

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام) يتبرأ من الظلم

About keeping aloof from oppression and misappropriation. “Aqīl’s condition of poverty and destitution

وَاللَّهِ لَإِنْ أَبَيْتَ عَلَيَّ حَسَبَكَ السَّعْدَانَ مُسَهِّدًا، أَوْ أُجِرَّ فِي الْأَغْلَالِ مُصَفَّدًا، أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ أَلْقَى اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ظَالِمًا لِبَعْضِ الْعِبَادِ، وَغَا صَبًا لِنِسْبِهِ مِنَ الْحَطَامِ، وَكَيْفَ أَظْلِمُ أَحَدًا لِنَفْسٍ يَسْرِعُ إِلَى الْبَلَى قَفُولَهَا، وَيَطُولُ فِي الثَّرَى حُلُولَهَا؟!

By Allāh, I would rather pass a night in wakefulness on the thorns of as-sa‘dān (a plant having sharp prickles) or be driven in chains as a prisoner than meet Allāh and His Messenger on the Day of Judgement as an oppressor over any person or a usurper of anything out of worldly wealth. And how can I oppress any one for (the sake of a life) that is fast moving towards destruction and is to remain under the earth for a long time?

وَاللَّهِ لَقَدْ رَأَيْتُ عُقِيلًا وَقَدْ أَمْلَقَ حَتَّى اسْتَمَاحَنِي مِنْ بَرِّكُمْ صَاعًا، وَرَأَيْتُ صَبِيَانَهُ شَعَثَ الشُّعُورِ، غَيْرَ الْإِلْوَانِ، مِنْ فَقْرِهِمْ، كَأَنَّمَا سُوِدَتْ وَجُوهُهُمْ بِالْعِظْلَمِ، وَعَاوَدَنِي مَوْكِبًا، وَكَرَّرَ عَلَيَّ الْقَوْلَ مَرْدِدًا، فَأَصْغَيْتُ إِلَيْهِ سَمْعِي، فَظَنَّ أَنِّي أَبِيعُهُ دِينِي، وَأَدْبَعَ قِيَادَهُ، مَفَارِقًا طَرِيقِي، فَأَحْمَيْتُ لَهُ حَدِيدَةً، ثُمَّ أَدْنَيْتُهَا مِنْ جِسْمِهِ لِيَعْتَبِرَ بِهَا، فَضَجَّ ضَجِيجَ ذِي ذَنْفٍ مِنَ الْمَهَا، وَكَادَ أَنْ يَحْتَرِقَ مِنْ مِيسْمِهَا،

By Allāh, I certainly saw (my brother) ‘Aqīl fallen in destitution and he asked me a šā‘ (about three kilograms in weight) out of your (share of) wheat, and I also saw his children with dishevelled hair and a dusty countenance due to starvation, as though their faces had been blackened by indigo. He came to me several times and repeated his request to me again and again. I heard him, and he thought I would sell my faith to him and follow his tread leaving my own way. Then I (just) heated a piece of iron and took it near his body so that he might take a lesson from it, then he cried as a person in protracted illness cries with pain and he was about to get burnt with its branding.

فَقُلْتُ لَهُ: تَكَلِّتُكَ الثُّوَاكِلُ، يَا عُقِيلُ! أَتَنْنُ مِنْ حَدِيدَةٍ أَحْمَاهَا إِنْسَانُهَا لِلْعَبِيهِ، وَتَجْرُنِي إِلَى نَارٍ سَجَرَهَا جِبَارُهَا لِعُضْبِيهِ! أَتَنْنُ مِنَ الْإِذَى وَلَا أَتَنْنُ مِنْ لُظِي؟

Then I said to him, “Moaning women may moan over you, O ‘Aqīl. Do you cry on account of this (heated) iron which has been made by a man for fun while you are driving me towards the fire which Allāh, the Powerful, has prepared for (a manifestation of) His wrath? Should you cry from pain, but I should not cry from the flames?”

وَأَعْجَبُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ طَارِقُ طَرَقْنَا بِمَلْفُوفَةٍ فِي وَعَائِهَا، وَمَعْجُونَةٌ شَنْتِهَا، كَأَنَّمَا عَجَنْتَ بَرِيقَ حَيَّةٍ أَوْ قَيْئِهَا، فَقُلْتُ: أَمْ صَلَّةٌ، أَمْ زَكَاةٌ، أَمْ

صَدَقَةٌ؟ فَذَلِكَ مُجْرَمٌ عَلَيْنَا أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ! فَقَالَ: لَا ذَا وَلَا ذَاكَ، وَلَكِنَّهَا هَدِيَّةٌ، فَقُلْتُ: هَبْتِكَ الْهَبُولُ! أَعَنَّ دِينَ اللَّهِ أَتَيْتَنِي لِتَخْدَعَنِي؟
أَمْخَبْتِ أَنْتِ أُمَّ ذَوْجِنَةَ، أَمْ تَهْجُرِي؟

A stranger incident than this is that a man [1] came to us in the night with a closed flask full of honey paste but I disliked it as though it was the saliva of a serpent or its vomit. I asked him whether it was a reward, or zakāt (poor-tax) or charity, for these are forbidden to us members of the Prophet's family. He said it was neither this nor that but a present. Then I said, "Childless women may weep over you. Have you come to deviate me from the religion of Allāh, or are you mad, or have you been overpowered by some jinn, or are you speaking without senses?"

وَاللَّهِ لَوْ أُعْطِيتِ الْإِقَالِيمَ السَّبْعَةَ بِمَا تَحْتُ أَفْلَاقِهَا، عَلَيَّ أَنْ أَعْصِي اللَّهَ فِي نَمْلَةٍ أَسْلَبَهَا جِلْبَ شَعِيرَةٍ مَا فَعَلْتُهُ، وَإِنَّ دُنْيَاكُمْ عِنْدِي
لَاهُونَ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ فِي فَمِّ جَرَادَةٍ تَقْضُمُهَا، مَا لِعَلِيٍّ وَلِنَعِيمٍ يَفْنَى، وَلَذَّةٍ لَا تَبْقَى!

By Allāh, even if I am given all the domains of the seven (stars) with all that exists under the skies in order that I may disobey Allāh to the extent of snatching one grain of barley from an ant I would not do it. For me your world is lighter than the leaf in the mouth of a locust that is chewing it. What has 'Alī to do with bounties that will pass away and pleasures that will not last? We seek protection of Allāh from the slip of wisdom and the evils of mistakes, and from Him we seek succour.

Footnote :

[1] It was al-Ash'ath ibn Qays.