

Sermon 33: Verily, God sent Muhammad (S) ...

At the time of setting out for the Battle of Jamal

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

عند خروجه لقتال أهل البصرة

[وفيها حكمة مبعث الرسل، ثم يذكر فضله ويذم الخارجين]

`Abdullah ibn `Abbas says that when Amir al-mu'minin set out for war with the people of Basrah he came to his audience at Dhi Qar and saw that he was stitching his shoe. Then Amir al-mu'minin said to me, "What is the price of this shoe?" I said: "It has no value now." He then said, "By Allah, it should have been dearer to me than ruling over you but for the fact that I may establish right and ward off wrong."

Then he came out and spoke:

قال عبدالله بن عباس (رحمه الله): دخلت على أمير المؤمنين صلوات الله عليه
بذي قار وهو يخصف نعله، فقال لي: ما قيمة هذا النعل؟ فقلت: لا قيمة لها!
قال: والله لهي أحب إلي من إمرتكم، إلا أن أقيم حقاً، أو أدفع باطلاً،

ثمَّ خرج (عليه السلام) فخطب الناس فقال:

Verily, Allah sent Muhammad (S) 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.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ سُبْحَانَهُ بَعَثَ مُحَمَّدًا (صلى الله عليه وآله)، وَلَيْسَ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْعَرَبِ يَقْرَأُ
كِتَابًا، وَلَا يَدْعِي نُبُوَّةً، فَسَاقَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى بَوَّأَهُمْ مَحَلَّتَهُمْ، وَبَلَّغَهُمْ مَنْجَاتَهُمْ،
فَاسْتَقَامَتْ قَنَاثُهُمْ، وَاطْمَأَنَّتْ صِفَاتُهُمْ.

By Allah, 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.

أَمَّا وَاللَّهِ إِنْ كُنْتُ لَفِي سَاقَتِهَا حَتَّى تَوَلَّتْ بِحَذَافِيرِهَا، مَا عَجَزْتُ، وَلَا جَبَنْتُ، وَإِنَّ
مَسِيرِي هَذَا لِمِثْلِهَا، فَلَانْقُبَنَّ الْبَاطِلَ حَتَّى يَخْرُجَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ جَنْبِهِ.

What (cause of conflict) is there between me and the Quraysh? By Allah, 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. By Allah, the Quraysh only take revenge against us because Allah 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:

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 tawny-coloured spears (strong spears). 1

مَالِي وَلِقْرِيشِ! وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ قَاتَلْتُهُمْ كَافِرِينَ، وَلَا قَاتَلْتَنَّهُمْ مَفْتُونِينَ، وَإِنِّي لَصَاحِبُهُمْ
بِالْأَمْسِ، كَمَا أَنَا صَاحِبُهُمْ الْيَوْمَ! وَاللَّهِ مَا تَنْقُمُ مِنَّا قُرَيْشٌ إِلَّا أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَخْتَارَنَا
عَلَيْهِمْ، فَأَدْخَلْنَاهُمْ فِي حَيْزِنَا، فَكَانُوا كَمَا قَالَ الْأَوَّلُ:

أَدَمْتَ لَعْمَرِي شُرَيْكَ الْمَحْضَ صَابِحاً *** وَ أَكَلْتَ بِالزُّبْدِ الْمُقَشَّرَةِ الْبُجْرَا

وَ نَحْنُ وَهَبْنَاكَ الْعِلَاءَ وَ لَمْ تَكُنْ *** عَلِيّاً، وَ حُطْنَا حَوْلَكَ الْجُرْدَ وَالسُّمْرَا

Alternative Sources for Sermon 33

(1) Al-Mufid, *al-Irshad*, 154.

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, Amir al-mu'minin wants to convey the same idea here to the Quraysh as Fatimah (p.b.u.h.) 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'an, 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 Allah has rescued you through my father Muhammad (S). . .

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