْدِيكُمْ إِلَّا لِتَرْكِهِمُ الْأَمْرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ، فَلَعْنُ السَّفَهَاءِ لِرُكُوبِ الْمَعَاصِي، وَالْحُلَمَاءِ لِتَرْكِ التَّنَاهِي!

Certainly, there are examples before you of Allāh's wrath, punishment, days of tribulations and happenings. Therefore, do not disregard His promises, ignoring His punishment, making light His wrath and not expecting His violence, because Allāh, the Glorified, did not curse the past ages except because they had left off asking others to do good acts and refraining them from bad acts. In fact Allāh cursed the foolish for committing sins and the wise because they gave up refraining others from evils.

أَلَا وَقَدْ قَطَعْتُمْ قَيْدَ الْإِسْلَامِ، وَعَطَّيْتُمْ حُدُودَهُ، وَأَمْتَمْتُمْ أَحْكَامَهُ. أَلَا وَقَدْ أَمَرَنِي اللَّهُ بِقِتَالِ أَهْلِ الْبَغْيِ وَالنَّكَثِ وَالْفَسَادِ فِي الْأَرْضِ، فَأَمَّا الذَّاكِرُونَ فَقَدْ قَاتَلْتُمْ، وَأَمَّا الْقَاسِطُونَ فَقَدْ جَاهَدْتُمْ، وَأَمَّا الْمَارِقَةُ فَقَدْ دُوخْتُمْ، وَأَمَّا الشَّيْطَانُ الرَّدِيءُ فَقَدْ كَفَيْتَهُ بِصَعْقَةٍ سَمِعَتْ لَهَا وَجِبَةٌ قَلْبِهِ وَرَجَّةٌ صَدْرِهِ، وَبَقِيَتْ بَقِيَّةٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْبَغْيِ، وَلِئِنْ أَدْنَى اللَّهُ فِي الْكُرَةِ عَلَيْهِمْ لِأَدِيلِنَ مِنْهُمْ إِلَّا مَا يَتَشَدَّرُ فِي أَطْرَافِ الْأَرْضِ تَشَدَّرًا!

Beware! You have broken the bonds of Islam, transgressed its limits, and destroyed its commands. Beware! Surely Allāh has commanded me to fight those who revolt, or who break the pledge, or create trouble on the earth. As regards

pledge-breakers, I have fought them, as regards deviators from truth, I have waged holy war against them, and as regards those who have gone out of the faith, I have put them in (serious) disgrace. [5] As for Satan of the pit, [6] he too has been dealt with by me through the loud cry with which the scream of his heart and shaking of his chest was also heard. Only a small portion of the rebels has remained. If Allāh allows me one more chance over them I will annihilate them except a few remnants that may remain scattered in the suburb of the cities.

[فضل الوحي:] أَنَا وَضَعْتُ [فِي الصَّغَرِ] بِكَلَاكِلِ الْعَرَبِ، وَكَسَرْتُ نَوَاجِمَ قُرُونِ رَبِيعَةَ وَمُضَرَ. وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ مَوْضِعِي مِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) بِالْقَرَابَةِ الْقَرِيبَةِ، وَالْمَنْزِلَةِ الْخَصِيصَةِ: وَضَعَنِي فِي حَجْرِهِ وَأَنَا وَلِيدٌ يَضُمُّ نَبِيَّ إِلَى صَدْرِهِ، وَيَكْتَفِينِي فِي فِرَاشِهِ، وَيَمْسُدُّ نَبِيَّ جَسَدَهُ، وَيَشْمُّ نَبِيَّ عَرْفَهُ، وَكَانَ يَمْضَغُ الشَّيْءَ ثُمَّ يَلْقَمُنِيهِ، وَمَا وَجَدَ لِي كَذِبَةً فِي قَوْلٍ، وَلَا خَطْلَةً فِي فِعْلٍ.

Even in my boyhood I had lowered the chest of (the famous men) of Arabia, and broken the horn points (i.e., defeated the chiefs) of the tribes of Rabī'ah and Muḍar. Certainly, you know my position of close kinship and special relationship with the Prophet of Allāh - peace and blessing of Allāh be upon him and his descendants. When I was only a child he took charge of me. He used to press me to his chest and lay me beside him in his bed, bring his body close to mine and make me smell his fragrance. He used to chew something and then feed me with it. He found no lie in my speaking, nor weakness in any act.

وَلَقَدْ قَرَنَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى بِهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) مِنْ لَدُنْ [أَنَّ] كَانَ فَطِيمًا أَعْظَمَ مَلِكٍ مِنْ مَلَائِكَتِهِ يَسْلُكُ بِهِ طَرِيقَ الْمَكَارِمِ، وَمَحَاسِنِ أَخْلَاقِ الْعَالَمِ، لَيْلَهُ وَنَهَارَهُ، وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُ أَتَّبِعُهُ اتِّبَاعَ الْفَصِيلِ أَثَرِ أُمِّهِ، يَرْفَعُ لِي فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ عِلْمًا مِنْ أَخْلَاقِهِ، وَيَأْمُرُنِي بِالْإِقْتِدَاءِ بِهِ. وَلَقَدْ كَانَ يَجَاوِرُ فِي كُلِّ سَنَةٍ بَحْرَاءَ، فَأَرَاهُ وَلَا يَرَاهُ غَيْرِي، وَلَمْ يَجْمَعْ بَيْتٍ وَاحِدٍ يَوْمئِذٍ فِي الْإِسْلَامِ غَيْرِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) وَخَدِيجَةَ وَأَنَا ثَالِثُهُمَا، أَرَى نُورَ الْوَحْيِ وَالرَّسَالَةِ، وَأَشْمُ رِيحَ النُّبُوَّةِ.

From the time of his weaning, Allāh had put a mighty angel with him to take him along the path of high character and good behaviour through day and night, while I used to follow him like a young camel following in the footprints of its mother. Every day he would show me in the form of a banner some of his high traits and commanded me to follow it. Every year he used to go in seclusion to the hill of Hīrā', where I saw him but no one else saw him. In those days Islam did not exist in any house except that of the Prophet of Allāh - peace and blessing of Allāh be upon him and his descendants - and Khadījah, while I was the third after these two. I used to see and watch the effulgence of divine revelation and message, and breathed the scent of Prophethood.

وَلَقَدْ سَمِعْتُ رِذَّةَ الشَّيْطَانِ حِينَ نَزَلَ الْوَحْيُ عَلَيْهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) فَقُلْتُ: يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا هَذِهِ الرِّذَّةُ؟ فَقَالَ: «هَذَا الشَّيْطَانُ قَدْ آيَسَ مِنْ عِبَادَتِهِ، إِنَّكَ تَسْمَعُ مَا أَسْمَعُ، وَتَرَى مَا أَرَى، إِلَّا أَنَّكَ لَسْتَ بِنَبِيِّ، وَلَكِنَّكَ وَزِيرٌ، وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَى خَيْرٍ».

When the revelation descended on the Prophet of Allāh - peace and blessing of Allāh be upon him and his descendants - I heard the moan of Satan. I said, “O Prophet of Allāh, what is this moan?” and he replied, “This is Satan who has lost all hope of being worshipped. O ‘Alī, you see all that I see and you hear all that I hear, except that you are not a Prophet, but you are a vicegerent and you are surely on (the path of) virtue.”

وَلَقَدْ كُنْتُ مَعَهُ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) لَمَّا آتَاهُ الْمَلَأَمِنْ قُرَيْشٍ، فَقَالُوا لَهُ: يَا مُحَمَّدُ، إِنَّكَ قَدْ ادَّعَيْتَ عَظِيمًا لَمْ يَدَّعِهِ أَبَاؤُكَ وَلَا أَحَدٌ مِنْ بَيْتِكَ، وَنَحْنُ نَسْأَلُكَ أَمْرًا إِنْ أَجَبْتَنَا إِلَيْهِ وَأَرَيْتَنَاهُ، عَلِمْنَا أَنَّكَ نَبِيٌّ وَرَسُولٌ، وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ عَلِمْنَا أَنَّكَ سَاحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ.

I was with him when a party of the Quraysh came to him and said to him, “O Muḥammad, you have made a big claim which none of your fore-fathers or those of your family have made. We ask you one thing; if you give us an answer to it and show it to us, we will believe that you are a prophet and a messenger, but if you cannot do it, we will know that you are a sorcerer and a liar.”

فَقَالَ لَهُمْ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): «وَمَا تَسْأَلُونَ؟». قَالُوا: تَدْعُو لَنَا هَذِهِ الشَّجَرَةَ حَتَّى تَنْقَلِعَ بِعُرْوِقِهَا وَتَقِفَ بَيْنَ يَدَيْكَ. فَقَالَ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ): «إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيَّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ، فَإِنْ فَعَلَ اللَّهُ ذَلِكَ لَكُمْ، أَنْتُمْ تَدْعُونَنِي وَتَشْهَدُونَ بِالْحَقِّ؟». قَالُوا: نَعَمْ. قَالَ: «فَإِنِّي سَأْرِيكُمْ مَا تَطْلُبُونَ، وَإِنِّي لِأَعْلَمُ أَنَّكُمْ لَا تَفِيثُونَ إِلَيَّ خَيْرٌ، وَإِنْ فَيَكُمُ مِنْ يَطْرِحُ فِي الْقَلْبِ، وَمِنْ يَحْزُبُ الْأَحْزَابَ». ثُمَّ قَالَ: «يَا أَيُّهَا الشَّجَرَةُ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَوَّامِنِينَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ، وَتَعْلَمِينَ أَنَّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، فَانْقَلِعِي بِعُرْوِقِكِ حَتَّى تَقِفِي بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ يَا ذَنِّ اللَّهِ».

The Messenger of Allāh said: “What do you ask for?” They said: “Ask this tree to move for us, even with its roots, and stop before you.” The Prophet said, “Verily, Allāh has power over everything. If Allāh does it for you, will you then believe and stand witness to the truth?” They said “Yes”. Then he said, “I shall show you whatever you want, but I know that you won’t bend towards virtue, and there are among you those who will be thrown into the pit, and those who will form parties (against me).” Then the Holy Prophet said: “O tree, if you do believe in Allāh and the Day of Judgement, and know that I am the Prophet of Allāh, come up with your roots and stand before me with the permission of Allāh.”

فَوَالَّذِي بَعَثَهُ بِالْحَقِّ نَبِيًّا لَانْقَلَعَتْ بِعُرْوِقِهَا، وَجَاءَتْ وَلِهَا دَوِيٌّ شَدِيدٌ، وَقَصَفُ كَقَصْفِ أَجْنَحَةِ الطَّيْرِ، حَتَّى وَقَفَتْ بَيْنَ يَدَيَّ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) مَرْفُوفَةً، وَأَلْقَتْ بِغَصْنِهَا الْأَعْلَى عَلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ)، وَبَعْضُ أَغْصَانِهَا عَلَى مَنْكِبِي، وَكُنْتُ عَنْ يَمِينِهِ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ).

By Him who deputed the Prophet with truth, the tree did remove itself with its root and came with a great humming sound and a flapping like the flapping of the wings of birds, till it stopped before the Messenger of Allāh and cast its higher branches over the Prophet, while some of its branches came down onto my shoulders, and I

was on the right side of the Holy Prophet.

فَلَمَّا نَظَرَ الْقَوْمُ إِلَى ذَلِكَ قَالُوا - عَلُوا وَاسْتَكْبَارًا : فَمَرَّهَا فَلْيَأْتِكَ نِصْفُهَا وَيَبْقَى نِصْفُهَا. فَأَمَرَهَا بِذَلِكَ، فَأَقْبَلَ إِلَيْهِ نِصْفُهَا كَأَعْجَبِ إِقْبَالٍ وَأَشَدِّهِ دَوْبًا، فَكَادَتْ تَلْتَفُ بِرَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله). فَقَالُوا كَفَرُوا وَعَتَوْا : فَمَرَّ هَذَا النِّصْفَ فَلْيَرْجِعْ إِلَى نِصْفِهِ كَمَا كَانَ. فَأَمَرَهُ فَرَجَعَ.

When the people saw this they said by way of pride and vanity. “Now you order half of it to come to you and the other half of it remain (in its place).” The Holy Prophet ordered the tree to do the same. Then half of the tree advanced towards him in an amazing manner and with greater humming. It was about to touch the Prophet of Allāh. Then they said, disbelieving and revolting, “Ask this half to get back to its other half and be as it was.” The Prophet ordered it and it returned.

فَقُلْتُ أَنَا: لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ، إِنِّي أَوَّلُ مُؤْمِنٍ بِكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، وَأَوَّلُ مَنْ آمَنَ أَنَّ الشَّجَرَةَ فَعَلَتْ مَا فَعَلَتْ بِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ تَصْدِيقًا لِنُبُوَّتِكَ، وَإِجْلَالًا لِكَلِمَتِكَ. فَقَالَ الْقَوْمُ كُلَّهُمْ: بَلْ سَاحِرٌ كَذَّابٌ، عَجِيبُ السِّحْرِ خَفِيفٌ فِيهِ، وَهَلْ يَصْدَقُكَ فِي أَمْرِكَ إِلَّا مِثْلَ هَذَا (يَعْنُونِي).

Then I said, “There is no god but Allāh! O Prophet of Allāh, I am the first to believe in you and to acknowledge that the tree did what it did just now with the command of Allāh, the Sublime, in testimony to your Prophethood and to heighten your word”. Upon this all the people shouted, “Rather a sorcerer, a liar; it is wonderful sorcery, he is very adept in it. Only a man like this (pointing to me) can stand testimony to you in your affairs.”

وَإِنِّي لِمِنْ قَوْمٍ لَا تَأْخُذُهُمْ فِي اللَّهِ لَوْمَةٌ لَائِمٌ، سِيَمَاهُمْ سِيَمَاءُ الصِّدِّيقِينَ، وَكَلَامُهُمْ كَلَامُ الْأَبْرَارِ، عَمَّارِ اللَّيْلِ، وَمَنَارِ النَّهَارِ، مَتَمَسِّكُونَ بِحَبْلِ الْقُرْآنِ، يَحْيُونَ سُنْنَ اللَّهِ وَسُنْنَ رَسُولِهِ، لَا يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ وَلَا يَغْلَوْنَ، وَلَا يَفْسِدُونَ، قُلُوبُهُمْ فِي الْجَنَانِ، وَأَجْسَادُهُمْ فِي الْعَمَلِ!

Certainly, I belong to the group of people who care not for the reproach of anybody in matters concerning Allāh. Their countenance is the countenance of the truthful and their speech is the speech of the virtuous. They are wakeful during the nights (in devotion to Allāh), and over beacons (of guidance) in the day. They hold fast to the rope of the Qur’ān. revive the traditions of Allāh and of His Prophet. They do not boast nor indulge in self conceit, nor misappropriate, nor create mischief. Their hearts are in Paradise while their bodies are busy in (good) acts.

Footnotes :

[1] The intention is that “you should not create conditions by which you may be deprived of Allāh’s favours, like the jealous who aims at harming him of whom he is

jealous.”

[2] The intention is to say that if belief is accepted under force of awe and fear and worship is offered under the influence of power and authority then neither will it be belief in the true sense nor worship in real spirit. This is because belief is the name of inner testimony and heart-felt conviction. The conviction produced by force and compulsion can be only verbal but not heart-felt. Similarly, worship is the name of open acknowledgement of one's position of servitude. Worship which is devoid of the feeling of servitude or the sense of devotion and which is performed only in view of authority or fear cannot be real worship. Therefore, such belief and such worship would not present their correct connotation.

[3] The reason for specifying the learned and the poor is that the learned has the light of learning to lead him, which the destitution of the poor may deny to him. In spite of this, both the learned and the poor fall into his deceit.

Then how can the ignorant save himself from his clutches, and how can the rich, who has all the means to get into wrong ways, defend himself against him.

Nay! Verily man is wont to rebel!
As he deemeth himself needless!

[4] If a glance is cast at the rise and fall and events and happenings of the past people this fact will shine like daylight that the rise and fall of communities is not the result of luck or change, but that, to a great extent, it is affected by their acts and deeds. And of whatever type those deeds are, their results and consequences are in accord with them. Consequently, the stories and events of past people openly reflect that the result of oppression and evil deeds has always been ruin and destruction, while the consequence of virtuous action and peaceful living was always good luck and success. Since time and people make no difference, if the same conditions appear again and the same actions are repeated the same results must accrue which had appeared in the earlier set of circumstances, because the accrual of the results of good or bad actions is sure and certain like the properties and effects of everything. If this were not so it would not be possible to kindle hope in the minds of the oppressed and the afflicted by presenting to them past events and their effects, nor could the oppressors and tyrants be warned of the ill-effects of their deeds, on the ground that it was not necessary that the same would accrue now as had accrued earlier. But it is the universality of causality which makes past events the object of a lesson for posterity. Consequently, it was for this purpose that

Amīr al-mu'minīn provoked thinking and consideration and mentioned the various events of Banū Ismā'īl, Banū Is'hāq and Banū Isrā'īl and their affliction at the hands of the kings of Persia and Rome.

The progeny of Ismā'īl, the elder son of Ibrahim (Abraham), is called Banū Ismā'īl while the progeny of his younger son Is'hāq is called Banū Is'hāq which later continued to divide into various off-shoots and acquired different names. Their original abode was at Canaan in Palestine, where Ibrahim had settled after the immigration from the plains of the Euphrates and the Tigris. His son Ismā'īl had settled in the Ḥijāz, where Ibrahim had left him and his mother Hājar (Hagar). Ismā'īl married as-Sayyidah hint Muḍāḍ a woman of the tribe of Jurhum which also inhabited this very area. His progeny sprang from her and spread throughout the world. The other son of Ibrāhīm namely Is'hāq remained in Canaan. His son was Ya'qūb (Jacob/Israel) who married Liyā the daughter of his mother's brother and after her death married his other daughter. Both of them bore him progeny which is known as Banū Isrā'īl. One of his sons was Yūsuf (Joseph), who reached the neighbouring country, Egypt, through an accident, and, after suffering slavery and imprisonment, eventually became the ruler and occupier of the throne.

After this change, he sent for all his relations and kith and kin and in this way Egypt became the abode of Banū Isrā'īl. For some time they lived there in peace and safety, and led a life of respect and esteem, but by and by the locals began to view them with disdain and hatred and made them the target of all sorts of tyrannies, so much so that they used to kill their children and retained their women as slave-maids, as a result of which their determination and courage was trampled and their spirit of freedom was completely subdued. At last, conditions changed and the period of their troubles came to an end, after four hundred years of the shackles of slavery; when Allāh sent Mūsā to deliver them from the oppression of the Pharaoh. Mūsā set off with them to leave Egypt, but in order to destroy the Pharaoh, Allāh turned them towards the Nile where there was all flood in front, and on the rear the huge forces of the Pharaoh. This bewildered them much, but Allāh commanded Mūsā to enter the river without fear. Thus, when he went forward, there appeared in the river not only one but several courses to pass through and Mūsā crossed to the other side of the river along with Banū Isrā'īl. Pharaoh was closely following. When he saw them passing he too advanced with his arm but when they reached the middle of the stream the still water began moving and, engulfing Pharaoh and his army in its waves, finished them. About them the Qur'ān says:

And (remember ye) when We delivered you from Pharaoh's people who afflicted you with grievous torment, slaying your sons and by letting your women alive, and

in that was a great trial from your Lord. (2:49)

However, when, after leaving the boundaries of Egypt, they entered their motherland Palestine, they established their own state and began to live in freedom, and Allāh changed their lowliness and disgrace into the greatness and sublimity of rule and power. In this connection, Allāh says:

And made We inheritors the people who were deemed weak (to inherit) the eastern parts of the earth and the western parts of it, which we had blessed therein (with fertility) and the good word of thy Lord was fulfilled in the children of Israel for what they did endure; and destroyed We, what Pharaoh and his people had wrought, and what shade they did make. (Qur'an, 7:137)

On occupying the throne of rule and regaining prosperity and peacefulness, Banū Isrā'īl forgot all the ignominies and disgraces of the period of slavery, and instead of being thankful to Allāh for the favours granted by Him they took to rebellion and revolt. Consequently, they shamelessly indulged in vices and misconduct and partook in mischiefs and evil deeds to the maximum, made lawful things unlawful and unlawful things lawful by false excuses and disobeyed the prophets who tried to preach and correct them under the command of Allāh, and even killed them. The natural consequence of their vicious activities was that they were caught in punishment for their deeds. Consequently, Nebuchadnezzar, who was ruling in Babylon (Iraq) in 600 B.C., rose to march against Syria and Palestine and killed seventy thousand Banū Isrā'īl with his blood-thirsty swords, devastated their towns, drove away the survivors with him like sheep and goats and threw them in the abyss of ignominy by turning them into slaves.

Although after this ruination there seemed no way for them to regain position and power, yet nature gave them still another chance to recover. When Nebuchadnezzar died and power came in the hands of Belshazzar he started all sorts of oppression on the people. Being disgusted with this, they sent word to the ruler of Persia that they were tired of enduring the oppression of their ruler and that he should rescue them from him, and free them from the oppression of Belshazzar. Cyrus the Great, who was a just and upright ruler, rose up in response to this request and, with the co-operation of the local population, overturned the government, as a consequence of which the yoke of slavery on Banū Isrā'īl's necks was also removed, and they were allowed to return to Palestine.

Thus, after seventy years of subjugation they again set foot in their homeland and took over the reins of government. If they had taken their lesson from the past

events they would not have committed the same evils as a consequence of which they had to suffer slavery; but the mental constitution of this community was such that whenever they achieved prosperity and freedom from care they lost themselves in the intoxication of riches and in the enjoyment of pleasure, mocked the laws of religion, derided the prophets and even killing them did not mean anything serious to them. Thus, when their ruler Herod at the request of his sweetheart, beheaded the Prophet Yaḥyā (John) and presented his head to her, none of them raised any voice against this brutality or was affected by it in any manner. This was the state of their unruliness and fierceness when ‘Īsā made his appearance. He stopped them from evil deeds and exhorted them to adopt good habits, but they opposed him too and gave him troubles of various sorts, so much so that they tried to end his life. However, Allāh foiled all their devices and made ‘Īsā safe against their approach.

When their disobedience reached this stage and their capacity to accept guidance was completely wiped out, fate decided to ruin them and made full arrangements for their annihilation and destruction. The ruler of Roma (Byzantia) Vespasianus sent his son Titus to attack Syria, he laid siege round Jerusalem, demolished the houses and broke down the walls of the Synagogue as a result of which thousand of Banū Isrā’īl left their houses and became scattered abroad, while thousands died of hunger; and those who remained were put to sword. Most of them settled in Ḥijāz, but because of their rejecting Prophet Muhammad (S) their unity was so disturbed that they could never again converge on any one centre of honour and could never regain a life of prestige and dignity in place of disgrace and ignominy.

In the same way the ruler of Persia made serious attacks on Arabia and subjugated the inhabitants of those places. Thus, Shāpūr ibn Hurmuz, at the age of sixteen, took with him four thousand combatants and attacked Arabs who resided within the boundaries of Persia and then advanced towards Bahrayn, Qaṭīf and Hājar and ruined Banū Tamīm, Banū Bakr ibn Wā’il and Banū ‘Abd al-Qays and cut through the shoulders of seventy thousand Arabs, after which his nickname became “Dhu’1-Aktāf” (the shoulderer). He forced the Arabs that they should live in tents built of hair, should grow long hair on their heads, should not wear white clothes and should ride unsaddled horses. Then he settled twelve thousand people of Iṣfahān and other cities of Persia in the area between Iraq and Syria. In this way he drove the inhabitants of those places from fertile lands to waterless forests which had neither any of the conveniences of life nor means of livelihood, and for long these people remained the victims of other’s oppression due to their own disunity

and division. At last, Allāh deputed the Prophet and raised them out of disgrace to the highest pinnacle of progress and sublimity.

[5] Amīr al-mu'minīn, Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī, Jābir ibn 'Abdullāh al-Anṣārī, 'Abdullāh ibn Mas'ūd, 'Ammār ibn Yāsir, Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī and 'Abdullāh ibn 'Abbās narrated that the Holy Prophet commanded 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib to fight those who are pledge-breakers (nākithīn), deviators from truth (qāsiṭīn) and those who have left the faith (māriqīn). (al-Mustadrak, vol. 3, p. 139; al-Isti'āb, vol. 3, p. 1117; Usd al ghābah, vol. 3, pp. 32-33; ad-Durr al-manthūr, vol. 6, p. 18; al-Khaṣā'ish al-kubrā, vol. 2, p. 138; Majma' az-zawā'id, vol. 5, p. 186; vol. 6, p. 235; vol. 7, p. 238; Kanzal-'ummāl, vol. 6, pp. 72, 82, 88, 155, 215, 319, 391, 392; Tārīkh Baghdād, vol. 8, p. 340; vol. 13, pp. 186-187; at-Tārīkh, Ibn 'Asākir, vol. 5, p. 41; at-Tārīkh, Ibn Kāthīr, vol. 7, pp. 304-306; ar-Riyāḍ an-naḍarah, vol. 2, p. 240; Sharḥ al-mawāhib al-ladunniyyah, vol. 3, pp. 316-317; Muwaḍḍaḥ al-awhām, vol. I, p. 386)

Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd says: "It has been proved (by right ascription) from the Holy Prophet that he said to 'Alī (a.s.): You will fight after me those who are pledge-breakers, deviators from truth and those who have gone out of the faith.

"The pledge-breakers were the people of Jamal, because they broke their allegiance with him. The deviators from truth were the people of Syria (ash-Shām) at Ṣiffīn. Those who have gone out of the faith were the Khārijites at an-Nahrawān. Regarding these three groups, Allāh says (about the first one): Verily, those who swear their fealty unto thee do but swear fealty unto Allāh; the hand of Allāh is above their hands; so whosoever violateth his oath, doth violate it only to the hurt of his (own) self;... (Qur'ān, 48:10)

(About the second group) Allāh says:

And as for the deviators, they shall be for the hell, a fuel. (Qur'ān, 72:15)"

Concerning the third group, Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd has referred to the following tradition (ḥadīth) that al-Bukhārī (in aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ, vol. 4, pp. 166—167, 243), Muslim (in aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ, vol. 3, pp. 109—117), at-Tirmidhi (in al-Jāmi' aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ, vol. 4, p. 481), Ibn Mājah (in as-Sunan, vol. 1, pp. 59—62), an-Nasā'ī (in as-Sunan, vol. 3, pp. 65—66), Mālik ibn Anas (in al-Muwaṭṭa', pp. 204—205), ad-Dār'quṭnī (in as-Sunan, vol. 3, pp. 131—132), ad-Dārimī (in as-Sunan, vol. 2, p. 133), Abū Dāwūd (in as-Sunan, vol. 4, pp. 241—246), al-Ḥākim (in al-Mustadrak, vol. 2, pp. 145—154; vol. 4, p. 531), Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (in al-Musnad, vol. 1, pp. 88, 140, 147; vol. 3, pp. 56, 65) and al-Bayḥaqī (in as-Sunan al-kubrā', vol. 8, pp. 170—171) have narrated

through a group of the companions of the Holy Prophet that he said about Dhu'l-Khuwayṣirah (the surname for Dhu'th-Thudayyah Ḥurqūṣ ibn Zuhayr at-Tamīmī, the chief of the Khārijites):

From this very person's posterity there will arise people who will recite the Qur'ān, but it will not go beyond their throat, they will kill their followers of Islam and will spare the idol-worshippers. They will glance through the teaching of Islam as hurriedly as the arrow passes through its prey. If I were to ever find them I would kill them like 'Ād.

Then Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd continues:

This is the sign for his (Holy Prophet's) prophethood and his prophecy of the secret knowledge. (Sharḥ Nahj al-balāghah, vol. 13, p. 183)

[6] By "Satan of the pit" the reference is to Dhu'th-Thudayyah (whose full name already mentioned in footnote no. 5) who was killed in Nahrawān by the stroke of lighting from the sky, and there was no need to kill him by sword. The Holy Prophet had foretold his death. Therefore, after the annihilation of the Khārijites at Nahrawān, Amīr al-mu'minīn came out in search, but could not find his body anywhere. In the meantime, ar-Rayyān ibn Ṣabirah saw forty to fifty bodies in a pit on the bank of the canal. When they were taken out the body of Dhu'th-Thudayyah was also found among them. He was called Dhu'th-Thudayyah because of a mass of flesh on his shoulder. When Amīr al-mu'minīn saw his body he said, "Allāh is Great, neither I spoke lie nor was I told wrong." (Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd, vol. 13, pp. 183—184; aṭ-Ṭabarī, vol. I, pp. 3383—3384; Ibn al-Athīr, vol. 3, p. 348)