

## Khutbat'ul-Iftikhár

### The Sermon of Glorification by Imam 'Ali ibn 'Abu-Talib<sup>asws</sup>

و من ذلك ما ورد عنه في خطبة الافتخار، رواها الأصمغ بن نباتة قال:

And from that what was reported about him<sup>asws</sup> in the sermon of Glorification [Khutbat'ul-Iftikhár], as reported by Al-Asbagh bin Nabatah, who said:

خطب أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام فقال في خطبته: أنا أخو رسول الله و وارث علمه، و معدن حكمه، و صاحب سرّه، و ما أنزل الله حرفا في كتاب من كتبه إلا و قد صار إليّ، و زاد لي علم ما كان و ما يكون إلى يوم القيامة، أعطيت علم الأنساب و الأسباب، و أعطيت ألف مفتاح يفتح كل مفتاح ألف باب، و مددت بعلم القدر، و إن ذلك يجري في الأوصياء من بعدي ما جرى الليل و النهار حتى يرث الله الأرض و من عليها، و هو خير الوارثين.

(While) addressing, Amir ul-Momineen<sup>asws</sup> said in a Sermons: 'I am the brother of the Rasool-Allah<sup>saww</sup> and the Heir to His<sup>saww</sup> knowledge, the treasury of His<sup>saww</sup> wisdom, and the owner of His<sup>saww</sup> secret. There is not a letter revealed by Allah<sup>azwj</sup> in any of His<sup>azwj</sup> Books but its meanings are deposited into my<sup>asws</sup> chest. He<sup>azwj</sup> has vouchsafed unto me<sup>asws</sup> the knowledge of what was from before and what will be happening until the Day of Resurrection. To me<sup>asws</sup> has been given the knowledge genealogy and the causes. And to me<sup>asws</sup> has been given a thousand keys to a thousand doors. The knowledge of the destinies of all things has been granted unto me<sup>asws</sup>. All these Gifts shall continue to flow through my<sup>asws</sup> appointed successors<sup>asws</sup> (wasi's) as long as day is followed by night and night followed by day and until all things return to Allah. For verily, He is the True Inheritor of all things.

أعطيت الصراط و الميزان و اللواء و الكوثر، أنا المقدم على بني آدم يوم القيامة، أنا المحاسب للخلق، أنا منزهم منازلهم، أنا عذاب أهل النار، ألا كل ذلك فضل من الله عليّ، و من أنكر أن لي في الأرض كرة بعد كرة و عودا بعد رجعة، حديثا كما كنت قديما، فقد ردّ علينا، و من ردّ علينا فقد رد على الله.

Unto me<sup>asws</sup> has been awarded the Path, the Balance, the Banner, and the Kawthar. I<sup>asws</sup> am the one who shall face the children of Adam on the Day of Judgement and shall bring them to accountability and shall direct them to their habitations. And verily, I<sup>asws</sup> will punishment of people of the Fire. These are the bounties of Allah<sup>azwj</sup> unto me<sup>asws</sup>. And should anyone deny that I shall return after the Return, or deny that I shall come back after the Raj'at, or should anyone reject the truth that I shall appear again, even as I have done from the beginning that has no beginning or even unto the end that has no end, he, verily, has denied the truth of all of us<sup>asws</sup>. And verily I<sup>asws</sup> say unto you, he who denies any one of us<sup>asws</sup>, has denied Allah<sup>azwj</sup>.

أنا صاحب الدعوات، أنا صاحب الصلوات، أنا صاحب النعمات، أنا صاحب الدلالات، أنا صاحب الآيات العجيبات، أنا عالم أسرار البريات، أنا قرن من حديد، أنا أبدا جديدا، أنا منزل الملائكة منازلها، أنا آخذ العهد على الأرواح في الأزل، أنا المنادي لهم أ لست بربكم بأمر قيوم لم يزل.

I<sup>asws</sup> am the one who has summoned you; I<sup>asws</sup> am in-charge of the prayers and the invocations. I<sup>asws</sup> am the owner of retribution, and I<sup>asws</sup> am the master of the signs and the in-charge of the wondrous symbols of guidance. I<sup>asws</sup> am cognisant of the mysteries of creation; I<sup>asws</sup> am the one who brought the iron unto men<sup>[1]</sup>. I<sup>asws</sup> am forever active and forever pre-existent, the one<sup>asws</sup> who brought the Angels from out of their habitations, the one<sup>asws</sup> who pledged an everlasting covenant with your spirits on the dawn of creation and Who, on that day, asked, through the will of Allah<sup>azwj</sup>, the Self-subsisting, these words: "Am I not your Lord?"

أنا كلمة الله الناطقة في خلقه، أنا آخذ العهد على جميع الخلائق في الصلوات، أنا غوث الأرامل و اليتامى، أنا باب مدينة العلم، أنا كهف الحلم، أنا دعامة الله القائمة، أنا صاحب لواء الحمد،

I<sup>asws</sup> am the Word of Allah [*Kalimat'u'lláh*] which has been uttered in the world of creation, the Object of the covenant that has been promised in the prayers and salutations which lie in the reality of all created things. I<sup>asws</sup> am the name that has been invoked by orphans and by widows, the door to the city of knowledge and the refuge of patience and forbearance. I<sup>asws</sup> am the upraised flag of Allah<sup>azwj</sup> with praise.

أنا صاحب الهبات بعد الهبات و لو أبحرتمكم لكفرتم، أنا قاتل الجبابرة، أنا الذخيرة في الدنيا و الآخرة، أنا سيّد المؤمنين، أنا علم المهتدين، أنا صاحب اليمين، أنا اليقين، أنا إمام المتقين، أنا السابق إلى الدين، أنا حبل الله المتين، أنا الذي أملاها عدلا كما ملئت ظلما و جورا بسيفي هذا،

I<sup>asws</sup> am the owner of infinite bounty and of infinite grace - and if I tell you (more than this), you would commit blasphemy. . For I<sup>asws</sup> am also the slayer of oppressors, the treasury of divine favours in this world and of the next. I am the master of the believers, the guide of those who seek the way. The truth is mine and certitude is at my side. I<sup>asws</sup> am the Leader of the righteous ones. I am the first to acknowledge the faith, the Cord of Allah that shall not be broken, the One who will raise the world to justice even as it has been brought low by oppression.

أنا صاحب جبريل، أنا تابع ميكائيل، أنا شجرة الهدى، أنا علم التقى، أنا حاشر الخلق إلى الله بالكلمة التي بها يجمع الخلائق، أنا منشئ<sup>1</sup> الأنام، أنا جامع الأحكام، أنا صاحب القضيب الأزهر و الجمل الأحمر، أنا باب اليقين، أنا أمير المؤمنين، أنا صاحب الخضر، أنا صاحب البيضاء، أنا صاحب الفيحاء، أنا قاتل الأقران، أنا مبيد الشجعان، أنا صاحب القرون الأولين، أنا الصديق الأكبر، أنا الفاروق الأعظم، أنا المتكلم بالوحي، أنا صاحب النجوم، أنا مدبرها بأمر ربّي و علم الله الذي خصني به

I<sup>asws</sup> am the companion of Gabriel<sup>as</sup> and the archangel Michael<sup>as</sup> is beside me<sup>asws</sup> (to serve me<sup>asws</sup>). I<sup>asws</sup> am the tree of guidance, and the essence of righteousness. I<sup>asws</sup> shall gather together the world of creation through the Word of Allah<sup>azwj</sup> that gathers together all things. I<sup>asws</sup> awake people from deep sleep (from kufr) and I<sup>asws</sup> am the treasury of all Divine Commands. To me<sup>asws</sup> has been given the Luminous Pen and the Crimson Camel<sup>[2]</sup>. I<sup>asws</sup> am the gate-keeper of certitude, the Commander of the Faithful, the friend of Khizar. I<sup>asws</sup> am

<sup>1</sup> (1) في الأصل المطبوع: منشاء.

the one<sup>asws</sup> who shall conquer Syria and destroy the arrogant (during Raj'a)<sup>2</sup>. I am the owner of the 'white' (hand) miracle (appeared for Prophet Musa<sup>as</sup>). I<sup>asws</sup> am in-charge of the raging Fire. I have been the eliminator (of the enemies of Allah<sup>azwj</sup> during the time) of Al-Qiran. I<sup>asws</sup> am the destroyer of the (famous) braves (enemies of Allah<sup>azwj</sup>). I<sup>asws</sup> am the companion of the first Qiran. I<sup>asws</sup> am the most firm speech and the most trustworthy differentiator. I<sup>asws</sup> (do not speak) except through Inspiration. I am the master of stars and move these through the Amr (Command) and the Knowledge of Allah<sup>azwj</sup> (as per their destined route).

أنا صاحب الرايات الصفراء، أنا صاحب الرايات الحمراء، أنا الغائب المنتظر لأمر العظيم، أنا المعطي، أنا المبذل، أنا القابض يدي على القبض، الواصف لنفسي، أنا الناظر لدين ربي، أنا الحامي لابن عمي، أنا مدرجة في الأكفان، أنا والي الرحمن، أنا صاحب الخضر و هارون، أنا صاحب موسى و يوشع بن نون، أنا صاحب الجنة، أنا صاحب القطر و المطر، أنا صاحب الزلازل و الخسوف، أنا مروع الألوف، أنا قاتل الكفار، أنا إمام الأبرار، أنا البيت المعمور، أنا السقف المرفوع، أنا البحر المسجور، أنا باطن الحرم، أنا عماد الأمم، أنا صاحب الأمر الأعظم، هل من ناطق يناطقي؟

With me<sup>asws</sup> are the saffron and crimson coloured flags and I shall remain concealed until the time shall come for my manifestation in a great Cause (Raj'a). Then, shall I<sup>asws</sup> grant and withhold as I<sup>asws</sup> wish. None can describe me<sup>asws</sup> except myself, for I<sup>asws</sup> shall protect the religion of my<sup>asws</sup> Lord<sup>azwj</sup>. I<sup>asws</sup> am the one whom my cousin (Prophet Muhammad<sup>saww</sup>) chose (as a successor), I<sup>asws</sup> was present when his sacred remains were shrouded. I<sup>asws</sup> am the guardian appointed by Allah<sup>azwj</sup>, the Most Merciful Allah<sup>azwj</sup>. I<sup>asws</sup> am the companion of Khizar<sup>[3]</sup> and Aaron, and the friend of Moses<sup>as</sup> and Joshua<sup>as</sup> - the son of Nun<sup>as</sup>. I<sup>asws</sup> am the distributor of Paradise, with my permission rain falls and the earth to quake and the sun and moon to be eclipsed. I<sup>asws</sup> am the object of the creation of multitudes and it is I<sup>asws</sup> who shall slay those who do not believe. Verily, I<sup>asws</sup> am the leader of the righteous, the Sacred Fane frequented by all, the upraised firmament, the fathomless ocean. I<sup>asws</sup> am the Holy of Holies, the pillar that supports humanity. I<sup>asws</sup> am the Possessor of the Greatest Cause. Is there anyone who can speak beside me<sup>asws</sup>?

أنا النار، و لو لا أني أسمع كلام الله و قول رسول الله صلى الله عليه و آله لوضعت سيفي فيكم و قتلنكم عن آخركم، أنا شهر رمضان، أنا ليلة القدر، أنا أم الكتاب، أنا فصل الخطاب، أنا سورة الحمد، أنا صاحب الصلاة في الخضر و السفر، بل نحن الصلاة و الصيام و الليالي و الأيام و الشهور و الأعوام، أنا صاحب الحشر و النحر، أنا الواضع عن أمة محمد الوزر، أنا باب السجود، أنا العابد، أنا المخلوق، أنا الشاهد، أنا المشهود، أنا صاحب السندس الأخضر، أنا المذكور في السماوات و الأرض، أنا الماضي مع رسول الله في السماوات، أنا صاحب الكتاب و القوس، أنا صاحب شيث بن آدم، أنا صاحب موسى و إرم، أنا بي تضرب الأمثال، أنا السماء الخضر، أنا صاحب الدنيا الغبراء، أنا صاحب الغيث بعد القنوط.

I<sup>asws</sup> am (the owner of the) fire itself. At a single Word of Allah<sup>azwj</sup>, at one utterance of the Prophet<sup>saww</sup>, I<sup>asws</sup> would put within you my sword's length and send you hurrying unto your next abode. I<sup>asws</sup> am the meaning of Ramadán and the night of Qadr<sup>[4]</sup> mentioned in the Mother Book. My<sup>asws</sup> utterance is decisive, for I am the Súrah of Praise<sup>[5]</sup>. I<sup>asws</sup> am the purpose of prayer itself, whether at home or when travelling. I<sup>asws</sup> am the purpose of Salat and fasting, and the sacred anniversaries in the months of the year. I<sup>asws</sup> have been made in-

<sup>2</sup> [https://hubeali.com/articles/Rajja\\_Return\\_to-Life.pdf](https://hubeali.com/articles/Rajja_Return_to-Life.pdf)

charge of the Resurrection and Judgement, the one<sup>asws</sup> who can remove the yoke that lies heavy on the people of Muhammad<sup>saww</sup>. I<sup>asws</sup> am the Gate through which all shall pass who worship Allah<sup>azwj</sup>; I<sup>asws</sup> am His<sup>azwj</sup> worshipper, and one<sup>asws</sup> created by Him<sup>azwj</sup>.<sup>3</sup> I<sup>asws</sup> am the witness (to Allah<sup>azwj</sup>'s religion) and the one witnessed to, the possessor of the green canopy, He<sup>asws</sup> whose name is mentioned in the heavens and in the earth, the one<sup>asws</sup> who is the travelling companion of the Rasool-Allah<sup>saww</sup> throughout the heavens, for with me<sup>asws</sup> is the Book and the sacred Arc. I<sup>asws</sup> am the One who befriended Seth<sup>as</sup>, the son of Adam<sup>as[6]</sup>, the companion of Moses<sup>as</sup> and Irám<sup>as</sup>, and all metaphors and analogies pertain unto me<sup>asws</sup>. Who indeed is there to compare with me<sup>asws</sup>? For I<sup>asws</sup> am the heaven-sent rain that caused each blade of green to grow, the Lord of this nether realm who brings forth the rains when all have lost their hope in its downpour.

ها أنا ذا فمن ذا مثلي، أنا صاحب الرعد الأكبر، أنا صاحب البحر الأكبر، أنا مكلم الشمس، أنا الصاعقة على الأعداء، أنا غوث من أطاع من الورى و الله ربي لا إله غيره، ألا و إن للباطل جولة و للحق دولة، و إني ظاعن عن قريب فارتقبوا الفتنة الأموية و الدولة الكسروية، ثم تقبل دولة بني العباس بالفرج و البأس، و تبنى مدينة يقال لها الزوراء بين دجلة و دجيل و الفرات، ملعون من سكنها، منها تخرج طينة الجبارين، تعلقى فيها القصور، و تسبل الستور، و يتعلون بالمكر و الفجور، فيتداولها بنو العباس ملكا على عدد سني الملك، ثم الفتنة الغبراء، و القلادة الحمراء في عنقها قائم الحق، ثم أسفر عن وجهي بين أجنحة الأقاليم كالقمر المضيء بين الكواكب، ألا و إن لخروجي علامات عشرة، أولها تحريف الرايات في أزقة الكوفة، و تعطيل المساجد، و انقطاع الحاج، و خسف و قذف بخراسان، و طلوع الكوكب المذنب، و اقتتان النجوم، و هرج و مرج و قتل و نهب، فتلك علامات عشرة، و من العلامة إلى العلامة عجب، فإذا تمت العلامات قام قائمنا قائم الحق ..

I<sup>asws</sup> am He Who summoned the mighty lightning and caused the ocean to rise and swell, the one<sup>asws</sup> who spoke to the sun and caused the stunning trumpet to blast forth. I<sup>asws</sup> am the refuge of all that have obeyed Allah<sup>azwj</sup>, and verily, Allah<sup>azwj</sup> is my Lord and there is no other Allah<sup>azwj</sup> but He<sup>azwj</sup>. For falsehood offers illusions, but truth gives the everlasting sovereignty. I<sup>asws</sup> shall soon depart from amongst you, but be watchful and aware; be on your guard against the tests and tribulations caused by the 'Umayyad's and their worldly powers. And after they shall pass away, the kingdom will revert to the 'Abbasids<sup>[7]</sup> who will bring both sorrow and happiness to mankind. And they shall build a city called Baghdád, which shall be between the Tigris and the Euphrates. Woe betide men in those latter days, for amongst them will rise the oppressors among my people, who shall build palaces for themselves and courts and tabernacles. For they shall seek supremacy through intrigue and impiety. Two score and two kings shall rule among the children of the 'Abbasids, after whose reign shall come to pass the Most Great Tribulation on the surface of the earth. Then shall the True Qá'im<sup>asws</sup> rise up once more. Then shall I show my face amongst men, and it shall be as luminous as the face of the moon amid the other stars. But note well the ten signs associated with my coming. The first sign shall be the inversion of banners on the highways of Kúfa<sup>[8]</sup>; the second, the abeyance of true worship and the prescribed prayers; the third, the end of true pilgrimage. The fourth sign shall be an eclipse in the lands of Khorasán<sup>[9]</sup>, the gathering of constellations and the appearance of comets in the sky. There shall be chaos and confusion, massacre, pillage and robbery in the world. Many other signs shall there be

<sup>3</sup> In some old copies instead of 'المخلوق' it is written as 'مُتَّبِعُود'

too, surpassing all these signs, among which is the sign of wonderment. But when all these signs have passed away, then, verily, shall the Qá'im<sup>asws</sup> Himself arise in truth.

ثم قال: معاشر الناس نزهوا ربكم و لا تشيروا إليه، فمن حد الخالق فقد كفر بالكتاب الناطق، ثم قال: طوبى لأهل ولايتي الذين يقتلون فيّ، و يطردون من أجلي، هم خزّان الله في أرضه، لا يفزعون يوم الفزع الأكبر، أنا نور الله الذي لا يطفى، أنا السرّ الذي لا يخفى

(Then said) O people, sanctify the Lord<sup>azwj</sup> your Allah<sup>azwj</sup> from all similitude(s), for every reference to Him<sup>azwj</sup> fails, and whosoever tries to limit the Creator by description or comparison has verily disbelieved in His<sup>azwj</sup> Book, which is the Book of Allah<sup>azwj</sup>'s Own Utterance. Then He<sup>asws</sup> [10] said: How great the blessedness of those who love me<sup>asws</sup> and who sacrifice their life in my<sup>asws</sup> path and who get exiled because of me<sup>asws</sup>! They truly are the repositories of Allah<sup>azwj</sup>'s knowledge, nor shall they be put to fear on the Day of the Great Terror. I<sup>asws</sup> am the Light of Allah<sup>azwj</sup>, Who can never be extinguished; I<sup>asws</sup> am the Mystery of Allah<sup>azwj</sup> that cannot be concealed.<sup>4</sup>

## Notes

[1] Reference to the Súrah of Iron in the Holy Qur'án.

[2] Oblique reference to the Thamud, their Prophet Salíh and the She-Camel so often referred to in the Holy Qur'án (11:61-65)

[3] In Islamic tradition, Khizar was a servant of Allah who had been taught special knowledge and was sent to be a companion and teacher to Moses (see Qur'án 18:65-82; Bukharí, Vol. 1, Bk 3, #74, 78, 124 and also Vol. 9, Bk. 93, #570). Khizar may not be a reference to a person, but, rather, to the inspirational Source. In this sermon, the Imám 'Alí<sup>asws</sup> is, in a sense, the Muse to all those inspired before, similar to Gabriel in the Qur'án (2:97).

[4] See Qur'án 97:1-3.

[5] The first Súrah in the Holy Qur'án and endowed with amazing powers.

[6] Seth is named in Genesis as the son of Adam, and he lived for 912 years. (See Gen. 4:25-5:8.) Here, however, the reference is to the notion that Companion (Sahib), in a sense, means that the Eternal "I" was with Seth (in Arabic, Shayth, the son of Adam). In Luke, Seth is an ancestor to Christ

[7] The family of Abbas, the uncle of Muhammad.(S.A)

[8] A city near the Euphrates River, 177km south of Baghdád. Formerly a Mesopotamian city, Kúfa was re-founded by the Arabs in 638, and was the capital of the Islamic Empire during the caliphate of the Imám 'Alí<sup>asws</sup>. For a time, it also served as the centre for the 'Abbasid caliphate. This and the following references are to catastrophes and spiritual reverses in the fortunes of truth. [MF's note, based on information from the on-line Columbia Encyclopaedia and from a personal e-mail received from the translator, dated Thursday, March 1, 2001.]

<sup>4</sup> 260 مشارق أنوار اليقين في أسرار أمير المؤمنين عليه السلام، ص:

[9] A mountainous and arid province in north-eastern Irán. The territory served as the capital of the eastern provinces of Islám during the time of the early 'Abbasid Caliphs. Khorásan was first invaded by the Oghuz Turks in 1153 and again in 1157. The Mongols devastated the region between 1220 and 1222. Timur invaded in 1383

[10] Imám 'Alí<sup>asws</sup>