

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Khutbah 24/3/17 – Anger

Today is the 24th of Jumada al-Akhir 1438

يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِرًا مِّنَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ عَنِ الْآخِرَةِ هُمْ غَافِلُونَ

They know an outward aspect of the life of this world but are heedless of the Next World. (Sūrat ar-Rum 30:7)

Although it is never acceptable to merely accept the outward aspects of things, it is doubly reprehensible when the world goes out of control. When things begin to go seriously wrong, the wise look to the beginnings and the roots of things. Someone who looks to the roots is called a ‘radical’ in English. Not to be radical and not to look to the roots can be fatal, for, as the Arabs say:

مُنَعُوا الْوُصُولَ لِتَرْكِهِمُ الْأُصُولَ

“They were denied arrival because they abandoned the roots.”

When entire societies begin to go seriously wrong on multiple levels, then it is simply mistaken to focus on single exceptional incidents or characters out of context. We are in a moment in history which is genuinely disturbing. Nations are gearing up for war with each other. People who are driven by hate and anger are coming to dominate public discourse, and I am certainly not speaking exclusively about terrorists or politicians. The fabric of international agreements and understandings that has bound the world together for some time is now disintegrating.

Allah, exalted is He, introduces the topic of the entirety of human destiny, history and Prophethood with the story of Sayyiduna Adam عليه السلام in Heaven, when He says:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً

When your Lord said to the angels, ‘I am putting a khalif on the earth.’ (Sūrat al-Baqarah 2:30)

Then He عليه السلام explains something of the nature of that *khalīfah* when He says:

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا

And He taught Ādam the names, all of them.

In Arabic a name is a noun. When people ask “which names” or “which nouns”, the answer is, in the words of Allah, عليه السلام “all of them”.

In the Arabic language, to teach عليه السلام is to give the knowledge of something to someone, but moreover, on a regular basis and repeatedly. So Ādam عليه السلام did not merely receive the names and language itself, but he was taught the knowledge of the names.

But today, language, which is arguably the very core of what it is to be human, is no longer used to exchange knowledge convivially but, at best, is used to persuade you to adopt a point of view by the use of rhetoric, often politically but most often commercially in advertising that is both overt and covert, and, at worst, is used as a weapon to deceive or to bludgeon you

into submission by the use of lies. Language itself has become weaponised. Allah says about such people who deceive whether subtly or grossly:

يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ

They distort the true meaning of words. (Sūrat al-An‘ām 5:13)

Following on from that and as consequence of it, the understanding of what knowledge is and thus education has been subverted so deeply that there is no longer a conception of the unity of knowledge, and thus no conception of the unity of existence. Just as it is the foundation of the human being, as we have seen, knowledge lies at the very basis of a society. Educational and knowledge-based institutions perform a singular social need. When they are transformed into training institutions for careers, they partake of the fragmentary forces that work to pull society apart, even if training for a profession is not in itself a bad thing.

Of all of these threads, one of the most prominent is that of anger. A well known author has recently titled a book about our time and its recent history: “The Age of Anger.”

In the following we assume that you know that a false psychology now advises people to act out their worst impulses including sexual ones, and to express their emotions. We are told that the only thing to avoid is repression, and thus more and more people are giving vent to their worst emotions, which in turn triggers others to do the same, and so society and the world spin out of control.

However, about anger the Prophet ﷺ said some words that are recorded in what is perhaps the briefest hadith, itself one of the Forty of Imām an-Nawawī that are regarded as the most indispensable of all hadith.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَجُلًا قَالَ لِلنَّبِيِّ ﷺ أَوْصِنِي. قَالَ: لَا تَغْضَبْ، فَرَدَّدَ مَرَارًا، قَالَ: لَا تَغْضَبْ. . رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِيُّ [رقم:6116].

Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrated that, “A man said to the Prophet ﷺ, ‘Advise me.’ He said, ‘Do not become angry’ and repeated it several times, saying, ‘Do not become angry.’” Al-Bukhari and Muslim narrated it.

The Commentator said that the meaning of his ﷺ saying, “Do not become angry” is do not carry out or execute your anger, and the prohibition does not refer to anger itself, because it is a part of human nature that man is not able to repel. Thus, Allah, exalted is He, addresses this reality, of our becoming angry but then controlling ourselves, when He says:

وَسَارِعُوا إِلَىٰ مَغْفِرَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ وَجَنَّةٍ عَرْضُهَا السَّمَاوَاتُ وَالْأَرْضُ أُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكُفَّٰمِينَ الْغَٰظِمِينَ وَالْعَٰفِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

Race each other to forgiveness from your Lord and a Garden as wide as the heavens and the earth, prepared for the godfearing: Those who give in times of both ease and hardship, those who control their rage and pardon other people – Allah loves good-doers. (Sūrat Ali ‘Imran 3:134)

In other words, such people, whom Allah loves, *do* become angry but they control or restrain their rage. Abū Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said:

لَيْسَ الشَّدِيدُ بِالصُّرَعَةِ إِلَّا الشَّدِيدُ الَّذِي يَمْلِكُ نَفْسَهُ عِنْدَ الْغَضَبِ

“The strong man is not the one who throws another down but the strong man is the one who controls himself when he is angry.” (Aḥmad, al-Bukhārī and Muslim)

أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ لِي وَلَكُمْ وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

He ﷺ said, “Beware of anger because it is a burning coal kindled in the heart of the son of Adam. Do you not see how when one of you becomes angry, his eyes become red and his external jugular veins become swollen. When any of you senses something of that then let him lie down on his bed or on the ground.”¹

A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, “Messenger of Allah teach me something which will draw me near to the Garden and keep me far from the Fire.” He said, “Do not become angry and the Garden is yours.”²

He ﷺ said, “Anger is from *shaytān* and *shaytān* is created from fire; the only thing which puts out fire is water, so when any of you becomes angry let him perform *wudu*’.”³

Abu Dharr al-Ghifari said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said to us, ‘When any of you becomes angry while he is standing let him sit down. Then if the anger leaves him [well and good], and if not let him lie down.’”⁴

‘Isā ﷺ said to Yahyā ibn Zakariyyā’ ﷺ, “I will teach you some useful knowledge: do not become angry.” He said, “How can I not become angry?” He said, “If someone mentions to you something [a defect or wrong] that is within you then say, ‘A wrong which you have mentioned and for which I seek forgiveness of Allah.’ If someone mentions to you something [a defect or wrong] which is not in you, then praise Allah since He did not put that with which you are reproached in you, and it is a good deed which is meant for you.”

‘Amr ibn al-‘As ﷺ said, “I asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about that which would keep me far from the anger of Allah i and he said, ‘Do not become angry.’”

Luqman said to his son, “If you want to take someone as a brother, then make him angry, and if he is fair to you while he is angry [then take him as a brother] and if not then beware of him.”

The other extreme that is blameworthy is not to be angry at wickedness and injustice, and, most importantly not to be angry at one’s own wrongdoing.

18718- عن عائشة أنها سئلت عن خلق رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقالت: كان خلقه القرآن يرضى لرضاه

ويسخط لسخطه.

‘Ā’ishah ﷺ was asked about the character of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and she said, “His character was the Qur’ān. He was pleased by what it finds pleasing and displeased according to what it finds displeasing.”¹

¹ At-Tirmidhi narrated it.

² At-Tabarani narrated it with two *isnads* one of which is *sahih*.

³ Abu Dawud narrated it.

⁴ Abu Dawud narrated it.

It is said that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was angry – and he was only angry for Allah – nothing could withstand his anger.

Shaykh ‘Uthmān dan Fodio, may Allah be merciful to him, said that there are three degrees of anger:

1. Insufficient (*tafrīt*)
2. Excessive (*ifrāt*)
3. Moderate (*i‘tidāl*)

He said, “Insufficient anger is blameworthy because you are not angry enough to protest against the *ḥarām* ... part of this failing is to be silent when you see objectionable actions. Part of it is also to be incapable of self-discipline, since self-discipline is made effective by bringing anger to bear on your own appetites, so that you are angry at yourself when it inclines to base appetites. Lack of anger is therefore blameworthy.”

He said about excessive anger, “Its effect on the heart is resentment, envy, concealing evil, resolving to divulge secrets, and other ugly things.”

And about moderate anger he said, “Praiseworthy anger is in moderation. It is the anger which waits for the indication of the intellect and the *dīn*. It arises when it is deemed praiseworthy by the *sharī‘ah*, and it stops when it is criticised by the *sharī‘ah*. It is the middle way which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ described when he said:

خير الأمور أوسطها

‘The best of affairs is the midmost of them.’”

None of the above is license to vent our anger. We are always bound by the *sharī‘ah* and intellect.

أما بعد:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ، يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا
اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلِّمْ تَسْلِيمًا
وَأَرْضِ اللَّهُمَّ عَنِ الْخُلَفَاءِ الرَّاشِدِينَ أَبِي بَكْرٍ وَعُمَرَ وَعُثْمَانَ وَعَلِيٍّ ، وَسَائِرِ الصَّحَابَةِ أَجْمَعِينَ ، خُصُوصًا الْأَنْصَارَ مِنْهُمْ
وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ ، وَالتَّابِعِينَ وَتَابِعِي التَّابِعِينَ وَمَنْ تَبِعَهُمْ إِلَى يَوْمِ الدِّينِ .
اللَّهُمَّ اهْدِ وِلَاةَ أُمُورِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ فِي مَشَارِقِ الْأَرْضِ وَمَغَارِبِهَا إِلَى مَا يُرْضِيكَ وَإِلَى اتِّبَاعِ سُنَّةِ مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ

اللَّهُمَّ اعِزَّ الْإِسْلَامَ وَالْمُسْلِمِينَ ، وَاخْذِلِ الْكُفْرَ وَالْكَافِرِينَ ، وَاَنْصُرِ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ، وَاجْعَلْ كَلِمَتَكَ هِيَ الْعُلَا ،
وَكَلِمَةَ الْكُفْرِ هِيَ السُّفْلَى
رَبَّنَا اغْفِرْ لَنَا وَلِإِخْوَانِنَا الَّذِينَ سَبَقُونَا بِالْإِيمَانِ وَلَا تَجْعَلْ فِي قُلُوبِنَا غِلًّا لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا ۗ رَبَّنَا إِنَّكَ رَؤُوفٌ رَحِيمٌ
رَبَّنَا آتِنَا مِنْ لَدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً وَهَيِّئْ لَنَا مِنْ أَمْرِنَا رَشَدًا
رَبَّنَا آتِنَا فِي الدُّنْيَا حَسَنَةً وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ حَسَنَةً وَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ
رَبَّنَا هَبْ لَنَا مِنْ أَزْوَاجِنَا وَذُرِّيَّاتِنَا قُرَّةَ أَعْيُنٍ وَاجْعَلْنَا لِلْمُتَّقِينَ إِمَامًا
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَايِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ
يَعْظُمُ لِعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ
وَقُومُوا إِلَىٰ صَلَاتِكُمْ يَرْحَمُكُمُ اللَّهُ