

Sermon 56: In the company of the Prophet (S)

About steadiness in the battlefield

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

يصف أصحاب رسول الله

وذلك يوم صفين حين أمر الناس بالصلح

In the company of the Prophet of Allah (S) we used to fight our parents, sons, brothers and uncles, and this continued us in our faith, in submission, in our following the right path, in endurance over the pangs of pain and in our fight against the enemy.

A man from our side and one from the enemy would pounce upon each other like energetic men contesting as to who would kill the other; sometime our man got over his adversary and some-time the enemy's man got over ours.

وَلَقَدْ كُنَّا مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله)، نَقْتُلُ آبَاءَنَا وَأَبْنَاؤَنَا وَإِخْوَانَنَا
وَأَعْمَامَنَا، مَا يَزِيدُنَا ذَلِكَ إِلَّا إِيمَانًا وَتَسْلِيمًا، وَمُضِيًّا عَلَى اللَّقْمِ، وَصَبْرًا عَلَى
مُضَضِّ الْأَلَمِ، وَجِدًّا عَلَى جِهَادِ الْعَدُوِّ، وَلَقَدْ كَانَ الرَّجُلُ مِنَّا وَالْآخَرُ مِنْ عَدُوِّنَا
يَتَصَاوَلَانِ تَصَاوُلَ الْفَحْلَيْنِ، يَتَخَالَسَانِ أَنْفُسَهُمَا، أَيُّهُمَا يَسْقِي صَاحِبَهُ كَأْسَ

الْمُنُونِ، فَمَرَّةً لَنَا مِنْ عَدُونَا، وَمَرَّةً لِعَدُونَا مِنَّا،

When Allah had observed our truth, He sent ignominy to our foe and sent His succour to us till Islam got established (like the camel) with neck on the ground and resting in its place. By my life, if we had also behaved like you, no pillar of (our) religion could have been raised, nor could the tree of faith have borne leaves. By Allah, certainly you will now milk our blood (instead of milk) and eventually you will face shame.¹

فَلَمَّا رَأَى اللَّهُ صِدْقَنَا أَنْزَلَ بَعْدُونَا الْكِبْتَ، وَأَنْزَلَ عَلَيْنَا النَّصْرَ، حَتَّى اسْتَقَرَّ
الْإِسْلَامُ مُلْقِيًا جِرَانَهُ وَمُتَبَوِّئًا أَوْطَانَهُ، وَلِعَمْرِي لَوْ كُنَّا نَأْتِي مَا أَتَيْتُمْ، مَا قَامَ لِلدِّينِ
عَمُودٌ، وَلَا أَخْضَرَ لِلْإِيمَانِ عُوْدٌ، وَأَيُّمُ اللَّهِ لَتَحْتَلِبُنَهَا دَمًا، وَلَتَتْبَعَنَّهَا نَدْمًا!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 56

(1) Nasr, *Siffin*, 520;

(2) al-Zamakhshari, IV, *Rabi`*, *bab al-qatl wa al-shahadah*;

(3) al-Thaqafi, *al-Gharat*;

(4) al-Waqidi, *al-Jamal*; for (3) and (4) see Ibn Abi al-Hadid, I, 348-355.

1. When Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr had been killed Mu`awiyah sent `Abdullah ibn `Amir al-Hadrami to Basrah to exhort the people of Basrah for avenging `Uthman's blood because the natural inclination of most of the inhabitants of Basrah and particularly of Banu Tamim was towards `Uthman. Consequently, he stayed with Banu Tamim. This was the time when `Abdullah ibn `Abbas, the governor of Basrah had gone to Kufah for condolence about Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr, leaving Ziyad ibn `Ubayd (Abih) as his substitute. When the atmosphere in Basrah began to deteriorate Ziyad informed Amir al-mu'minin of all the facts. Amir al-mu'minin tried to get Banu Tamim of Kufah ready but they kept complete silence and gave no reply. When Amir al-mu'minin saw this weakness and shamelessness on their part he gave this speech namely that "During the days of the Prophet (S) we did not see whether those killed at our hands were our kith and kin, but whoever collided with Right, we were prepared to collide with him. If we too had acted carelessly or been guilty of inaction like you then neither religion could have taken root nor could Islam prosper." The result of this shaking was that A`yan ibn Dabi`ah al-Mujashi`i prepared himself but on reaching Basrah he was killed by the swords of the enemy. Thereafter, Amir al-mu'minin sent off Jariyah ibn Qudamah as-Sa`di with fifty men of Bani Tamim. First he tried his best to canvass his own tribe but instead of following the right path they stooped down to abusing and fighting. Then Jariyah called Ziyad and the tribe of Azd for his help. Soon on their arrival (`Abdullah) Ibn al-Hadrami also came out with his men. Swords were used from both sides for some time but eventually Ibn al-Hadrami fled away with seventy persons and took refuge in the house of Sabil as-Sa`di. When Jariyah saw no other way he got this house set on fire. When fire rose into flames they came out in search of safety but could not succeed in running away. Some of them were crushed to death under the wall while others

were killed.

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