

١. قال (عليه السلام): كُنْ فِي الْفِتْنَةِ كَابْنِ اللَّبُونِ، لَا ظَهْرٌ فَيُرَكَبُ، وَلَا ضَرْعٌ فَيُحْلَبُ.

1. Amīr al-mu'minīn, peace be upon him, said: During civil disturbance be like an adolescent camel [1] who has neither a back strong enough for riding nor udders for milking.

Footnotes :

[1] "Labūn" means a milch camel and "ibnu'l-labūn" means its two year old young. In this age the young is neither suitable for riding nor does it has udders which could be milked. It is called "ibnu'l-labūn" because in this period of two years its mother bears another young and begins yielding milk again.

The intention is that during civil disturbance or trouble a man should behave in such a manner that lie may be regarded of no consequence and ignored. No need should be felt for his participation in either party. This is because during mischief only dissociation can save from molestation. Of course, when the clash is between right and wrong it is not permissible to keep aloof nor can it be called civil disturbance: but on such occasions it is obligatory to rise up for the support of right and suppression of wrong. For example, during the battles of Jamal and Şiffin it was obligatory to support the right and to fight against the wrong.