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Sermon 182: Praise be to Allah to Whom is the return of all creation...

It has been related by Nawf al-Bikali that Amir al-mu'minin `Ali (p.b.u.h.) delivered this sermon at Kufah standing on a stone which Ja`dah ibn Hubayrah al-Makhzumi had placed for him. Amir al-mu'minin had a woollen apparel on his body, the belt of his sword was made of leaves, and the sandals on his feet too were of palm leaves. His forehead had a hardened spot like that a camel (on its knee, due to many and long prostrations).

ومن خطبة له (عليه السلام)

روي عن نوف البكالي قال: خطبنا بهذه الخطبة أمير المؤمنين عليّ (عليه السلام) بالكوفة وهو قائم على حجارة، نصبها له جعدة بن هبيرة المخزومي، وعليه مدرعة من صوف وحمائل سيفه ليف، وفي رجليه نعلان من ليف، وكان جبينه تفتة بعير، فقال:

About Allah's attributes, His creatures and His being above physical limitations

حمد الله واستعانته

Praise be to Allah to Whom is the return of all creation and the end of all matters. We render Him praise for the greatness of His generosity, the clarity of His proofs, the increase of His bounty and His favours – praise which may fulfil His right, repay His thanks, take (us) near His reward and be productive of increase in His kindness. We seek His help like one who is hopeful of His bounty, desirous of His benefit, and confident of His warding off (calamities), who acknowledges His gifts and is obedient to Him in word and deed. We believe in Him like him who reposes hope in Him with conviction, inclines to Him as a believer, humbles himself before Him obediently, believes in His oneness exclusively, regards Him great, acknowledging His dignity, and seeks refuge with Him with inclination and exertion.

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي إِلَيْهِ مَصَائِرُ الْخَلْقِ، وَعَوَاقِبُ الْأَمْرِ، نَحْمَدُهُ عَلَى عَظِيمِ إِحْسَانِهِ،
وَنَيِّرُ بُرْهَانِهِ، وَنَوَامِي فَضْلِهِ وَامْتِنَانِهِ، حَمْدًا يَكُونُ لِحَقِّهِ قَضَاءً، وَلِشُكْرِهِ أَدَاءً،
وَإِلَى ثَوَابِهِ مُقْرَبًا، وَلِحُسْنِ مَزِيدِهِ مُوجِبًا.

وَنَسْتَعِينُ بِهِ اسْتِعَانَةَ رَاجٍ لِفَضْلِهِ، مُؤَمِّلٍ لِنَفْعِهِ، وَاثِقٍ بِدَفْعِهِ، مُعْتَرِفٍ لَهُ بِالطَّوْلِ،
مُذْعِنٍ لَهُ بِالْعَمَلِ وَالْقَوْلِ.

وَتُؤْمِنُ بِهِ إِيمَانًا مِنْ رَجَاهُ مُوقِنًا، وَأُنَابَ إِلَيْهِ مُؤْمِنًا، وَخَنَعَ لَهُ مُذْعِنًا، وَأَخْلَصَ لَهُ
مُوحِدًا، وَعَظَّمَهُ مُمَجِّدًا، وَلَاذًا بِهِ رَاغِبًا مُجْتَهِدًا.

Allah the Glorified has not been born so that someone could be (His) partner in glory. Nor has He begotten anyone so as to be inherited from after dying. Time and period have not preceded Him. Increase and decrease do not occur to Him. But He has manifested Himself to our understanding through our having observed His strong control and firm decree.

Among the proofs of His creation is the creation of the skies which are fastened without pillars and stand without support. He called them and they responded obediently and humbly without being lazy or loathsome. If they had not acknowledged His Godhead and obeyed Him He would not have made them the place for His throne, the abode of His angels and the destination to which ascend ‘the pure utterances and the righteous deeds’ (ref. 35: 10) of the creatures.

لَمْ يُوَلَدْ سُبْحَانَهُ فَيَكُونَ فِي الْعِزِّ مُشَارِكًا، وَلَمْ يَلِدْ فَيَكُونَ مُرُوثًا هَالِكًا، وَلَمْ

يَتَقَدَّمُهُ وَقْتُ وَلَا زَمَانٌ، وَلَمْ يَتَعَاوَرَهُ زِيَادَةٌ وَلَا نُقْصَانٌ، بَلْ ظَهَرَ لِلْعُقُولِ بِمَا أَرَانَا
مِنْ عِلْمَاتِ التَّدْبِيرِ الْمُتَقِنِ، وَالْقَضَاءِ الْمُبْرَمِ.

فَمِنْ شَوَاهِدِ خَلْقِهِ خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ مُوْطَدَاتٍ بِلَا عَمَدٍ، قَائِمَاتٍ بِلَا سَنَدٍ، دَعَاهُنَّ
فَأَجَبْنَ طَائِعَاتٍ مُذْعِنَاتٍ، غَيْرَ مُتَلَكِّئَاتٍ وَلَا مُبْطِنَاتٍ، وَلَوْ لَا إِقْرَارُهُنَّ لَهُ
بِالرُّبُوبِيَّةِ وَإِدْعَانُهُنَّ بِالطَّوَاعِيَةِ، لَمَا جَعَلَهُنَّ مَوْضِعًا لِعَرْشِهِ، وَلَا مَسْكَنًا لِمَلَائِكَتِهِ،
وَلَا مَصْعَدًا لِلْكَلِمِ الطَّيِّبِ وَالْعَمَلِ الصَّالِحِ مِنْ خَلْقِهِ.

He has made the stars in the skies by way of signs by which travellers wandering the various routes of the earth may be guided. The gloom of the dark curtains of the night does not prevent the flame of their light, nor do the veils of blackish nights have the power to turn back the light of the moon when it spreads in the skies. Glory be to Allah from Whom neither the blackness of dark dusk or of gloomy night (falling) in the low parts of the earth or on high dim mountains is hidden, nor the thundering of clouds on the horizons of the skies, nor the sparking of lightning in the clouds, nor the falling of leaves blown away from their falling places by the winds of hurricanes or by downpour from the sky. He knows where the drops fall and where they stay, where the grubs leave their trails or where they drag themselves, what livelihood would suffice the mosquitoes and what a female bears in its womb.

جَعَلَ نُجُومَهَا أَعْلَامًا يَسْتَدِلُّ بِهَا الْحَيْرَانُ فِي مُخْتَلَفِ فِجَاجِ الْأَقْطَارِ، لَمْ يَمْنَعِ
ضَوْءَ نُورِهَا ادْلِهَامًا سُجِفَ اللَّيْلُ الْمُظْلِمُ، وَلَا اسْتَطَاعَتْ جَلَابِيبُ سَوَادِ
الْحِنَادِسِ أَنْ تَرُدَّ مَا شَاعَ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ مِنْ تَلَالُؤِ نُورِ الْقَمَرِ.

فَسُبْحَانَ مَنْ لَا يَخْفَى عَلَيْهِ سَوَادُ غَسَقِ دَاجٍ، وَلَا لَيْلِ سَاجٍ، فِي بَقَاعِ الْأَرْضِينَ
الْمُتَطَاطِنَاتِ، وَلَا فِي يَفَاعِ السُّفْعِ الْمُتَجَاوِرَاتِ، وَمَا يَتَجَلَّجَلُ بِهِ الرَّعْدُ فِي أَفْقِ
السَّمَاءِ، وَمَا تَلَاشَتْ عَنْهُ بُرُوقُ الْغَمَامِ، وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ تُزِيلُهَا عَنْ مَسْقَطِهَا
عَوَاصِفُ الْأَنْوَاءِ وَانْهَطَالُ السَّمَاءِ! وَيَعْلَمُ مَسْقَطَ الْقَطْرَةِ وَمَقَرَّهَا، وَمَسْحَبَ الذَّرَّةِ
وَمَجْرَهَا، وَمَا يَكْفِي الْبَعُوضَةَ مِنْ قُوتِهَا، وَمَا تَحْمِلُ مِنْ أَنْثَى فِي بَطْنِهَا.

Praise be to Allah Who exists from before the coming into existence of the seat, the throne, the sky, the

earth, the jinn or human being. He cannot be perceived by imagination nor measured by understanding. He who begs from Him does not divert Him (from others), nor does giving away cause Him diminution. He does not see by means of an eye, nor can He be confined to a place. He cannot be said to have companions. He does not create with (the help of) limbs. He cannot be perceived by senses. He cannot be compared with people.

وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الْكَائِنِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَكُونَ كُرْسِيُّهُ أَوْ عَرْشُهُ، أَوْ سَمَاءٌ أَوْ أَرْضٌ، أَوْ جَانٌّ أَوْ
إِنْسٌ، لَا يُدْرِكُ بِهِمْ، وَلَا يُقَدَّرُ بِهِمْ، وَلَا يَشْغَلُهُ سَائِلٌ، وَلَا يَنْقُصُهُ نَائِلٌ، وَلَا يَنْظُرُ
بِعَيْنٍ، وَلَا يُحَدُّ بِأَيْنٍ، وَلَا يُوصَفُ بِالْأَزْوَاجِ، وَلَا يُخْلَقُ بِعِلَاجٍ، وَلَا يُدْرِكُ بِالْحَوَاسِّ،
وَلَا يُقَاسُ بِالنَّاسِ،

It is He who spoke to Musa clearly and showed him His great signs without the use of bodily parts, the organ of speech or the uvula. O you who exert yourself in describing Allah, if you are serious then (first try to) describe Gabriel, Michael or the host of angels who are close (to Allah) in the receptacles of sublimity; but their heads are bent downwards and their wits are perplexed as to how to assign limits (of definition) to the Highest Creator. This is because those things can only be perceived through qualities which have shape and parts and which succumb to death after reaching the end of their times. There is no god but He. He has lighted every darkness with His effulgence and has darkened every light with the darkness (of death).

الَّذِي كَلَّمَ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا، وَأَرَاهُ مِنْ آيَاتِهِ عَظِيمًا، بِلَا جَوَارِحَ وَلَا أَدْوَاتٍ، وَلَا نُطْقَ
وَلَا لَهَوَاتٍ. بَلْ إِنْ كُنْتَ صَادِقًا أَيُّهَا الْمُتَكَلِّفُ لِيُوصَفَ رَبِّكَ، فَصِفْ جِبْرَائِيلَ
وَمِيكَائِيلَ وَجُنُودَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ الْمُقَرَّبِينَ، فِي حُجْرَاتِ الْقُدْسِ مُرْجَحِينَ، مُتَوَلِّهِةً
عُقُولَهُمْ أَنْ يَحُدُّوا أَحْسَنَ الْخَالِقِينَ. وَإِنَّمَا يُدْرِكُ بِالصِّفَاتِ ذُؤَالِهِئَاتِ
وَالْأَدْوَاتِ، وَمَنْ يَنْقُضِي إِذَا بَلَغَ أَمَدَ حَدِّهِ بِالْفَنَاءِ، فَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ، أَضَاءَ بِنُورِهِ كُلَّ
ظَلَامٍ، وَأَظْلَمَ بِظُلْمَتِهِ كُلَّ نُورٍ.

An account of past peoples and about learning from them

الوصية بالتقوى

I advise you, creatures of Allah, to practise fear of Allah Who gave you good clothing and bestowed an abundance of sustenance on you. If there was anyone who could secure a ladder to everlasting life or a way to avoid death it was Sulayman ibn Dawud (p. b. u. h.) who was given control over the domain of the jinn and men along with prophethood and great position (before Allah), but when he finished what was his due in food (of this world) and exhausted his (fixed) time the bow of destruction shot him with arrow of death. His houses became vacant and his habitations became empty. Another group of people inherited them. Certainly, the by-gone centuries have a lesson for you.

أَوْصِيكُمْ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ الَّذِي أَلْبَسَكُمْ الرِّيشَ، وَأَسْبَغَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْمَعِاشَ؛ فَلَوْ
 أَنَّ أَحَدًا يَجِدُ إِلَى الْبَقَاءِ سُلْمًا، أَوْ لِدَفْعِ الْمَوْتِ سَبِيلًا، لَكَانَ ذَلِكَ سُلَيْمَانَ بْنِ
 دَاوُدَ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ)، الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَهُ مَلِكُ الْجِنِّ وَالْإِنْسِ، مَعَ النَّبُوَّةِ وَعَظِيمِ الزُّلْفَةِ،
 فَلَمَّا اسْتَوْفَى طُعْمَتَهُ، وَاسْتَكْمَلَ مُدَّتَهُ، رَمَتْهُ قِسِي الْفَنَاءِ بِنِبَالِ الْمَوْتِ، وَأَصْبَحَتِ
 الدِّيَارُ مِنْهُ خَالِيَةً، وَالْمَسَاكِنُ مُعْطَلَةً، وَرَثَتَهَا قَوْمٌ آخَرُونَ، وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ فِي الْقُرُونِ
 السَّالِفَةِ لَعِبْرَةً!

Where are the Amalekites¹ and the sons of Amalekites? Where are the Pharaohs?² Where are the people of the cities of ar-Rass³ who killed the prophets, destroyed the traditions of the divine messengers and revived the traditions of the despots? Where are those who advanced with armies, defeated thousands, mobilised forces and populated cities?

أَيْنَ الْعَمَالِقَةَ وَأَبْنَاءَ الْعَمَالِقَةِ! أَيْنَ الْفِرَاعِنَةَ وَأَبْنَاءَ الْفِرَاعِنَةَ! أَيْنَ أَصْحَابِ مَدَائِنِ
 الرِّسِّ الَّذِينَ قَتَلُوا النَّبِيِّينَ، وَأَطْفَأُوا سُنْنَ الْمُرْسَلِينَ، وَأَحْيَوْا سُنْنَ الْجَبَّارِينَ! أَيْنَ
 الَّذِينَ سَارُوا بِالْجِيُوشِ، وَهَزَمُوا الْأُلُوفَ، وَعَسَكُرُوا الْعَسَاكِرَ، وَمَدَّنُوا الْمَدَائِنَ!؟

A part of the same sermon about the Imam al-Mahdi

منها:

He will be wearing the armour of wisdom, which he will have secured with all its conditions, such as full attention towards it, its (complete) knowledge and exclusive devotion to it. For him it is like a thing which he had lost and which he was then seeking, or a need which he was trying to fulfil. If Islam is in trouble

he will feel forlorn like a traveller and like a (tired) camel beating the end of its tail and with its neck flattened on the ground. He is the last of Allah's proofs and one of the vicegerents of His prophets.

قَدْ لَبَسَ لِلْحِكْمَةِ جُنَّتَهَا، وَأَخَذَهَا بِجَمِيعِ أَدْبَاهَا، مِنْ الْأَقْبَالِ عَلَيْهَا، وَالْمَعْرِفَةِ بِهَا،
وَالتَّفَرُّغِ لَهَا، فَهِيَ عِنْدَ نَفْسِهِ ضَالَّةٌ الَّتِي يَطْلُبُهَا، وَحَاجَتُهُ الَّتِي يَسْأَلُ عَنْهَا، فَهُوَ
مُغْتَرِبٌ إِذَا اغْتَرَبَ الْأَسْلَامُ، وَضَرَبَ بِعَسِيبِ ذَنْبِهِ وَأَلْصَقَ الْأَرْضَ بِجِرَانِهِ، بِقِيَّةٍ
مِنْ بَقَايَا حُجَّتِهِ، خَلِيفَةٌ مِنْ خَلَائِفِ أَنْبِيَائِهِ.

On the method of his ruling, and grief over the martyrdom of his companions

Then Amir al-mu'minin continued:

ثم قال (عليه السلام):

O people! I have divulged to you advice which the prophets used to preach before their peoples, and I have conveyed to you what the vicegerents (of the prophets) conveyed to those coming after them. I tried to train you with my whip but you could not be straightened. I drove you with admonition but you did not acquire proper behaviour. May Allah deal with you! Do you expect an Imam other than me to take you on the (right) path, and show you the correct way?

أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنِّي قَدْ بَنَيْتُ لَكُمْ الْمَوَاعِظَ الَّتِي وَعَظَ بِهَا الْأَنْبِيَاءُ أُمَّمَهُمْ، وَأَدَيْتُ إِلَيْكُمْ
مَا أَدَّتِ الْأَوْصِيَاءُ إِلَى مَنْ بَعْدَهُمْ، وَأَدَّبْتُكُمْ بِسَوْطِي فَلَمْ تَسْتَقِيمُوا، وَحَدَوْتُكُمْ
بِالزَّوْجِرِ فَلَمْ تَسْتَوْسِقُوا. لَلَّهِ أَنْتُمْ! أَتَتَوَقَّعُونَ إِمَامًا غَيْرِي يَطُّ بِكُمْ الطَّرِيقَ،
وَيُرْشِدُكُمْ السَّبِيلَ؟

Beware, the things in this world which were forward have become things of the past, and those of which were behind are going ahead. The virtuous people of Allah have made up their minds to leave and they have purchased, with a little perishable (pleasure) of this world, a lot of such (reward) in the next world that will remain. What loss did our brothers whose blood was shed in Siffin suffer by not being alive today? Only that they are not suffering choking on swallowings and not drinking turbid water. By Allah, surely they have met Allah and He has bestowed upon them their rewards and He has lodged them in

safe houses after their (having suffered) fear.

أَلَا إِنَّهُ قَدْ أَدْبَرَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا مَا كَانَ مُقْبِلًا، وَأَقْبَلَ مِنْهَا مَا كَانَ مُدْبِرًا، وَأَزْمَعَ التَّرْحَالَ
عِبَادُ اللَّهِ الْأَخْيَارُ، وَبَاعُوا قَلِيلًا مِنَ الدُّنْيَا لَا يَبْقَى، بِكَثِيرٍ مِنَ الْآخِرَةِ لِأَيْفَنِي. مَا ضَرَّ
إِخْوَانَنَا الَّذِينَ سَفَكَتْ دِمَاؤُهُمْ - وَهُمْ بِصِفَيْنَ - أَلَّا يَكُونُوا الْيَوْمَ أَحْيَاءَ؟ يُسَيِّغُونَ
الْغُصَصَ، وَيَشْرَبُونَ الرَّنْقَ! قَدْ - وَاللَّهِ - لَفُوا اللَّهَ فَوْقَاهُمْ أَجُورَهُمْ، وَأَحْلَهُمْ دَارَ
الْأَمْنِ بَعْدَ خَوْفِهِمْ.

Where are my brethren who took the (right) path and trod in rightness. Where is `Ammar? 4 Where is Ibn at-Tayyihan? 5 Where is Dhu'sh-Shahadatayn?6 And where are others like them7 from among their comrades who had pledged themselves to death and whose (severed) heads were taken to the wicked enemy.

أَيْنَ إِخْوَانِي الَّذِينَ رَكَبُوا الطَّرِيقَ، وَمَضَوْا عَلَى الْحَقِّ؟ أَيْنَ عَمَارٌ؟ وَأَيْنَ ابْنُ
التَّيَّهَانِ؟ وَأَيْنَ ذُو الشَّهَادَتَيْنِ؟ وَأَيْنَ نُظَرَاؤُهُمْ مِنْ إِخْوَانِهِمُ الَّذِينَ تَعَاقَدُوا عَلَى
الْمَنِيَّةِ، وَأُبْرِدَ بِرُؤُوسِهِمْ إِلَى الْفَجْرَةِ؟

Then Amir al-mu'minin wiped his hand over his auspicious, honoured beard and wept for a long time, then he continued:

قال: ثمَّ ضرب (عليه السلام) بيده إلى لحيته، فأطال البكاء، ثمَّ قال:

Oh my brothers who recited the Qur'an and strengthened it, thought over their obligation and fulfilled it, revived the *sunnah* and destroyed innovation! When they were called to *jihad* they responded and trusted in their leader then followed him.

أُوهِ عَلَى إِخْوَانِي الَّذِينَ تَلَّوْا الْقُرْآنَ فَأَحْكَمُوهُ، وَتَدَبَّرُوا الْفَرَضَ فَأَقَامُوهُ، أَحْيَوْا
السُّنَّةَ، وَأَمَاتُوا الْبِدْعَةَ، دُعُوا لِلْجِهَادِ فَأَجَابُوا، وَوَثِقُوا بِالْقَائِدِ فَاتَّبَعُوا.

Then Amir al-mu'minin shouted at the top of his voice:

ثم نادى بأعلى صوته:

Al-jihad, al-jihad (fighting, fighting), O creatures of Allah! By Allah, I am mobilising the army today. He who desires to proceed towards Allah should come forward.

الْجِهَادَ الْجِهَادَ عِبَادَ اللَّهِ! أَلَا وَإِنِّي مُعَسِّكِرٌ فِي يَوْمِي هَذَا، فَمَنْ أَرَادَ الرُّوْحَ إِلَى اللَّهِ
فَلْيَخْرُجْ.

Nawf said: Then Amir al-mu'minin put Husayn (p.b.u.h.) over (a force of) ten thousand, Qays ibn Sa'd (mercy of Allah be upon him) over ten thousand, Abu Ayyub al-Ansari over ten thousand, and others over different numbers, intending to return to Siffin, but Friday did not appear again and the accursed Ibn Muljam (may Allah curse him) killed him. Consequently, the armies came back and were left like sheep who had lost their shepherd while wolves were snatching them away from all sides.

قال نَوْفٌ: وعقد للحسين (عليه السلام) في عشرة آلاف، ولقيس بن سعد في عشرة آلاف، ولأبي أيوب الانصاري في عشرة آلاف، ولغيرهم على أعداد آخر، وهو يريد الرجعة إلى صفين، فما دارت الجمعة حتى ضربه الملعون ابن ملجم لعنه الله، فتراجعت العساكر، فكنا كأغنام فقدت راعيها، تختطفها الذئاب من كل مكان!

Alternative Sources for Sermon 182

(1) Al-Wasiti, *Uyun al-hikam*, see al-Majlisi, vol. 77, 310;

(2) Ibn al-'Athir, *al-Nihayah*, II, 145, 198.

1. History shows that very often the ruin and destruction of peoples has been due to their oppression and open wickedness and profligacy. Consequently, communities which had extended their sway over all the corners of the populated world and had flown their flags in the East and West of the globe disappeared from the surface of the earth like a wrong word, on disclosure of their vicious actions and evil doings.

Amalekites: ancient nomadic tribe, or collection of tribes, described in the Old Testament as relentless enemies of Israel, even though they were closely related to Ephraim, one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Their name derives from Amalek, who is celebrated in Arabian tradition but cannot be identified. The district over which they ranged was south of Judah and probably extended into northern Arabia. The Amalekites harassed the Hebrews during their exodus out of Egypt and

attacked them at Rephidim (near Mt. Sinai), where they were defeated by Joshua. They also filled out the ranks of the nomadic raiders defeated by Gideon and were condemned to annihilation by Samuel. The Amelekites, whose final defeat occurred in the time of Hezekiah, were the object of a perpetual curse. (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica [Micropaedia], vol. 1, p. 288, ed. 1973–1974; also see [for further reference] The Encyclopaedia Americana, [International Edition] vol. 1, p. 651, ed. 1975).

2. Pharaoh: Hebrew form of the Egyptian per-¹o ("the great house"), signifying the royal palace, an epithet applied in the New Kingdom and after, as a title of respect, to the Egyptian king himself. In the 22nd dynasty the title was added to the king's personal name. In official documents the full titulary of the Egyptian king contained five names. The first and oldest identified him as the incarnation of the falcon god, Horus; it was often written inside a square called serekh, depicting the facade of the archaic palace. The second name, "two ladies", placed him under the protection of Nekhbet and Buto, the vulture and uraeus (snake) goddesses of Upper and Lower Egypt; the third, "golden Horus", signified perhaps originally "Horus victorious over his enemies." The last two names, written within a ring or cartouche, are generally referred to as the praenomen and nomen, and were the ones most commonly used; the praenomen and nomen, and were the ones most commonly used; the praenomen, preceded by the hieroglyph meaning "King of Upper and Lower Egypt," usually contained a reference to the king's Unique relationship with the sun god, Re, while the fifth, or nomen, was preceded by the hieroglyph for "Son of Re," or by that for "Lord of the two lands." The last name was given him at birth, the rest at his coronation. (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica [Micropaedia], vol. VII, p. 927, ed. 1973–1974; also see [for further reference] The Encyclopaedia Americana, [International Edition], vol. 21, p. 707, ed. 1975).

Among the Pharaohs was the Pharaoh of the days of Prophet Musa. His pride, egotism, insolence and haughtiness were such that by making the claim "I am your sublime God" he deemed himself to be holding sway over all other powers of the world, and was under the misunderstanding that no power could wrest the realm and government from his hands. The Qur'an has narrated his claim of "I and no one else" in the following words:

And proclaimed Pharaoh unto his people, "O' my people! is not the kingdom of Egypt mine? And these rivers flow below me; What! behold ye not? (43:51)

But when his empire came near the end it was destroyed in a few moments. Neither his position and servants could come in the way of its destruction nor could the vastness of his realm prevent it. Rather, the waves of the very streams which he was extremely proud to possess, wrapped him in and dispatched his spirit to Hell throwing the body on the bank to serve as a lesson for the whole of creation.

3. The people of the cities of ar-Rass: In the same way the people of ar-Rass were killed and destroyed for disregarding the preaching and call of a prophet, and for revolt and disobedience. About them the Qur'an says:

And the (tribes of) `Ad and Thamud and the inhabitants of ar-Rass, and generations between them, in great number. And unto each of them We did give examples and every one (of them) We did destroy with utter extermination. (25:38,39)

Belied (also) those before them the people of Noah and the dwellers of ar-Rass and Thamud; And `Ad and Pharaoh, and the brethren of Lot; And the dwellers of the Wood and the people of Tubba`; all belied the apostles, so was proved true My promise (of the doom) (50:12–14)

4. `Ammar ibn Yasir ibn `Amir al-`Ansi al-Madhhi al Makhzumi (a confederate of Banu Makhzum) was one of the earliest converts to Islam, and the first Muslim to build a mosque in his own house in which he used to worship Allah (at-Tabaqat, vol. 3, Part 1, p. 178; Usd al-ghabah, vol. 4, p. 46; Ibn Kathir, at-Tarikh, vol. 7, p. 311).

`Ammar accepted Islam along with his father Yasir and his mother Sumayyah. They suffered great tortures by the Quraysh, due to their conversion to Islam, to such an extent that `Ammar lost his parents; and they were the first martyrs man and woman in Islam.

`Ammar was among those who immigrated to Abyssinia, and the earliest immigrants (muhajirun) to Medina. He was present in the battle of Badr and all other battles as well as places of assembly by the Muslims during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet; and he showed his might and favour in all Islamic struggles in the best way.

Many traditions are narrated from the Holy Prophet about `Ammar regarding his virtues, outstanding traits and his glorious deeds, such as the tradition which `A'ishah and other have narrated that the Holy Prophet himself had said that `Ammar was filled with faith from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet. (Ibn Majah, as-Sunan, vol. 1, p. 65; Abu Nu`aym, Hilyah al-Awliya', vol. 1, p. 139; al-Haytami, Majma` az-zawa'id, vol. 9, p. 295; al-Isti`ab, vol. 3, p. 1137; al-Isabah, vol. 2,

p. 512)

In another tradition the Holy Prophet said about `Ammar:

`Ammar is with the truth and the truth is with `Ammar. He turns wherever the truth turns. `Ammar is as near to me as an eye is near to the nose. Alas! a rebellious group will kill him. (at-Tabaqat, vol. 3, part 1, p. 187; al-Mustadrak, vol. 3, p. 392; Ibn Hisham, as-Sirah, vol. 2, p. 143; Ibn Kathir, at-Tarikh, vol. 7, pp. 268-270)

Also in the decisive and widely known tradition which al-Bukhari (in Sahih, vol. 8, pp. 185-186), at-Tirmidhi (in al-Jami` as-Sahih, vol. 5, p. 669); Ahmad ibn Hanbal (in al-Musnad, vol. 2, pp. 161,164,206; vol. 3, pp.5, 22, 28, 91; vol. 4, pp.197, 199, vol. 5 pp.215, 306, 307; vol. 6, pp.289, 300, 311, 315), and all the narrators of Islamic traditions and historians transmitted through twenty-five Companions that the Holy Prophet said about `Ammar:

Alas! a rebellious group which swerves from the truth will murder `Ammar. `Ammar will be calling them towards Paradise and they will be calling him towards Hell. His killer and those who strip him of arms and clothing will be in Hell.

Ibn Hajar al-`Asqalani (in Tahdhib at-tahdhib, vol. 7, p. 409; al-Isabah, vol. 2, p.512) and as-Suyuti (in al-Khasa'is al-kubra, vol. 2, p. 140) say: "The narration of this (above mentioned) tradition is mutawatir (i.e. narrated successively by so many people that no doubt can be entertained about its authenticity)."

Ibn `Abd al-Barr (in al-Isti`ab, vol. 3, p. 1140) says:

The narration followed uninterrupted succession from the Holy Prophet, that he said: "A rebellious group will murder `Ammar," and this is a prophecy of the Prophet's secret knowledge and the sign of his prophethood. This tradition is among the most authentic and the most rightly ascribed traditions.

After the death of the Holy Prophet, `Ammar was one of the closest adherents and best supporters of Amir al-mu'minin during the reign of the first three Caliphs. During the caliphate of `Uthman when the Muslim protested (to `Uthman) against his policy on the distribution of the Public Treasury (Baytu'l-mal) `Uthman said in a public assembly that, 'the money which as in the treasury was sacred and belonged to Allah, and that he (as being the successor of the Prophet) had the right to dispose of them as he thought fit. 'He (`Uthman) threatened and cursed all who presumed to censure or murmur at what he said. Upon this, `Ammar ibn Yasir boldly declared his disapprobation and began to charge him with his inveterate propensity to ignore the interests of the general public; accused him with reviving the heathenish customs abolished by the Prophet. Whereupon `Uthman commanded him to be beaten and immediately some of the Umayyads, the kindred of the Caliph fell upon the venerable `Ammar, and the Caliph himself kicking him with his shoes (on his feet) on `Ammar's testicles, and afflicted him with hernia. `Ammar became unconscious for three days, and he was taken care of by Umm al-mu'minin Umm Salamah in her own house. (al-Baladhuri, Ansab al-ashraf, vol. 5, pp. 48,54,88; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 3, pp. 47-52; al-Imamah wa's-siyasah, vol. 1, pp. 35-36; al-`Iqd al-farid, vol. 4, p. 307; at-Tabaqat, vol. 3, Part 1, p. 185; Tarikh al-khamis, vol. 2, p. 271)

When Amir al-mu'minin became Caliph, `Ammar was one of his most sincere supporters. He participated fully in all social, political and military activities during this period, especially in the first battle (the battle of Jamal) and the second one (the battle of Siffin).

However, `Ammar was martyred on 9th Safar 37 A.H. in the battle of Siffin when a he was over ninety years of age. On the day `Ammar ibn Yasir achieved martyrdom, he turned his face to the sky and said:

O My God! Surely Thou art aware that if I know that Thy wish is that I should plunge myself into this River (the Euphrates) and be drowned, I will do it. O My God! Surely Thou knowest that if I knew that Thou would be pleased if I put my scimitar on my chest (to hit my heart) and pressed it so hard that it came out of my back, I would do it. O My God! I do not think there is anything more pleasant to Thee than fighting against this sinful group, and if I knew that any action were more pleasant to Thee I would do it.

Abu `Abd ar-Rahman as-Sulami narrates:

"We were present with Amir al-mu'minin at Siffin where I saw `Ammar ibn Yasir was not turning his face towards any side, nor valleys (wadis [of the land]) of Siffin but the companions of the Holy Prophet were following him as if he was a sign for them. Then I heard `Ammar say to Hashim ibn 'Utbah (al-Mirqal): 'O Hashim! Rush into enemy's ranks, paradise is under the sword!

Today I meet my beloved one, Muhammad and his party'.

"Then he said: 'By Allah, if they put us to flight (and pursue us) to the date-palms of Hajar (a town in Bahrain, Persian Gulf

[i.e., if they pursue us along all the Arabian desert] nevertheless) we know surely that we are right and they are wrong.'

"Then he (Ammar) continued (addressing the enemies):

We struck you to (believe in) its (Holy Qur'an) revelation; And today we strike you to (believe in) its interpretation; Such strike as to remove heads from their resting places; And to make the friend forget his sincere friend; Until the truth returns to its (right) path."

The narrator says: "I did not see the Holy Prophet's companions killed at any time as many as they were killed on this day." Then `Ammar spurred his horse, entered the battlefield and began fighting. He persistently chased the enemy, made attack after attack, and raised challenging slogans till at last a group of mean-spirited Syrians surrounded him on all sides, and a man named Abu al-Ghadiyah al-Juhari (al-Fazari) inflicted such a wound upon him that he could not bear it, and returned to his camp. He asked for water. A tumbler of milk was brought to him. When `Ammar looked at the tumbler he said: "The Messenger of Allah had said the right thing." People asked him what he meant by these words. He said "The Messenger of Allah informed me that the last sustenance for me in this world would be milk." Then he took that tumbler of milk in his hands, drank the milk and surrendered his life to Allah, the Almighty. When Amir al-mu'minin came to know of his death, he came to `Ammar's side, put his (`Ammar's) head on his own lap, and recited the following elegy to mourn his death: Surely any Muslim who is not distressed at the murder of the son of Yasir, and is not be afflicted by this grievous misfortune does not have true faith.

May Allah show His mercy to `Ammar the day he embraced Islam, may Allah show His mercy to `Ammar the day he was killed, and may Allah show His mercy to `Ammar the day he is raised to life.

Certainly, I found `Ammar (on such level) that three companions of the Holy Prophet could not be named unless he was the fourth, and four of them could not be mentioned unless he was the fifth.

There was none among the Holy Prophet's companions who doubted that not only was Paradise once or twice compulsorily bestowed upon `Ammar, but that he gained his claim to it (a number of times). May Paradise give enjoyment to `Ammar.

Certainly, it was said (by the Holy Prophet) "Surely, `Ammar is with the truth and the truth is with `Ammar. He turns wherever the truth turns. His killer will be in hell."

Then Amir al-mu'minin stepped forward and offered funeral prayers for him, and then with his own hands, he buried him with his clothes.

`Ammar's death caused a good deal of commotion in the ranks of Mu`awiyah too, because there were a large number of prominent people fighting from his side under the impression created in their minds that he was fighting Amir al-mu'minin for a right cause. These people were aware of the saying of the Holy Prophet that `Ammar would be killed by a group who would be on the wrong side. When they observed that `Ammar had been killed by Mu`awiyah's army, they became convinced that they were on the wrong side and that Amir al-mu'minin was definitely on the right. This agitation thus caused among the leaders as well as the rank and file of Mu`awiyah's army, was quelled by him with the argument that it was Amir al-mu'minin who brought `Ammar to the battlefield and therefore it was he who was responsible for his death. When Mu`awiyah's argument was mentioned before Amir al-mu'minin he said it was as though the Prophet was responsible for killing Hamzah as he brought him to the battle of Uhud. (at-Tabari, at-Tarikh, vol. 1, pp. 3316-3322; vol. 3, pp. 2314-2319; Ibn Sa'd, at-Tabaqat, vol. 3, Part 1, pp. 176-189; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil, vol. 3, pp. 308-312; Ibn Kathir, at-Tarikh, vol. 7, pp. 267-272; al-Minqari, Siffin, pp. 320-345; Ibn `Abd al-Barr, al-Isti'ab, vol. 3, pp. 1135-1140; vol. 4, p. 1725; Ibn al-Athir, Usd al-ghabah, vol. 4, pp. 43-47; vol. 5, p. 267; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 5, pp. 252-258; vol. 8, pp. 10-28; vol. 10, pp. 102-107, al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak, vol. 3, pp. 384-394; Ibn `Abd Rabbih, al-Iqd al-farid, vol. 4, pp. 340-343; al-Mas`udi, Muruj adh-dhahab, vol. 2, pp. 381-382, al-Haytami, Majma` az-zawa'id, vol. 7, pp. 238-244; vol. 9, pp. 291-298; al-Baladhuri, Ansab al-ashraf (Biography of Amir al-mu'minin), pp. 310-319.

5. Abu'l-Haytham (Malik) ibn at-Tayyihan al-Ansari was one of the twelve chiefs (naqib [of Ansar]) who attended the fair and met at al-Aqabah -- in the first `Aqabah and among those who attended in the second `Aqabah -- where he gave the Holy Prophet the 'pledge of Islam'. He was present in the battle of Badr and all other battles as well as places of assembly by the Muslims during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. He was also among the sincere supporters of Amir al-mu'minin and he attended the battle of Jamal as well as Siffin where he was martyred. (al-Isti'ab, vol. 4, p. 1773; Siffin, p. 365; Usd al-ghabah, vol. 4, p. 274; vol. 5, p. 318; al-Isabah, vol. 3, p. 341; vol. 4, pp. 312-313; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 10, pp. 107-108; Ansab al-ashraf, p. 319).

6. Khuzaymah ibn Thabit al-Ansari. He is known as Dhu'sh-Shahadatayn because the Holy Prophet considered his evidence equivalent to the evidence of two witnesses. He was present in the battle of Badr, and other battles as well as in the places of assembly of the Muslims during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet. He is counted among the earliest of those who showed their adherence to Amir al-mu'minin and he was also present in the battle of Jamal and Siffin. `Abd ar-Rahman ibn Abi Layla narrated that he saw a man in the battle of Siffin fighting the enemy valiantly and when he protested against his action, the man said:

I am Khuzaymah ibn Thabit al-Ansari, I have heard the Holy Prophet saying "Fight, fight, by the side of `Ali." (al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, Muwaddih awham al-jam` wa't-tafriq, vol. 1, p. 277).

Khuzaymah was martyred in the battle of Siffin soon after the martyrdom of `Ammar ibn Yasir.

Sayf ibn `Umar al-Usayyidi (the well known liar) has fabricated another Khuzaymah, and claimed that the one who was martyred in the battle of Siffin was this one and not the one with the surname of 'Dhu'sh-Shahadatayn'. at-Tabari has quoted this fabricated story from Sayf either intentionally or otherwise, and through him this story has affected some other historians who quoted from at-Tabari or relied on him. (For further reference, see al-`Askari, Khamsun wa miah sahabi mukhtalaq [one hundred and fifty fabricated companions], vol. 2, pp. 175-189).

After having denied this story Ibn Abi'l-Hadid adds (in Sharh Nahjul Balaghah, vol. 10, pp. 109-110) that:

Furthermore, what is the need for those who want to defend Amir al-mu'minin to make a boast of abundance with Khuzaymah, Abu'l-Haytham, `Ammar and others. If people treat this man (Amir al-mu'minin) with justice and look at him with healthy eyes they will certainly realise that should he be alone (on one side) and the people all together (on the other side) fighting him, he will be in the truth and all the rest will be in the wrong. (at-Tabaqat, vol. 3, Part 1, pp. 185, 188; al-Mustadrak, vol. 3, pp. 385, 397; Usd al-ghabah, vol. 2, p. 114; vol. 4, p. 47; al-Isti`ab, vol. 2, p. 448; at-Tabari, vol. 3, pp. 2316, 2319, 2401; al-Kamil, vol. 3, p. 325; Siffin, pp. 363, 398; Ansab al-ashraf, pp. 313-314).

7. Among the people who were present in the battle of Jamal on the side of Amir al-mu'minin there were one hundred and thirty Badries (those who participated in the battle of Badr with the Holy Prophet) and seven hundred of those who were present in the 'pledge of ar-Ridwan' (Bay`atu'r-Ridwan) which took place under a tree. (adh-Dhahabi, Tarikh al-Islam, vol. 2, p. 171; Khalifah ibn Khayyat, at-Tarikh vol. 1, p. 164). Those who were killed in the battle of Jamal from the side of Amir al-mu'minin numbered some five hundred (some said that the number of martyrs were more than that). But on the side of the people of Jamal twenty thousand were killed. (al-`Iqd al-farid, vol. 4, p. 326).

Among those who were present in the battle of Siffin on the side of Amir al-mu'minin, there were eighty Badries and eight hundred of those who gave the Holy Prophet the 'pledge of ar-Ridwan.' (al-Mustadrak, vol. 3, p. 104 al-Isti`ab, vol. 3, p. 1138; al-Isabah, vol. 2, p. 389; at-Tarikh, al-Ya`qubi, vol. 2, p. 188).

On the side of Mu`awiyah forty-five thousand were killed, and on the side of Amir al-mu'minin twenty-five thousand. Among these martyrs (of Amir al-mu'minin) there were twenty-five or twenty-six Badries and sixty-three or three hundred and three of the people of the 'pledge of ar-Ridwan'. (Siffin, p. 558; al-Isti`ab, vol. 2, p. 389; Ansab al-ashraf, p. 322; Ibn Abi'l-Hadid, vol. 10, p. 104; Abu'l-Fida' vol. 1, p. 175; Ibn al-Wardi, at-Tarikh, vol. 1, p. 240; Ibn Kathir, vol. 7, p. 275; Tarikh al-khamis, vol. 2, p. 277)

Besides the distinguished and eminent companions of Amir al-mu'minin like `Ammar, Dhu'sh-Shahadatayn and Ibn al-Tayyihan, those who lay martyred in Siffin were:--

Hashim ibn `Utbah ibn Abi Waqqas al-Mirqal was killed on the same day when `Ammar was martyred. He was the bearer of the standard of Amir al-mu'minin's army on that day.

Abdullah ibn Budayl ibn al-Warqa' al-Khuza'i was sometimes the right wing Commander of Amir al-mu'minin's army and sometimes the infantry Commander.

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