Name

Name of Professor

Name of Class

Day Month Year

Pericles Speech

The speech given by Pericles was in the honor of fallen Athenian heroes at the end of the war and was filled with the height of emotions and patriotism. In the speech he disrobed the qualities of Athenians and what makes them great. The idea that they were able to strive hard for the good of their country. Some of the great qualities of Athenians described in his speech are that they share the bonds of trust and have a mutual desire for freedom. What makes them great is that they obey the laws and regulations not because they are bound to do so but because they really want to do it. They are a unique type of citizen; they are intelligent, open-minded, and tolerant. They are able to cope up with any challenge and have become the new ideal for the Greek world.

The state is better than other states of Greek because of their unique system of democracy. He describes this system as "Its administration favors the many instead of the few; this is why it is called a democracy." Their state offers justice to all without any discrimination of the class or wealth. In addition, they do not copy laws of others which makes them unique rather they give a unique role model to the other states. "Our constitution does not copy the laws of neighboring states; we are rather a pattern to others than imitators ourselves."

His idea of the state as depicted in his speech is that the state has the purpose of serving the people of the state. He considers the democracy as the best form of government, and it offers the opportunities to all the men without any discrimination, "class considerations not being allowed to interfere with merit" (*Internet History Sourcebooks*). That is why he has adopted democracy for his state, and he considers the Athenians as superior to any other citizens of the fellow states. Since he calls his state the best and better from the fellow states, his state is the ideal one having democracy as the system in which every capable man enjoys the benefit. Such state allows several occasions to fresh the mind by celebrating games and sacrifices of its people. The freedom is not just in the government, but it also exists in the ordinary life of the citizens so that the Athenians enjoy the same fruits as the fellow states. Such a state is open for the opportunities to the foreigners.

In his speech, he addresses the women from the family of those who died in the war. He advised the women on several issues and matters and guided them, regarding what is their role in the success and betterment of the state. His advice has been reduced to an ideological perception which called for silence form Athenian women. He persuaded women without offending the men in the audience. He believes the role of women is essential in the success of the strategies that he had to use against the Peloponnesians. He appreciated the women who will be widows and advised them not to mourn over the death of the soldiers but to feel proud being their widows, “On the other hand, if I must say anything on the subject of female excellence to those of you who will now be in widowhood, it will be all comprised in this brief exhortation.” (*Internet History Sourcebooks*). The role of women is not just confined to that of the inside of the house but also outside the house, and they can play the equal role in the betterment of their state and to win against Peloponnesians. Overall women must realize her roles and responsibilities and must be moderate in behavior. "Great will be your glory in not falling short of your natural character; and greatest will be hers who is least talked of among the men, whether for good or for bad.”

He depicts the men who have died sacrificing for their nation and their people like the heroic characters and depicts them as the ideal one must follow. They are depicted as the role models and perfect examples of how a man must live and die. Athens who died in the service of their country deserves appreciation and praise. He pays tribute to the fallen soldiers and embraces the fact that they are the real heroes, “the Athens that I have celebrated is only what the heroism of these and their like have made her” (*Internet History Sourcebooks*). According to him the value of these spirits who died cannot be described in words, and they deserve the praise and gratitude, “You, their survivors, must determine to have as unfaltering a resolution in the field, though you may pray that it may have a happier issue.” They are the examples which are only celebrated in their own country but will be respected in foreign lands as well.

At that time religion as the religion was deeply embedded in the civic life of people and they could not consider a separation between the state and the church. Participation in rituals was considered a political act. Pericles had a relationship with gods, and he was the spokesman of the civic religion. Due to his attachment to religion, he was inclined to making policies aimed at launching architectural, religious works throughout Attica; and, furthermore, he was engaged in such doings at a time when the city was familiarizing with autochthony He had also developed personal relationships with God.

Works Cited

*Internet History Sourcebooks*. https://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/ancient/pericles-funeralspeech.asp. Accessed 11 Mar. 2019.