

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام) في معنى الخوارج لما أنكروا تحكيم الرجال ويذم فيه أصحابه، قال (عليه السلام):

About the Khārijites and their opinion on Arbitration

إِنَّمَا لَمْ نُحْكَمْ بِالرِّجَالِ، وَإِنَّمَا حَكَمْنَا الْقُرْآنَ. وَهَذَا الْقُرْآنُ إِنَّمَا هُوَ خَطٌّ مُسْتَوٍ بَيْنَ الدِّفَتَيْنِ، لَا يَنْطِقُ بِلِسَانٍ، وَلَا يَدُّ لَهُ مِنْ تَرْجُمَانٍ، وَإِنَّمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنْهُ الرِّجَالُ. وَلِمَا دَعَانَا الْقَوْمُ إِلَى أَنْ نَحْكُمَ بَيْنَنَا الْقُرْآنَ لَمْ نَكُنِ الْفَرِيقَ الْمَتَوَلِّيَ عَنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ، وَقَالَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ: ﴿فَإِنْ تَنَازَعْتُمْ فِي شَيْءٍ فَرُدُّوهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَالرَّسُولِ﴾.

We did not name people the arbitrators but we named the Qur'ān the arbitrator. The Qur'ān is a book, covered, between two flaps, and it does not speak. It should therefore necessarily have an interpreter. Men alone can be such interpreters.

When these people invited us to name the Qur'ān as the arbitrator between us, we could not be the party turning away from the Book of Allāh, since Allāh has said : “. . . And then if ye quarrel about anything refer it to Allāh and the Prophet . . .” (Qur'ān, 4:59)

فَرَدَّهُ إِلَيَّ اللَّهُ أَنْ نَحْكُمَ بِكِتَابِهِ، وَرَدَّهُ إِلَى الرَّسُولِ أَنْ نَأْخُذَ بِسُنَّتِهِ؛ فَإِذَا حُكِمَ بِالصِّدْقِ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ، فَنَحْنُ أَحَقُّ النَّاسِ بِهِ، وَإِنْ حُكِمَ بِسُنَّةِ رَسُولِهِ فَنَحْنُ أَوْلَاهُمْ بِهِ.

Reference to Allāh means that we decide according to the Qur'ān while reference to the Prophet means that we follow his sunnah. Now therefore, if arbitration were truly done through the Book of Allāh (Qur'ān), we would be the most rightful of all people for the Caliphate; or if it were done by the sunnah of the Holy Prophet, we would be the most preferable of them.

وَأَمَّا قَوْلُكُمْ: لِمَ جَعَلْتَ بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُمْ أَجَلًا فِي التَّحْكِيمِ؟ فَإِنَّمَا فَعَلْتُ ذَلِكَ لِتَبَيُّنِ الْجَاهِلِ، وَتَشْيِيتِ الْعَالَمِ، وَلَعَلَّ اللَّهَ أَنْ يُصْلِحَ فِي هَذِهِ الْهَدَنَةِ أَمْرَ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ، وَلَا تَتَّخِذَ بِأَكْظَامِهَا، فَتَعْجَلَ عَنْ تَبَيُّنِ الْحَقِّ، وَتَنْفَادَ لِأَوَّلِ الْغَيِّ. إِنْ أَفْضَلَ النَّاسِ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مَنْ كَانَ الْعَمَلُ بِالْحَقِّ أَحَبَّ إِلَيْهِ - وَإِنْ نَقَصَهُ وَكَرِهَهُ - مِنَ الْبَاطِلِ وَإِنْ جَرَّ إِلَيْهِ فَائِدَةٌ وَزَادَهُ،

Concerning your point why I allowed a time lag between myself and them with regard to the Arbitration, I did so in order that the ignorant may find out (the truth) and one who already knows may hold with it firmly. Possibly Allāh may, as a result of this peace, improve the condition of these people, and they will not be caught by the throats and will not, before indication of the right, fall into rebellion as before. Certainly the best man before Allāh is he who loves most to act according to right, even though it causes him hardship and grief, rather than according to wrong, even though it gives him benefit and increase.

فَأَيُّ يَتَاهُ بِكُمْ؟! وَمِنْ أَيْنَ أَتَيْتُمْ؟! اسْتَعِدُّوا لِلْمَسِيرِ إِلَى قَوْمٍ حَيَّارٍ عَنِ الْحَقِّ لَا يُبْصِرُونَهُ، وَمَوْزَعِينَ بِالْجَوْرِ لَا يَعْدِلُونَ بِهِ، جُفَاءً عَنْ

الْكِتَابُ، نُكِبَ عَنِ الطَّرِيقِ. مَا أَنْتُمْ بِوَثِيقَةٍ يُعْلَقُ بِهَا، وَلَا زَوَافِرٍ يُعْتَصِمُ إِلَيْهَا، لِبَشْسٍ حُشَّاشٍ نَارِ الْحَرْبِ أَنْتُمْ! أَفَّ لَكُمْ! لَقَدْ لَقِيتُ مِنْكُمْ بَرَحًا، يَوْمًا أَنَا دِيَكُمْ وَيَوْمًا أَنَا جِيكُمْ، فَلَا أحرارَ صِدْقٍ عِنْدَ الذِّدَاءِ، وَلَا إِخْوَانِ ثِقَةٍ عِنْدَ الذِّجَاءِ!

So, where are you being mislead and from where have you been brought (to this state)? Be prepared to march to the people who have deviated from the right and do not see it, have been entangled in wrongdoing and are not corrected. They are away from the Book and turned from the (right) path. You are not trustworthy to rely upon, nor are you holders of honour to be adhered to. You are very bad in kindling the fire of fighting. Woe to you! I had to bear a lot of worries from you. Some day I call you (to jihād) and some day I speak to you in confidence, you are neither true free men at the time of call, nor trustworthy brothers at the time of speaking in confidence.