

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام) وقد قالها يستنهض بها الناس حين ورد خبر غزوات الأتبار بجيش معاوية فلم ينهضوا، وفيها يذكر فضل الجهاد، ويستنهض الناس، ويذكر علمه بالحرب، ويلقي عليهم التبعة لعدم طاعته

Exhorting people for jihād

[فَضِّلِ الْجِهَادَ] إِمَّا بَعْدَ، فَإِنَّ الْجِهَادَ بَابٌ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الْجَنَّةِ، فَتَحَهُ اللَّهُ لِخَاصَّةِ أَوْلِيَائِهِ، وَهُوَ لِبَاسُ التَّقْوَى، وَدَرْعُ اللَّهِ الْحَصِينَةُ، وَجَنَّتَهُ الْوَثِيقَةُ، فَمَنْ تَرَكَهُ رَغْبَةً عَنْهُ أَلْبَسَهُ اللَّهُ ثُوبَ الْإِذْلِ، وَشَمَلَهُ الْبَلَاءُ، وَدَيْثُ الْبَلَاءِ بِالصَّغَارِ وَالْقَمَاءِ وَضَرْبُ عَلَى قَلْبِهِ بِالْأَسْهَابِ وَأَدِيلُ الْحَقِّ مِنْهُ بِتَضْيِيعِ الْجِهَادِ، وَسِيمِ الْخُسْفِ، وَمَنْعِ النِّصْفِ

Now then, surely jihād is one of the doors of Paradise, which Allāh has opened for His chief friends. It is the dress of piety and the protective armour of Allāh and His trustworthy shield. Whoever abandons it Allāh covers him with the dress of disgrace and the clothes of distress. He is kicked with contempt and scorn, and his heart is veiled 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.

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 ذَلُّوا، فَتَوَاكَلْتُمْ وَتَخَاذَلْتُمْ حَتَّى شَنَنْتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْغَارَاتِ وَمَلَكَتْ عَلَيْكُمْ الْاِطْوَانَ. وَهَذَا أَخُو غَامِدٍ قَدْ وَرَدَتْ خَيْلُهُ الْاِتْبَارَ وَقَدْ قَتَلَ حَسَانَ بْنَ حَسَانَ الْبَكْرِي، وَأَزَالَ خَيْلَكُمْ عَنْ مَسَاجِدِهَا

Beware! I called you (insistently) to fight these people night and day, secretly and openly and exhorted you to attack them before they attacked you, because by Allāh, no people have been attacked in the hearts of their houses but they suffered disgrace; but you put it off to others and forsook it till destruction befell you and your cities were occupied. The horsemen of Banu Ghamid [1] have reached al-Anbār and killed Ḥassān ibn Ḥassān al-Bakri. They have removed your horsemen from the garrison.

وَلَقَدْ بَلَّغْنِي أَنَّ الرَّجُلَ مِنْهُمْ كَانَ يَدْخُلُ عَلَى الْمَرْأَةِ الْمُسْلِمَةِ، وَالْآخِرِي الْمِعَاهِدَةَ فَيَنْتَزِعُ حُجْلَهَا وَقَلْبَهَا وَقَلَانِدَهَا، وَرِعَائَهَا مَا تَمْتَنِعُ مِنْهُ إِلَّا بِالْاِسْتِرْجَاعِ وَالْاِسْتِرْحَامِ ثُمَّ انْصَرَفُوا وَاقْرَبِينَ مَا نَالَ رَجُلًا مِنْهُمْ كَلِمًا وَلَا أَرِيقَ لَهُمْ دَمٌ، فَلَوْ أَنَّ امْرَأً مُسْلِمًا مَاتَ مِنْ بَعْدِ هَذَا أَسْفَا مَا كَانَ بِهِ مَلُومًا، بَلْ كَانَ بِهِ عِنْدِي جَدِيرًا.

I have come to know that every one of them entered upon Muslim women and other women under protection of Islam and took away their ornaments from legs, arms, necks and ears and no woman could resist it except by pronouncing the verse, “We are for Allāh and to Him we shall return.” (Qur’ān, 2:156) Then they got back laden with wealth without any wound or loss of life. If any Muslim dies of grief after all this he is not to be blamed but rather there is justification for him before me.

فيا عجباً! عجباً والله - يَمِيتُ الْقَلْبَ وَيَجْلِبُ الْهَمَّ مِنْ اجْتِمَاعِ هَؤُلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ عَلَيَّ بِاطْلِهِمْ. وَتَفَرَّقَكُمْ عَنِّي حَقِّكُمْ! فَكَبِحَا لَكُمْ وَتَرَحَّأَ حِينِ صِرْتُمْ غَرَضًا يَرْمِي بِغَارٍ عَلَيْكُمْ وَلَا تَغَيِّرُونَ، وَتَغْزُونَ وَلَا تَغْرُونَ، وَيَعْصِي اللَّهُ وَتَرْضُونَ! فَإِذَا أَمَرْتُمْ بِالسَّيْرِ إِلَيْهِمْ فِي أَيَّامِ الْحَرِّ قَلْتُمْ: هَذِهِ حِمَارَةُ الْقَيْظِ أَمَهَلْنَا يَسْبِخُ عِنَّا الْحَرُّ وَإِذَا أَمَرْتُمْ بِالسَّيْرِ إِلَيْهِمْ فِي الشِّتَاءِ قَلْتُمْ: هَذِهِ صِبَارَةُ الْقَرِّ، أَمَهَلْنَا يَنْسَلِخُ عِنَّا الْبَرْدُ، كُلُّ هَذَا فِرَارًا مِنَ الْحَرِّ وَالْقَرِّ؛ فَإِذَا كُنْتُمْ مِنَ الْحَرِّ وَالْقَرِّ تَفِرُّونَ فَاتَمَّ وَاللَّهِ مِنَ السَّيْفِ أَفْر!

How strange! how strange! By Allāh my heart sinks to see the unity of these people on their wrong and your dispersion from your right. 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 agreeable to it. When I ask you to move against them in summer you say it is hot weather. Spare us till heat subsides from us. When I order you to march in winter you say it is severely cold; give us time till cold clears from us. These are just excuses for evading heat or cold because if you run away from heat and cold; you would be, by Allāh, running away (in a greater degree) from sword (war).

يَا أَشْبَاهَ الرِّجَالِ وَلَا رِجَالٍ! حُلُومُ الْأَطْفَالِ، وَعُقُولُ رِبَاتِ الْحِجَالِ لَوَدِدْتُ أَدْبِي لَمْ أَرْكَمْ وَلَمْ أَعْرِفْكُمْ مَعْرِفَةً - وَاللَّهِ - جَرَّتْ نَدْمًا، وَأَعْقَبْتُمْ قَاتِلَكُمْ اللَّهُ! لَقَدْ مَلَأْتُمْ قَلْبِي قَيْحًا وَشَحَنْتُمْ صَدْرِي غَيْظًا، وَجَرَّ عَتَمُونِي نَغْبَ التَّهْمَامِ أَنْفَاسًا وَأَفْسَدْتُمْ عَلَيَّ رَأْيِي بِالْعَصِيانِ وَالْخِذْلَانِ، حَتَّى قَالَتْ قُرَيْشٌ: إِنَّ ابْنَ أَبِي طَالِبٍ رَجُلٌ شَجَاعٌ، وَلَكِنْ لَا عِلْمَ لَهُ بِالْحَرْبِ. اللَّهُ أَبُوهُمْ! وَهَلْ أَحَدٌ مِنْهُمْ أَشَدُّ لَهَا مِرَاسًا وَأَقْدَمَ فِيهَا مَقَامًا مِنِّي؟! لَقَدْ نَهَضْتُ فِيهَا وَمَا بَلَغْتُ الْعِشْرِينَ، وَهِيَ أَنَا إِذَا قَدْ ذُرْفْتُ عَلَى السِّتِّينَ! وَلَكِنْ لَا رَأْيَ لِمَنْ لَا يَطَاع!

O you semblances of men, not men, your intelligence is that of children and your wit is that of the occupants of the curtained canopies (women kept in seclusion from the outside world). I wish I had not seen you nor known you. By Allāh, this acquaintance has brought about shame and resulted in repentance. May Allāh fight you! you have filled my heart with puss and loaded my bosom with rage. You made me drink mouthful of grief one after the other. You shattered my counsel by disobeying and leaving me so much so that Quraysh started saying that the son of Abī Ṭālib is brave but does not know (tactics of) war. Allāh bless them! Is any one of them more fierce in war and more older in it than I am? I rose for it although yet within twenties, and here I am, have crossed over sixty, but one who is not obeyed can have no opinion.

Footnote :

[1] After the battle of Siffin, Mu'āwiyah had spread killing and bloodshed all round, and started encroachments on cities within Amīr al-mu'minīn's domain. In this connection he duped Sufyan ibn 'Awf al-Ghamidi with a force of six thousand to attack Hit, al-Anbār and al-Mada'in. First he reached al-Mada'in but finding it

deserted proceeded to al-Anbār. Here a contingent of five hundred soldiers was posted as guard from Amīr al-mu'minīn's side, but it could not resist the fierce army of Mu'āwiyah. Only a hundred men stuck to their position and they did face them stoutly as far as they could but collecting together the enemy's force made such severe attack that they too could no more resist and the chief of the contingent Ḥassān ibn Ḥassān al-Bakri was killed along with thirty others. When the battlefield was clear the enemy ransacked al-Anbār with full freedom and left the city completely destroyed.

When Amīr al-mu'minīn got the news of this attack he ascended the pulpit, and exhorted the people for crushing the enemy and called them to jihād, but from no quarter was there any voice or response. He alighted from the pulpit utterly disgusted and worried and in the same condition set off for the enemy on foot. When people observed this their sense of self respect and shame was also awakened and they too followed him. Amīr al-mu'minīn stopped at an-Nukhaylah. People then surrounded and insisted upon him to get back as they were enough with the enemy, when their insistence increased beyond reckoning, Amīr al-mu'minīn consented to return and Said ibn Qays al-Hamdāni proceeded forward with a force of eight thousand. But Sufyan ibn 'Awf al-Ghāmīdi had gone, so Said came back without any encounter. When Said reached Kūfah then - according to the version of Ibn Abi'l-Ḥadīd - Amīr al-mu'minīn was so deeply grieved and indisposed during those days to an extent of not wishing to enter the mosque, but instead sat in the corridor of his residence (that connects the entrance of the mosque) and wrote this sermon and gave it to his slave Sa'd to read it over to the people. But al-Mubarrad (al-Kāmil, vol. I, pp. 104-107) has related from 'Ubaydullah ibn Hafṣ at-Taymi, Ibn 'Ā'ishah, that Amīr al-mu'minīn delivered this sermon on a high pace in an-Nukhaylah. Ibn Maytham has held this view preferable.