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Differences

الإختلاف Differences

Mankind Were a Single (Religious) Community

كانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً واحِدَةً

.. الإمامُ الباقرُ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ) : كانوا قَبلَ نُوح أُمَّةً واحِدَةً على فِطْرَةِ اللّه لا مُهْتَدينَ ولا ضُلَّالاً ، فَبعَثَ اللّهُ النَّبيّينَ1

1– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, 'Before Prophet Noah (a.s.), they [mankind] were a single community upon the fitra [The special origination or innate nature deposited in man by Allah which calls him to his Creator (ed.)] of Allah, neither guided nor in error, thereafter Allah sent the prophets.'[Nur al-Thaqalayn, v. 1, p. 209, no. 784]

Encouragement to Discard Differences

الحَتُّ عَلَى نَبذِ الاختِلافِ

ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صلَّى اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ) : ما اخْتَلَفَتْ أُمَّةٌ بَعدَ نَبيّها إِلَّا ظَهرَ أَهْلُ باطِلِها على أَهْل حقِّها 2

2– The Prophet (S) said, 'No sooner does a community differ [between themselves] after their own prophet, than the people of falsehood from amongst them become victorious over the people of truth.'[Kanz al-'Ummal, no. 929]

- الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ) : والْزَموا السَّوادَ الأعْظَمَ ، فإنَّ يَدَ اللّهِ مَع الجَماعةِ ، و إيّاكُم والفُرْقَةَ ، فإنَّ الشّاذَّ مِن الغَنَم للدِّئبِ . النّاسِ للشَّيطانِ، كما أنّ الشّاذَّ مِن الغَنَم للدِّئبِ

3– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Stay with the greater majority, for verily Allah's hand is with the [larger] group. Beware of separation for verily the deviant amongst you is the victim of Satan just as the deviant amongst the cattle is the victim of a wolf.'[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 127]

4– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'By Allah, verily I believe that this community of yours will turn around and change, by congregating upon their falsehood and you having to separate through your truth.'[Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 25]

5- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'No sooner do two differing claims arise than one of them is erroneous.[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 183]

Explanation of 'The Separation of My Community is a Mercy'

- عن عبد المُؤمِن الأنصاريّ : قلت للإمامِ الصّادقِ (عَلَيهِ السّالامُ) : إنّ قَوماً رَوَوا أنَّ رسولَ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ6 آلِهِ) قالَ : إنّ اخْتِلافَهُم رَحمَةً فاجْتِماعُهُم عَذابٌ ؟ قالَ : لَيس حيثُ ذَهَبْتَ وَذَهَبوا ، إنَّما أرادَ قولَ اللهِ عزّوجلّ : «فلولا نَفَرَ مِن كُلِّ فِرْقَةٍ مِنْهُمْ طائِفَةٌ لِيَتَفَقَّهُوا فِي الدِّينِ»185 ، عنامَرُهُم أنْ يَنْفِروا إلى رسولِ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ) ويَخْتَلِفوا إلَيهِ فيتَعلّموا ثُمَّ يَرْجِعوا إلى قومِهم فيُعلّموهُم ، إنّما فأمرَهُم أنْ يَنْفِروا إلى رسولِ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَليهِ وَ آلِهِ) ويَخْتَلِفوا إلَيهِ فيتَعلّموا ثُمَّ يَرْجِعوا إلى قومِهم فيُعلّموهُم ، إنّما الدّينُ واحِدٌ

6– Imam al–Sadiq (a.s.) was asked by 'Abd al–Mu'min al–Ansari, 'Verily some people narrated from the Prophet (S) that he said, "The separation of my community is a mercy" and they were truthful, so I ask that if their separation is a mercy then is their congregation a chastisement?', to which the Imam replied, 'It is not as you understand it nor as they understood it, actually he meant the saying of Allah, "But why should not there go forth a group from each of their sections…" so He commanded them to go forth to the Prophet (S) and to frequent him and learn from him then to return to their people and teach them, so what is meant is [physical] separation from their cities, not separation or difference with regards to the religion of Allah, for verily the religion of Allah is one.'[Ma'ani al–Akhbar, p. 157, no. 1]

Explanation of Congregation and Separation

7- Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, 'The Prophet (S) was asked about the congregation of his [religious] community, and he said, 'The congregation of my community are those who are the people of truth even if they are few in number.' [Ma'ani al-Akhbar, p. 154, no. 1]

The Cause of Separation

علَّةُ الفُرقةِ

8– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Verily you are brothers in the religion of Allah, nothing has separated you except ill natures and bad consciences, consequently you do not bear the burdens of each other, nor do you advise each other, nor spend on each other, nor love each other.' [Nahjul Balaghah, Sermon 113]

9- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'If the ignorant ones had kept silent, men would not have differed.'[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 78, p. 81, no. 75]

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