



الشعر

Poetry



Lesson 11



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DrVaniya.com



نَصُّ شِعْرِي

قَصِيدَةُ الْفَرَزْدَقِ فِي مَدْحِ الْإِمَامِ زَيْنِ الْعَابِدِينَ

This beautiful *qaSiidah* by the famous Ummayyad poet al-Farazdaq is in praise of "aliyy ibn al-Husayn ibn "aliyy known as zayn al-"aabidiin.

The occasion of composing this *qaSiidah* is that hishaam ibn "abd al-malk ibn marwaan performed Hajj during the lifetime of father. While performing the *Tawaaf* he tried to kiss the *al-Hajar al-aswad*, but could not because of the big crowd. He sat down there waiting along with some notables from Syria.

During this time "aliyy ibn al-Husayn ibn "aliyy known as zayn al-"aabidiin came to perform the *Tawaaf*. And when he went to kiss the *al-Hajar al-aswad*, the crowd receded and respectfully allowed him to kiss. At this, one of the notables asked hishaam who this man was, and why the crowd showed him such great respect. For political reasons, hishaam said that he did not know him.

The poet al-Farazdaq, who was a great admirer and lover of zayn al-"aabidiin was with hishaam. Angered by this reply, he extemporized this *qaSiidah*.

Here are some most beautiful couplets of this *qaSiidah*:



هذا الذي تعرفُ البطحاءَ وطأتهُ والبيتُ يعرفُهُ، والحِلُّ والحرمُ

هذا ابنُ خيرِ عبادِ اللهِ كلِّهمُ هذا التَّقِيُّ النِّقِيُّ الطَّاهِرُ العَلَمُ

هذا ابنُ فاطمةٍ إنْ كُنْتَ جاهِلَهُ بِجَدِّهِ أَنبِيَاءِ اللهِ قَدْ خُتِمُوا

ولَيْسَ قَوْلُكَ «مَنْ هَذَا؟» بِضَائِرِهِ العُربُ تَعْرِفُ مَنْ أَنْكَرْتَ والعَجَمُ

إذا رَأَتْهُ قُرَيْشٌ قَالَ قَائِلُهَا إِلَى مَكَارِمِ هَذَا يَنْتَهِي الكَرَمُ

يُغْضِي حَيَاءً، وَيُغْضِي مِنْ مَهَابَتِهِ فَمَا يُكَلِّمُ إِلَّا حِينَ يَبْتَسِمُ

ما قال: «لا» قَطُّ، إِلَّا فِي تَشْهَدِهِ لَوْلَا التَّشْهَدُ كَانَتْ لَاءُهُ نَعَمُ

عَمَّ البَرِيَّةَ بِالإِحْسَانِ، فَانْقَشَعَتْ عَنْهَا الغِيَابُ والإِمْلَاقُ والعَدَمُ

من مَعَشَرَ حُبُّهُمْ دِينٍ، وَبُغْضُهُمْ كُفْرٌ، وَقُرْبُهُمْ مَنْجَى وَمُعْتَصَمُ

إِنَّ عُدَّ أَهْلَ التَّقَى كَانُوا أَيْمَتَهُمْ أَوْ قِيلَ: «مَنْ خَيْرُ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ؟» قِيلَ: «هُمْ»

لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ جَوَادٌ بَعْدَ جُودِهِمْ وَلَا يُدَانِيهِمْ قَوْمٌ، وَإِنْ كَرُمُوا

هُمْ الْغِيُوثُ إِذَا مَا أَزَمَتْ وَالْأُسْدُ أَسْدُ الشَّرِّ وَالْبَأْسُ مُحْتَدَمٌ

مُقَدَّمٌ بَعْدَ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ذِكْرَهُمْ فِي كُلِّ بَدْءٍ، وَمُخْتَوِّمٌ بِهِ الْكَلِمُ



The *qaSiidah* with translation & Lexical and Grammatical Notes



(1)

هذا الذي تعرفُ البطحاءُ ووطأتهُ والبيتُ يعرفُهُ، والحِلُّ والحَرَمُ



This is the one whose footprint is known to al-BatHaa'.

The House (of Allah) knows him.

The Sacred Precinct of Makkah knows him,
and likewise the profane precinct beyond Makkah.

البَطْحَاءُ is an area in Makkah.

وَطَأُ (i-a), to tread, to step, to set foot. Its *maSdar* is وَطْءٌ, and
maSdar marrah is وَطْءَةٌ.

الحَرَمُ, the Sacred Precinct of Makkah and areas surrounding it. Its boundaries are marked with pillars.

الحِلُّ is the area which lies beyond the Haram, e.g., "arafaat is Hill, and Haram ends at Masjid Namirah.

So Hill practically means the whole world except Makkah.

(2)

هذا ابنُ خيرِ عبادِ اللهِ كلِّهمُ هذا التَّقِيُّ النَّقِيُّ الطَّاهِرُ الْعَلَمُ



He is the son of the best of Allah's servants put together.
He is the pious, the immaculate, the pure, the outstanding.

اتَّقَى is derived from وَقَى يَقِي (a-i), to save. The baab viii is اتَّقَى

يَتَّقِي, to be pious, to be conscious of Allah,

نَقِيَ يَنْقِي نَقَاءً، وَنَقَاوَةً (i-a), to be pure.

طَهَّرَ طَهَارَةً (u-u), to be clean.

عَلَمٌ means a leader of the community, pl أَعْلَامٌ. I have translated it as *the outstanding*.

The poet means by خَيْرُ عِبَادِ اللَّهِ كُلِّهِمْ the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

(3)

هذا ابنُ فاطمةٍ إنْ كُنْتَ جَاهِلُهُ بِجَدِّهِ أَنْبِيَاءُ اللَّهِ قَدْ خُتِمُوا



This is the son of Fatimah if you do not know him.
His grandfather was made the seal of the prophets of Allah.

ابنُ فاطمةٍ : Note that in poetry, a مَمْنُوعٌ مِنَ الصَّرْفِ noun may be used as a مَصْرُوفٌ noun.

(4)

وَلَيْسَ قَوْلُكَ «مَنْ هَذَا؟» بِضَائِرِهِ الْعَرَبُ تَعْرِفُ مَنْ أَنْكَرْتَ وَالْعَجْمُ



And your saying 'Who is he?' is not going to harm him.

The Arabs as well as the non-Arabs know
whom you failed to recognize.

ضَارَ يَضِيرُ ضَيْرًا (a-i), to harm.

أَنْكَرَ إِنْكَارًا (iv), to fail to recognize.

الْعَرَبُ is another form of الْعَرَبُ.

As we have seen, the question 'Who is he?' was asked by a Syrian notable, and hishaam had replied to him saying 'I do not know him'. The poet has attributed the question to hishaam. It does not matter much because the result is the same.

(5)

إِذَا رَأَتْهُ قُرَيْشٌ قَالَ قَائِلُهَا إِلَى مَكَارِمِ هَذَا يَنْتَهِي الْكَرَمُ



When the people of Quraysh saw him, one of them said,
'Generosity ends with the generous deeds of this man'.

(6)

يُغْضِي حَيَاءً، وَيُغْضَى مِنْ مَهَابَتِهِ فَمَا يُكَلَّمُ إِلَّا حِينَ يَبْتَسِمُ



His eyes are half-closed out of modesty.

And all eyes are half-closed in awe of him.

And he is not spoken to except when he smiles.

أَغْضَى (iv), to half-close one's eyes.

يُغْضَى is passive voice. So it means 'eyes are half-closed'.

هَابَهُ يَهَابُهُ هَيْبَةً وَمَهَابَةً (i-a), to feel awe.

(7)

مَا قَالَ: «لَا» قَطُّ، إِلَّا فِي تَشْهُدِهِ لَوْلَا التَّشْهُدُ كَانَتْ لَاءُهُ نَعْمٌ



He never said *No* except in his declaration of faith (*tashahhud*).

If there were no declaration of faith

his *No* would have been *Yes*.

كَانَتْ لَاءُهُ نَعْمٌ (His *Yes* would have been *No*.)

For poetic reason, the poet has inverted the elements of this sentence. The correct sequence should be **كَانَتْ لَأُوهُ نَعْمًا**.

(8)

عَمَّ الْبِرِّيَّةَ بِالْإِحْسَانِ، فَاَنْقَشَعَتْ عَنْهَا الْغِيَابُ وَالْإِمْلَاقُ وَالْعَدَمُ



His beneficence has embraced all of Allaah's creatures.
So darkness (of ignorance), poverty and want have been dispelled.

بِرَايَا، creatures, all the people, pl الْبِرِّيَّةُ.

عَمَّ يَعُمُّ عُمُومًا (a-u), to comprise, embrace, pervade.

انْقَشَعَ انْقِشَاعًا (vii), to be dispersed, be dispelled.

غِيَابُ، darkness, pl الْغِيَابُ.

الْإِمْلَاقُ، poverty.

This word occurs in the Glorious Qur'aan in two *aayat*. In one of them Allaah *subHaanahuu wa ta'aalaa* says:

﴿وَلَا تَقْتُلُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ مِنْ إِمْلَاقٍ مِمَّنْ نَرْزُقُكُمْ وَإِيَّاهُمْ﴾



Do not kill your children because of poverty. We provide sustenance for you and for them. [Q 6:151].

The other *aayah* is Q 17:31.



عَدِمَ الشَّيْءَ يَعْدِمُهُ عَدَمًا (i-a), to be deprived of something, to lack something.

الْعَدَمُ, depravity, want.

The pronoun in **عَنْهَا** refers to **الْبَرِيَّةُ**.

(9)

مِنْ مَعَشَرٍ حُبُّهُمْ دِينٌ، وَبُغْضُهُمْ كُفْرٌ، وَقُرْبُهُمْ مَنْجَى وَمُعْتَصِمٌ 

He belongs to such a society that to love them is part of faith,
and to hate them is unbelief
and to be close to them is a means of salvation
and a place of refuge.

مَعَشَرٌ, group, society. Pl. مَعَاشِرُ. (See Q6:130)

نَجَا يَنْجُو نَجَاءً، وَنَجَاةً (a-u), to escape.

Its ism al-makān wa l-zamān is مَنْجَى, place of escape.

عَصِمَ (a-i), to protect. (See Q5:67).

The capital city is called **الْعَاصِمَةُ** because it protects the country
from enemy attacks.

اِعْتَصَمَ اِعْتِصَامًا (viii), to be protected.

Its ism al-makān wa l-zamān is مُعْتَصِمٌ (a place providing
protection).

حُبُّهُمْ دِينٌ، وَبُغْضُهُمْ كُفْرٌ،

وَقُرْبُهُمْ مَنْجَى وَمُعْتَصِمٌ

Each of these three sentences is a نَعْت of the word مَعْشَرٌ.

Note that the *mîm* in بُغْضُهُمْ and قُرْبُهُمْ has *dammah* instead of *sukūn*. This is permissible in poetry.

In normal Arabic this happens only when the next word commences with هَمْزَةُ الْوَصْلِ as in بَيْتُهُمْ الْجَدِيدُ.

(10)

إِنْ عُدَّ أَهْلُ التَّقَى كَانُوا أَيْمَتَّهُمْ 
أَوْ قِيلَ: «مَنْ خَيْرُ أَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ؟» قِيلَ: «هُمْ»

If people of piety are counted, they are their leaders.
And if a question is asked, 'Who are the best people on earth?',
the reply will be, 'They.'

(11)

لَا يَسْتَطِيعُ جَوَادٌ بَعْدَ جُودِهِمْ وَلَا يُدَانِيهِمْ قَوْمٌ، وَإِنْ كَرُمُوا 

No one known for generosity can practice generosity
after their deeds of generosity.

And no community can ever come close to them
even if they do great acts of generosity.

دَنَا يَدْنُو دُنُوًّا, to come near.

دَانِي يَدَانِي مُدَانَاً (iii), to approach, to close.

(12)

هُمُ الْغِيُوثُ إِذَا مَا أَزَمَتْ أَزَمَتْ وَالْأُسْدُ أُسْدُ الشَّرَى وَالْبَأْسُ مُحْتَدِمٌ



Like rains they provide relief to people
when they are hit by hard times.
They are brave soldiers like the lions of Sharaa
when war breaks out and flares up in every direction.

غِيُوثٌ, rain, pl غَيْثٌ.

غَاثَ اللَّهُ الْبِلَادَ يَغِيْثُهَا غَيْثًا, to send down rain.

This word occurs in the following *ayah*:

﴿ثُمَّ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ عَامٌ فِيهِ يُغَاثُ النَّاسُ وَفِيهِ يَعَصِرُونَ﴾



Then thereafter will come a year in which people will receive rain, and in which they will press (oil, wine, etc) [Q12:49]

أَزَمَ عَلَيْنَا الدَّهْرُ يَأْزِمُ أَزْمًا (a-i) mean 'we were hit by hard times with very little relief.'

أَزْمَةٌ, hard times like famine, etc. Pl أَزْمَاتٌ. In Modern Arabic this word is used to mean a crisis.

أُسْدٌ is a lightened form of أُسْدٌ which is the plural of أَسَدٌ (a lion).

الشَّرَى, a forest in the Arabian Peninsula which in ancient times was a habitation of ferocious lions.

احْتَدَمَتِ النَّارُ (viii), (of the fire) to flare up, to blaze; (of a war) to break out.

البَّاسُ, here meaning war.

In وَالْأُسْدُ أُسْدُ الشَّرَى, the second أُسْدُ is a *badal* (هُمُ الْأُسْدُ، أُسْدُ)

الشَّرَى

The *waaw* in وَالْبَّاسُ مُحْتَدِمٌ is وَאוُ الْحَالِ.

(13)

مُقَدَّمٌ بَعْدَ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ذِكْرُهُمْ فِي كُلِّ بَدْءٍ، وَمُخْتَوِّمٌ بِهِ الْكَلِمُ



At the beginning of every discourse,
their names are the ones
that are mentioned first after Allah's name,
and its their names with which every discourse ends.

He means that at the beginning of every discourse, we praise Allah first, and then pronounce the *Salaah* which consists of invoking Allah's benediction on the Prophet and his family. And the discourse comes to an end with the *Salaah*.

كَلِمٌ is the plural of كَلِمَةٌ .

This plural is used both as feminine and masculine.

In this line the *khavar* is masculine : وَمَخْتَوْمٌ بِهِ الْكَلِمُ .

Al-Farazdaq (الْفَرَزْدَقُ) is an Ummayyad poet. Al-Farazdaq was his nickname. This is an Arabicized Persian word meaning *a piece of dough*. He was so named on account of his big frowning face. His name was هُمَامُ بْنُ غَالِبِ التَّمِيمِيُّ . He was born in Basrah in 38 AH and died in 114 AH (641-732).

The *baHr* of this *qaSiidah* is *al-basiiT* (الْبَسِيطُ). It consists of the following feet:

مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ فَاعِلُنْ (twice)

مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ is made up of:

A long syllable + a long syllable + a short syllable + a long syllable =
dan + dan + da + dan

English words corresponding to this pattern are: *come, come to me.*

فَاعِلُنْ is made up of:

A long syllable + a short syllable + a long syllable = dan + da + dan.

English words corresponding to this pattern are: *come to me*.

Note that فَاعِلُنْ may be changed to فَعِلُنْ which is made up of:
a short syllable + a short syllable + a long syllable = da + da + dan.

English words corresponding to this pattern are: *any one*.

هذا الذي تعرفُ البطحاءُ وطأتهُ والبيتُ يعرفُهُ، والحِلُّ والحرمُ

ها ذلٌ لذي = dan + dan + da + dan

يعرِ فلٌ = dan + da + dan

بطأ حاءُ وطأ = dan + dan + da + dan

ء ت هو = da + da + dan

ول بي ت يع = dan + dan + da + dan

رف هو = da + da + dan

ول حل ل ول = dan + dan + da + dan

ح ر مو = da + da + dan