

وَمِنْ خُطْبَةٍ لَهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

From one of his sermons

وَتَشْتَمِلُ عَلَى تَهْذِيبِ الْفُقَرَاءِ بِالزُّهْدِ وَتَأْدِيبِ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ بِالشَّفَقَةِ

About abstaining from envy and good behaviour towards kith and kin

[تهذيب الفقراء:] أما بعد، فإن الأمم ينزل من السماء إلى الأرض كقطرات [في بعض النسخ: كقطر] المطر إلى كل نفس بما قسم لها من زيادة أو نقصان،

Now then, verily Divine orders descend from heaven to earth like drops of rain, bringing to every one what is destined for him whether plenty or paucity.

[في بعض النسخ: فإن] رأى أحدكم لأخيه غفيرة في أهله أو مال أو نفوس فلا تكون له فتنة، فإن الأمر بالمسئلم ما لم يغلبش دناءة تظهر فيخشع لها إذا ذكرت، ويغلبرى بها لثام الناس، كان كالفالج الياسر الذي ينتظر أول فولة من قداحه توجب له المغنم، ويرفع بها عنه المغرم.

So if any one of you observes for his brother plenty of progeny or of wealth or of self, it should not be a worry for him. So long as a Muslim does not commit such an act that if it is disclosed he has to bend his eyes (in shame) and by which low people are emboldened, he is like the gambler who expects that the first draw of his arrow would secure him gain and also cover up the previous loss.

وَكذلك [وكذلك] الأمر بالمسئلم البريء من الخيانة ينتظر من الله إحدى الحسنيين: إما داعي الله فما عند الله خير له، وإما رزق الله فإذا هو ذو أهله وماله، ومعه دينه وحسبه.

Similarly, the Muslim who is free from dishonesty expects one of the two good things: either call from Allāh and in that case whatever is with Allāh is the best for him, or the livelihood of Allāh. He has already children and property while his faith and respect are with him.

إن [في بعض النسخ: وإن] المال والبنين حرث الدنيا، والعمل الصالح حرث الآخرة، وقد يجتمعهما الله [في بعض النسخ: الله تعالى] لأقوام، فاحذروا من الله ما حذركم من نفوسه، واخشوه خشية ليست [ليست] بتعذيب واعملوا في غير رياء ولا سمعة، فإنه من يعمل لغير الله يكلاه الله إلى من عمل [في بعض النسخ: الله لمن عمل] له.

Certainly, wealth and children are the plantations of this world while virtuous deed is the plantation of the next world. Sometimes Allāh joins all these in some groups.

Beware of Allāh against what He has cautioned you and keep afraid of Him to the extent that no excuse is needed for it. Act without show or intention of being heard, for if a man acts for some one else then Allāh makes him over to that one.

نَسْأَلُ اللّٰهَ مَنَازِلَ الشُّهَدَاءِ، وَمَعَايِشَةَ السُّعَدَاءِ، وَمُرَافَقَةَ الْإِنَّمِيَاءِ.

We ask Allāh (to grant us) the positions of the martyrs, company of the virtuous and friendship of the prophets.

[تَأْدِيبُ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ: أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّهُ لَا يَسْتَعِينُ الرَّجُلُ وَإِنْ كَانَ ذَا مَالٍ عَنِ عَشِيرَتِهِ [فِي بَعْضِ النِّسْخِ: عَتَلْتَهُ]، وَدَفَاعِهِمْ عَنْهُ بِأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَلْسِنَتِهِمْ، وَهُمْ أَعْظَمُ النَّاسِ حِيلَةً مِنْ وَرَائِهِ وَالْمَهْمُ لَشِعْتِهِ، وَأَعْلَفُفَهُمْ عَلَيْهِمْ عِنْدَ نَازِلَةِ إِذَا [فِي بَعْضِ النِّسْخِ: إِنْ] نَزَلَتْ بِهِ. وَلِسَانَ الصِّدِّيقِ يَجْعَلُهُ لِلدَّامِرِ فِي النَّاسِ خَيْلًا لَهُ مِنَ الْمَالِ يورثه غيره [فِي بَعْضِ النِّسْخِ: يرثه غيره].

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 rear and can ward off from him his troubles, and 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.

وَمِنْهَا [فِي بَعْضِ النِّسْخِ: مِنْهَا]: أَلَا لَا يَعْلَمُ دَلَنَ أَحَدِكُمْ عَنِ الْقَرَابَةِ يَرِي بِهَا الْإِخْصَابَةَ أَنْ يَسُدَّهَا بِالَّذِي لَا يَزِيدُهُ إِنْ أَمْسَكَهُ وَلَا يَنْقُصُهُ إِنْ أَهْلَكَهُ، وَمَنْ يَقْلِبْ يَدَهُ عَنِ عَشِيرَتِهِ، فَإِنَّمَا تَقْلِبْ بَعْضَ مَنْلِهِ عَنْهُمْ يَدَ وَاحِدَةٍ، وَتَقْلِبْ بَعْضَ مَنْلِهِمْ عَنْهُ أَيْدٍ كَثِيرَةٍ، وَمَنْ تَلَنَ حَاشِيَتَهُ يَسْتَدِيمُ مِنْ قَوْلِهِ الْمَوْدَةُ.

In the same sermon: Behold! If any one of you finds your near ones in want or starvation, he should not desist from helping them with that which will not increase if this help is not extended, nor 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 remain held up from helping him. One who is sweet tempered can retain the love of his people for good.

أَقُولُ [فِي بَعْضِ النِّسْخِ: قَالَ السَّيِّدُ: أَقُولُ، أَوْ: قَالَ السَّيِّدُ الشَّرِيفُ: أَقُولُ]: «الْإِغْفِيرَةُ» هَاهُنَا الزِّيَادَةُ وَالْكَثْرَةُ؛ مِنْ قَوْلِهِمْ لِلْجَمْعِ الْكَثِيرِ: الْجَمُّ الْإِغْفِيرُ، وَالْجَمَاءُ الْإِغْفِيرُ. وَيُرْوَى: «عَفْلُوةٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ أَوْ مَالٍ»، وَالْعَفْلُوةُ: الْإِخْتِيَارُ مِنَ الشَّيْءِ؛ يُقَالُ: أَكَلْتُ عَفْلُوةَ الطَّعَامِ، أَيُّ: خِيَارِهِ. وَمَا أَحْسَنَ الْمَعْنَى الَّذِي أَرَادَهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَقُولُ لَهُ: «وَمَنْ يَقْلِبْ يَدَهُ عَنِ عَشِيرَتِهِ...» إِلَى تَمَامِ الْكَلَامِ، فَإِنَّ الْمَمْسُوكَ خَيْلَهُ عَنِ عَشِيرَتِهِ إِنَّمَا يَمْسُوكُ نَفْسَهُ يَدَ وَاحِدَةٍ؛ فَإِذَا أَحْتِاجَ إِلَى نَصْرَتِهِمْ، وَاضْطَرَّ إِلَى مُرَافَقَتِهِمْ، قَعَدُوا عَنْ نَصْرِهِ، وَتَثَاقَلُوا عَنْ صَوْلَتِهِ؛ فَمَنْعَ تَرَافُدِ الْإِيْدِي الْكَثِيرَةِ، وَتَنَاضُضِ الْأَفْئِدَامِ الْجَمَّةِ.

as-Sayyid ar-Raḍī says: In this sermon “al-ghafirah” means plenty or abundance,

and this is derived from the Arab saying, “al-jamm al-ghafīr” or “al-jammā’ al-ghafīr” meaning thick crowd. In some versions for “al-ghafīrah”, “afwatan” appears. “afwah” means the good and selected part of anything. It is said “akaltu ‘afwat al-ṭa’ām”, to mean “I ate select meal.” About “wa man yaqbiḍ yadahu ‘an ‘ashīratihi” appearing towards the end he points out how beautiful the meaning of this sentence is, Amīr al-Mu’minīn implies that he who does not help his own kinsmen withholds only his hand but when he is in need of their assistance and would be looking for their sympathy and support then he would remain deprived of the sympathies and succour of so many of their extending hands and marching feet.