

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام) وقد تواترت عليه الأخبار باستيلاء أصحاب معاوية على البلاد، وقدم عليه عاملاً على اليمن - وهما عبيد الله بن العباس وسعيد بن نمران - لما غلب عليها بسر بن أبي أرتاة، فقام (عليه السلام) إلى المنبر ضجراً بشاغل أصحابه عن الجهاد، ومخالفتهم له في الرأي، وقال:

When Amīr al-mu'minīn received successive news that Mu'āwiyah's men were occupying cities, [1] and his own officers in Yemen namely 'Ubaydullāh ibn 'Abbās and Said ibn Nimrān came to him retreating after being overpowered by Busr ibn Abi Arṭāt, he was much disturbed by the slackness of his own men in jihād and their difference with his opinion. Proceeding on to the pulpit he said :

مَا هِيَ إِلَّا الْكُوفَةُ، أَقْبَضُهَا وَأَبْسُطُهَا، إِنْ لَمْ تَكُونِي إِلَّا أَنْتِ، تَهْبُ أَعَا صِيرُكَ، فَقَبَّحَكَ اللَّهُ!

Nothing (is left to me) but Kūfah which I can hold and extend (which is in my hand to play with). (O Kūfah) if this is your condition that whirlwinds continue blowing through you then Allah may destroy you.

وتمثل بقول الشاعر: لَعَمْرُ أَبِيكَ الْخَيْرِ يَا عَمْرُو! إِنِّي عَلَى وَضْرٍ - مِنْ ذَا الْأَنْاءِ - قَلِيلٌ

Then he illustrated with the verse of a poet : 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 after it has been emptied).

ثم قال (عليه السلام): أُبَيِّتُ بِسِرِّ قَدِ اطَّلَعِ الْيَمَنَ، وَإِنِّي وَاللَّهِ لَأُظَنُّ هَوْلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ سَيِّدَالِوَنٍ مِنْكُمْ بِاجْتِمَاعِهِمْ عَلَيَّ بِاطْلِهِمْ، وَتَفَرُّقِهِمْ عَنِ حَقِّكُمْ، وَبِمَعْصِيَتِكُمْ إِمَامِكُمْ فِي الْحَقِّ، وَطَاعَتِهِمْ إِمَامِهِمْ فِي الْبَاطِلِ، وَيَأْدَائِهِمْ الْإِمَانَةَ إِلَى صَاحِبِهِمْ وَخِيَانَتِكُمْ، وَبِصِلَاحِهِمْ فِي بِلَادِهِمْ وَفَسَادِكُمْ. فَلَوْ ائْتَمَنْتُمْ أَحَدَكُمْ عَلَى قَعْبٍ لَخَشِيتُ أَنْ يَذْهَبَ بِعِلَاقَتِهِ.

Then he continued : I have been informed that Busr has overpowered Yemen. By Allāh, I have begun thinking about these people that they would shortly snatch away the whole country through their unity on their wrong and your disunity (from your own right), and separation, your disobedience of your Imam in matters of right and their obedience to their leader in matters of wrong, their fulfilment of the trust in favour of their master and your betrayal, their good work in their cities and your mischief. Even if I give you charge of a wooden bowl I fear you would run away with its handle.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي قَدْ مَلَلْتَهُمْ وَمَلُونِي، وَسَمَّيْتَهُمْ وَسَمَّوْنِي، فَأَبْدَلْنِي بِهِمْ خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ، وَأَبْدِلْهُمْ بِي شَرًّا مِنِّي، اللَّهُمَّ مِثْ قُلُوبِهِمْ كَمَا يَمَاطُ الْمَلْحُ فِي الْمَاءِ.

O my Allāh they are disgusted of me and I am disgusted of them. They are weary of

me and I am weary of them. Change them for me with better ones and change me for them with worse one. O my Allāh melt their hearts as salt melts in water.

أَمَّا وَاللَّهِ لَوْ دِدْتُ أَنْ لِي بِكُمْ أَلْفَ فَرَسٍ مِنْ بَنِي فِرَاسٍ بِنِ غَنَمٍ : هُنَالِكَ، لَوْ دَعَوْتُ، أَتَاكَ مِنْهُمْ فَوَارِسٌ مِثْلُ أَرْمِيَةِ الْحَمِيمِ

By Allāh I wish I had only a thousand horsemen of Banu Firās ibn Ghanm (as the poet says) : If you call them the horsemen would come to you like the summer cloud.

ثم نزل (عليه السلام) من المنبر.

(Thereafter Amīr al-mu'minīn alighted from the pulpit)

قال السيد الشريف: قلت أنا: والارمية جمع رمي وهو: السحاب، والحميم في هذا الموضع: وقت الصيف، وإنما خص الشاعر سحاب الصيف بالذكر لأنه أشد جفولا، وأسرع خفولا، لأنه لا ماء فيه، وإنما يكون السحاب ثقبيل السير لامتلائه بالماء، وذلك لا يكون في الاكثر إلا زمان الشتاء، وإنما أراد الشاعر وصفهم بالسرعة إذا دعوا، والاغاثة إذا استغيثوا، والدليل على ذلك قوله: «هنالك، لو دعوت، أتاك منهم...».

as-Sayyid ar-Raḍī says: In this verse the word “armiyah” is plural of “ramiyy” which means cloud and “hamīm” here means summer. The poet has particularised the cloud of summer because it moves swiftly. This is because it is devoid of water while a cloud moves slowly when it is laden with rain. Such clouds generally appear (in Arabia) in winter. By this verse the poet intends to convey that when they are called and referred to for help they approach with rapidity and this is borne by the first line “if you call them they will reach you.”

Footnote :

[1] When after arbitration Mu'āwiyah's position was stabilised he began thinking of taking possession of Amīr al-mu'minīn's cities and extend his domain. He sent his armies to different areas in order that they might secure allegiance for Mu'āwiyah by force. In this connection he sent Busr ibn Abi Arṭāt to Hijāz and he shed blood of thousands of innocent persons from Hijāz up to Yemen, burnt alive tribes after tribes in fire and killed even children, so much so that he butchered two young boys of 'Ubaydullāh ibn 'Abbās the Governor of Yemen before their mother Juwayriyah bint Khalid ibn Qaraz al-Kināniyyah.

When Amīr al-mu'minīn came to know of his slaughtering and blood shed he thought of sending a contingent to crush him but due to continuous fighting people

had become weary and showed heartlessness instead of zeal. When Amīr al-mu'minīn observed their shirking from war he delivered this sermon wherein he roused them to enthusiasm and self respect, and prompted them to jihād by describing before them the enemy's wrongfulness and their own short-comings. At last Jariyah ibn Qudāmah as-Sa'di responded to his call and taking an army of two thousand set off in pursuit of Busr and chased him out of Amīr al-mu'minīn's domain.