

وَمِنْ خُطْبَةٍ لَهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

From one of his sermons

عِنْدَ خُرُوجِهِ لِقِتَالِ أَهْلِ الْبَصْرَةِ

At the time of setting out for the Battle of Jamal

وَفِيهَا حِكْمَةٌ مَبْلُغَتِ الرُّسُلِ، ثُمَّ يَذُكُرُ فَضْلَهُ وَيَذُمُّ الْخَارِجِينَ

قَالَ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَبَّاسٍ [فِي بَعْضِ النسخ: ابْنُ عَبَّاسٍ] [فِي بَعْضِ النسخ: ... رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، أَوْ: ... رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ]: دَخَلْتُ عَلَى أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ [فِي بَعْضِ النسخ: صلوات الله عليه] بِذِي قَارٍ وَهُوَ يَخْلُصِفُ نَعْلَهُ، فَقَالَ لِي: مَا قِيَمَةُ هَذَا النَعْلِ؟ فَقُلْتُ: لَا قِيَمَةَ لَهَا!

'Abdullāh ibn al-'Abbās says that when Amīr al-Mu'minīn set out for war with the people of Baṣrah, he came to his audience at Dhī Qār and saw that he was stitching his shoe. Then Amīr al-Mu'minīn said to me, "What is the price of this shoe?" I said, "It has no value now."

فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ [فِي بَعْضِ النسخ: قَالَ]: وَاللَّهِ لَهِيَ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ إِمْرَتِكُمْ، إِلَّا أَنْ أُقِيمَ حَقًّا، أَوْ أَدْفَعَ بَاطِلًا.

He then said, "By Allāh, it should have been dearer to me than ruling over you were it not for the fact that I establish right and ward off wrong."

ثُمَّ خَرَجَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَخَطَبَ النَّاسَ فَقَالَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:

Then he came out and spoke:

[حِكْمَةٌ بَعَثَهُ النَّبِيُّ: إِنَّ اللَّهَ [فِي بَعْضِ النسخ: اللَّهُ سَيِّدُ حَانِهِ] بَعَثَ مُحَمَّدًا صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ، وَلِيَسَّ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْعَرَبِ يَقْرَأُ كِتَابًا، وَلَا يَدْعِي نُبُوَّةَ، فَسَاقَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى بَوَّأَهُمْ مَحَلَّتَهُمْ، وَبَلَّغَهُمْ مِنْ جَانَتِهِمْ، فَاسْتَقَامَتْ قَنَاتُهُمْ، وَاطْمَأَنَّتْ صِفَاتُهُمْ.

Verily, Allāh sent Muḥammad (ṣ) when none among the Arabs read a book or claimed prophethood. He guided the people till he took them to their (correct) position and their salvation. So their spears (i.e. officers) became straight and their conditions settled down.

[فَضِّلْ عَلِيَّ:] أَمَا وَاللَّهِ! إِنْ كُنْتُ لَفِي سَاقَتِهَا حَتَّى تَوَلَّيْتُ بِحِذَائِهَا، مَا ضَعُفْتُ [فِي بَعْضِ النسخ: عَجَزْتُ]. وَلَا جُنُوتُ، وَإِنْ مَسِيرِي هَذَا لِمِثْلِهَا، فَلَأَنْتَقِبَنَّ اللَّبَاطِلَ حَتَّى يَخْلُجَ الرَّحْمَاقُ مِنَ جَنَابِهِ.

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.

[توبيخ الخارجين عليه:] مَا لِي وَلِقْرِيٍّ شِ! وَاللَّهِ! لَقَدْ قَاتَلْتُهُمْ كَافِرِينَ، وَلَا قَاتَلْتَهُمْ مَفَلِّتُونَينَ، وَإِنِّي لَصَاحِبُهُمْ بِاللَّامِلسِ، كَمَا أَنَا صَاحِبُهُمُ الْيَوْمِ!

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

[وزاد في بعض النسخ:] وَاللَّهِ مَا تَنَلِّقُمُ مِنَّا قُرَيْشٍ إِلَّا أَنَّ اللَّهَ اخْتَارَنَا عَلَيْهِمْ، فَأَدَّ خَلْقَنَاهُمْ فِي حَيْزِنَا، فَكَانُوا كَمَا قَالَ الْأَوَّلُ:

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

أَدَمَّتْ لِعَمَلِي شُرْبَكَ الْإِمْحَضَ صَاحِبًا \*\*\* وَأَكَلْتُكَ بِالزُّبْدِ الْإِمْقَشْرَةَ الْبُجْرًا  
وَنَحَلْنَا وَهَبْنَاكَ الْإِعْلَاءَ وَلَمْ تَكُنْ \*\*\* عَلِيًّا وَحَطَلْنَا حَوْلَكَ الْإِجْرَادَ وَالسُّمْلَرَا

By my life, you continued drinking fresh milk every morning, And (continued) eating 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 tawnycoloured spears (strong spears). [1]

Notes:

[1] In fact, the aim of the poet 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 have given him the best means of leading their lives. But as the result of this improved condition, the addressee has completely lost himself and forgotten his past condition, and thinks that he had had this kind of life previously. Now, Amīr al-Mu'minīn wants to convey the same idea here to the Quraysh as Fāṭimah (s.a.), the holy daughter of the Holy Prophet, said in her speech on Fadak: (O People) ... You were on the brink of the pit of Hell Fire (Qur'ān, 3:103). You were as worthless as the mouthful of water. You were minority like the handful greedy and a spark of the hasty. You were as down-trodden as the dust under feet. You

drank dirty water. You ate untanned skin. You were abased and condemned. But Allāh has rescued you through my father, Muḥammad (ﷺ) ...