

Sermon 61: Do not fight the Khawarij after me ...

Amir al-mu'minin also said concerning the Kharijites:

وقال (عليه السلام) فيهم

Do not fight¹ the Kharijites after me, because one who seeks right but does not find it, is not like one who seeks wrong and finds it.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: (By “one who seeks wrong and finds it”) Amir al-mu'minin means Mu'awiyah and his men.

لَا تَقْتُلُوا الْخَوَارِجَ بَعْدِي، فَلَيْسَ مَنْ طَلَبَ الْحَقَّ فَأَخْطَأَهُ، كَمَنْ طَلَبَ الْبَاطِلَ فَأَدْرَكَهُ.

قال السيد الشريف: يعني معاوية وأصحابه.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 61

(1) Al-Saduq, *Ilal*, 201;

(2) al-Tusi, *al-Tahdhib*, II, 48.

¹ The reason for stopping people from fighting the Kharijites was that Amir al-mu'minin was clearly perceiving that after him authority and power would devolve on people who would be ignorant of the proper occasion of jihad, and who will make use of sword only to maintain their sway. And there were those who excelled even Kharijites in holding and calling Amir al-mu'minin bad. So those who are themselves in the wrong have no right to fight others in the wrong. Again, those who are wilfully in the wrong can be allowed to fight those who are in the wrong by mistake. Thus, Amir al-mu'minin's words make this fact clear that the misguidance of Kharijites was not wilful but under Satan's influence. They mistook wrong as right and stuck to it. On the other hand, the position of misguidance of Mu'awiyah and his party was that they rejected right realising it as right and appropriated wrong as the code of their conduct fully knowing that it was wrong. Their audacity in the matter

of religion reached the stage that it can neither be regarded as a result of misunderstanding nor can it be covered under the garb of error of judgement, because they openly transgressed the limits of religion and paid no heed to the Prophet's injunctions in comparison with their own view. Thus, Ibn Abi'l-Hadid has written (vol. 5, p. 130) that when the Prophet's companion Abu'd-Darda' saw utensils of gold and silver being used by Mu`awiyah he said he had heard the Prophet saying, "One who drinks in vessels of gold and silver will feel flames of the fire of Hell in his stomach" whereupon Mu`awiyah said, "As for me, I do not find any harm in it." Similarly, creating Ziyad ibn Abih's blood relationship with himself by his own opinion in total disregard of the Prophet's injunction, abusing the descendants of the Prophet over the pulpit, transgressing the limits of shari`ah, shedding blood of innocent persons and placing over Muslims (as so called Khalifah) a vicious individual and thus opening the way to disbelief and atheism are events that to attribute them to any misunderstanding is like wilfully closing eyes to facts.

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