

Sermon 127: If you refuse to stop claiming ...

About the Kharijites

(ومن كلام له (عليه السلام

للخوارج أيضاً

If you refuse to stop claiming that I have gone wrong and been misled, why do you consider that the common men among the followers of the Prophet Muhammad (S) have gone astray like me, and accuse them with my wrong, and hold them unbelievers on account of my sins. You are holding your swords on your shoulders and using them right and wrong. You are confusing those who have committed sins with those who have not. You know that the Prophet (S) stoned the protected (married) adulterer, then he also said his burial prayer and allowed his successors to inherit from him. He killed the murderer and allowed his successors to inherit from him.

He amputated (the hand of) the thief and whipped the unprotected (unmarried) adulterer, but thereafter allowed their shares from the booty, and they married Muslim women. Thus the Prophet (S) took them to task for their sins and also abided by Allah's commands about them, but did not disallow them their rights created by Islam, nor did he remove their names from its followers.

فَإِنْ أَبَيْتُمْ إِلَّا أَنْ تَزْعُمُوا أَنِّي أَخْطَأْتُ وَضَلَلْتُ، فَلِمَ تُضَلِّلُونَ عَامَّةَ أُمَّةٍ مُحَمَّدٍ (صلى الله عليه وآله) بِضَلَالِي، وَتَأْخُذُونَهُمْ بِخَطِيئِي، وَتُكَفِّرُونَهُمْ بِذُنُوبِي! سَيُؤْفِكُمْ عَلَى عَوَاتِقِكُمْ تَضْعُونَهَا مَوَاضِعَ الْبَرَاءَةِ وَالسُّقْمِ، وَتَخْلُطُونَ مَنْ أَذْنَبَ بِمَنْ لَمْ يَذْنِبْ. وَقَدْ عَلِمْتُمْ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) رَجَمَ الزَّانِيَ [الْمُحْصَنَ] ثُمَّ صَلَّى عَلَيْهِ ثُمَّ وَرَّثَهُ أَهْلَهُ، وَقَتَلَ الْقَاتِلَ وَوَرَّثَ مِيرَاثَهُ أَهْلَهُ، وَقَطَعَ السَّارِقَ وَجَلَدَ الزَّانِيَ غَيْرَ الْمُحْصَنِ ثُمَّ قَسَمَ عَلَيْهِمَا مِنَ الْفَيْءِ وَنَكَحَا الْمُسْلِمَاتِ؛ فَأَخَذَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صلى الله عليه وآله) بِذُنُوبِهِمْ، وَأَقَامَ حَقَّ اللَّهِ فِيهِمْ، وَلَمْ يَمْنَعْهُمْ سَهْمَهُمْ مِنَ الْأَسْلَامِ، وَلَمْ يُخْرِجْ أَسْمَاءَهُمْ مِنْ بَيْنِ أَهْلِهِ.

Certainly you are the most evil of all persons and are those whom Satan has put on his lines and thrown out into his wayless land. With regard to me, two categories of people will be ruined, namely he who loves me too much and the love takes him away from rightfulness, and he who hates me too much and the hatred takes him away from rightfulness. The best man with regard to me is he who is on the middle course. So be with him and be with the great majority (of Muslims) because Allah's hand (of protection) is on keeping unity. You should beware of division because the one isolated from the group is (a prey) to Satan just as the one isolated from the flock of sheep is (a prey) to the wolf.

ثُمَّ أَنْتُمْ شِرَارُ النَّاسِ، وَمَنْ رَمَى بِهِ الشَّيْطَانُ مَرَامِيَهُ، وَضَرَبَ بِهِ تِيهَهُ ! وَسَيَهْلِكُ فِي صِنْفَانِ: مُحِبٌّ مُفْرِطٌ يَذْهَبُ بِهِ الْحُبُّ إِلَى غَيْرِ الْحَقِّ، وَمُبْغِضٌ مُفْرِطٌ يَذْهَبُ بِهِ الْبُغْضُ إِلَى غَيْرِ الْحَقِّ، وَخَيْرُ النَّاسِ فِي حَالِ الْنَمَطِ الْاَوْسَطُ فَالْزَمُوهُ، وَالزَمُوا السَّوَادَ الْأَعْظَمَ فَإِنَّ يَدَ اللَّهِ مَعَ الْجَمَاعَةِ، وَإِيَّاكُمْ وَالْفُرْقَةَ! فَإِنَّ الشَّاذَّ مِنَ النَّاسِ لِلشَّيْطَانِ، كَمَا أَنَّ الشَّاذَّةَ مِنَ الْغَنَمِ لِلذِّئْبِ.

Beware; whoever calls to this course, kill him, even though he may be under this headband of mine. Certainly the two arbitrators were appointed to revive what the Qur'an revives and to destroy what the Qur'an destroys. Revival means to unite on it (in a matter) and destruction means to divide on a matter. If the Qur'an drives us to them we should follow them, and if it drives them to us they should follow up.

May you have no father! (Woe to you), I did not cause you any misfortune, nor have I deceived you in any matter, nor created any confusion. Your own group had unanimously suggested in favour of these two men and we bound them that they would not exceed the Qur'an but they deviated from it and abandoned the right although both of them were conversant with it. This wrong-doing was the dictate of their hearts and so they trod upon it, although we had stipulated that in arbitrating with justice and sticking to rightfulness they would avoid the evil of their own views and the mischief of their own verdict (but since this has happened the award is not acceptable to us).

أَلَا مَنْ دَعَا إِلَى هَذَا الشِّعَارِ فَاقْتُلُوهُ، وَلَوْ كَانَ تَحْتَ عِمَامَتِي هَذِهِ، فَإِنَّمَا حُكِّمَ الْحَكَمَانِ لِحَيَاتِي مَا أَحْيَا الْقُرْآنُ، وَبُيِّنَا مَا أَمَاتَ الْقُرْآنُ، وَإِحْيَاؤُهُ الْأَجْتِمَاعُ عَلَيْهِ، وَإِمَاتَتُهُ الْأَفْتِرَاقُ عَنْهُ، فَإِنْ جَرَّنَا الْقُرْآنُ إِلَيْهِمْ اتَّبَعْنَاهُمْ، وَإِنْ جَرَّهُمْ إِلَيْنَا اتَّبَعُونَا.

فَلَمْ أَتِ - لِأَبَا لَكُمْ - بُجْرًا، وَلَا خَتَلْتُكُمْ عَنْ أَمْرِكُمْ، وَلَا لَبَسْتُكُمْ عَلَيْكُمْ، إِنَّمَا اجْتَمَعَ رَأْيُ مَلِكِكُمْ عَلَى اخْتِيَارِ رَجُلَيْنِ، أَخَذْنَا عَلَيْهِمَا أَلَّا يَتَعَدَّيَا الْقُرْآنَ، فَتَاهَا عَنْهُ، وَتَرَكَمَا الْحَقَّ وَهُمَا يُبْصِرَانِهِ، وَكَانَ الْجَوْرُ هَوَاهُمَا فَمَضَيَا عَلَيْهِ، وَقَدْ سَبَقَ اسْتِثْنَاؤُنَا عَلَيْهِمَا - فِي الْحُكُومَةِ بِالْعَدْلِ، وَالصَّمْدِ لِلْحَقِّ - سُوءَ رَأْيِهِمَا، وَجَوْرَ حُكْمِهِمَا.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 127

(1) Al-Tabari, *Ta'rikh*, VI, 48, events of 37 H.;

(2) Ibn al-'Athir, *al-Nihayah*, (b.j.r);

(3) al-Jahiz, *al-Hayawan*, II, 90;

(4) al-Bayhaqi, *al-Mahasin*, 41;

(5) al-Saduq, *al-'Amali*;

(6) al-'Amidi, *Ghurar*, 329;

(7) al-Karajiki, *Ma'dan*, 226.

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