

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام) لما أشير عليه بالألتبع طلحة والزبير ولا يرصد لهما القتال [وفيه بين عن صفته بأنه (عليه السلام) لا يخذع]

Delivered on being advised not to chase Ṭalḥah ibn ‘Ubaydillih and az-Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām for fighting. [1]

وَاللَّهِ لَا أَكُونُ كَالضَّبُعِ: تَنَامُ عَلَيَّ طُولَ اللَّيْلِ، حَتَّى يَصِلَ إِلَيْهَا طَالِبُهَا، وَيَخْتَلِهَا رَا صِدْهَا، وَلَكِنِّي أَضْرِبُ بِالمُقْبِلِ إِلَى الحَقِّ المُدْبِرِ عَنْهُ، وَبِالسَّمْعِ المَطِيعِ العَا صِي المَرِيبِ أَبْدَا، حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ عَلَيَّ يَوْمِي. فَوَاللَّهِ مَا زِلْتُ مَدْفُوعًا عَنِ حَقِّي، مَسْتَأْثِرًا عَلَيَّ، مِنْذُ قَبْضِ اللّٰهِ تَعَالَى نَبِيِّهِ (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) حَتَّى يَوْمِ النَّاسِ هَذَا.

By Allāh I shall not be like the badger, which feigns sleep on continuous (sound of) stone-throwing till he who is in search of it find it or he who is on the look out for it overpowers it. Rather, I shall ever strike the deviators from truth with the help of those who advance towards it, and the sinners and doubters with the help of those who listen to me and obey, till my day (of death) comes. By Allāh I have been continually deprived of my right from the day the Prophet died till today.

Footnote :

[1] When Amīr al-mu‘minīn showed intention to chase Ṭalḥah and az-Zubayr, he was advised to leave them on their own lest he received some harm from them. Amīr al-mu‘minīn uttered these words in reply, the sum total whereof is : “How long can I be a mere spectator to my right being snatched and keep quiet. Now, so long as I have breath of life I shall fight them and make them suffer the consequences of their conduct. They should not think that I can be easily over-powered like the badger.”

Dabu` means badger. Its nickname is Umm `Amir and Umm Turrayq. It is also called “the glutton”, because it swallows everything and eats up whatever it gets as if several bellies were contained in one, and they do not have their fill. It is also called Na`thal. It is a very simple and silly animal. Its slyness is apparent from the way it is easily caught. It is said that the hunter surrounds its den and strikes it with his foot or a stick, and calls out softly “Bow your head Umm Turrayq, conceal yourself Umm `Amir.” On repeating this sentence and patting the ground, it conceals itself in a corner of the den. Then the hunter says “Umm `Amir is not in its den, it is sleeping.” On hearing this it stretches its limbs and feigns sleep. The hunter then puts the knot in its feet and drags it out, and it falls like a coward into his hand without resistance.