

## Sermon 9: They thundered ...

*Cowardice of the people of Jamal*

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

في صفته وصفة خصومه ويقال إنها في أصحاب الجمل

They<sup>1</sup> thundered like clouds and shone like lightning but despite both these things they exhibited cowardice, while we do not thunder until we pounce upon the foe nor do we show flow (of words) until we have not virtually rained.

وقَدْ أَرَعَدُوا وَأَبْرَقُوا، وَمَعَ هَذَيْنِ الْأَمْرَيْنِ الْفَشْلُ، وَلَسْنَا نُرْعِدُ حَتَّى نُوقِعَ، وَلَا نُسِيلُ حَتَّى نُمَطِّرَ .

### Alternative Sources for Sermon 9

(1) Al-Mufid, *al-Jamal*, 177, from (2)

(2) al-Waqidi, *al-Jamal*.

(3) Ibn A`tham, *Futuh*, as quoted by (4)

(4) al-Khwarazmi in *al-Manaqib*.

---

1. About the people of Jamal (i.e. the enemy in the battle of Jamal) Amir al-mu'minin says that they rose thundering, shouting and stampeding but when encounter took place they were seen flying like straw. At one time they made loud claims that they would do this and would do that and now they showed such cowardice as to flee from the battle-field. About himself Amir al-mu'minin says, that "We do not threaten the enemy before battle, nor utter boasts, nor terrorise the enemy by raising unnecessary cries because it is not the way of the brave to use the tongue instead of the hand." That is why on this occasion he said to his comrades: "Beware of excessive talk as it is cowardice."

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.al-islam.org/nahjul-balagha-part-1-sermons/sermon-9-they-thundered>