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The Verdict

The Verdict[1] الفَتوى

Those Who Give Verdicts of Their Own Opinion to People

مَن أفتَى النّاسَ بِرَأيِهِ

1ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): أجرَؤكُم علَى الفَتوى أجرَؤكُم علَى النارِ

1– The Prophet (S) said, ‘The most audacious from among you at giving verdicts will be the most hasty from among you to enter the Hellfire.’[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 2, p. 123, no. 48]

2ـ الإمامُ الباقرُ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ): لو كنّا نُفتِي الناسَ بِرَأينا وهَوانا لَكُنّا مِن الهالِكِينَ، ولَكُنّا نُفتِيهِم بآثارٍ مِن رسولِ اللّهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ) وأُصولِ عِلمٍ عِندَنا، نَتَوارَثُها كابِراً عن كابِرٍ ....

2– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, ‘If we were to give verdicts to people according to our opinions and whims, we would be among those who perish. And, we would be giving them verdicts based on mere reports handed down from the Prophet (S) when we have the very principles of knowledge, which we have inherited from our forefathers...’[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 2, p. 172, no. 3]

3ـ الإمامُ الصّادقُ (عَلَيهِ الّسَلامُ): مَن أفتَى النّاسَ بِرَأيِهِ فَقَد دانَ بِما لا يَعلَمُ، ومَن دانَ بِما لا يَعلَمُ فَقَد ضادَّ اللّهَ حَيثُ أحَلَّ وَحَرَّمَ فِيما لايَعلَمُ.

3– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Whoever gives a verdict to people from their opinion submits to that which they have no knowledge of, and whoever submits to that which he does not have knowledge of is

opposing Allah as he permits and prohibits what he does not have knowledge of.'[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 2, p. 299, no. 25]

4ـ الإمامُ الصّادقُ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): أُهرُبْ مِن الفُتيا هَرَبَكَ مِنَ الأسَدِ، ولاتَجعَلْ رَقَبَتَكَ للناسِ جِسراً

4– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, 'Flee from a verdict the way you would flee from a lion, and do not let your neck be a bridge for others.'[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 2, p. 260]

The Permissibility for a Scholar to Issue a Verdict

جَوازُ الإفتاءِ لِلعالِمِ

5ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ) ـ فيما كَتَبَ إلى قُثَمَ بنِ العبّاس ـ: وَاجلِسْ لَهُمُ العَصرَينِ، فَأفتِ المُستَفتيَ، وعَلِّمِ الجاهِلَ، وذاكِرِ العالِمَ.

5– Imam Ali (a.s.), in what he wrote to Qutham b. 'Abbas said, 'Sit for them in the afternoon, and give verdicts to the questioner, teach the ignorant, and remind the knowledgeable.'[Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. 17, p. 315, no. 21453]

6ـ الإمامُ الباقرُ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ) ـ لأبانَ بنِ تَغلِبَ ـ: اِجلِسْ في مَجلِسِ المَدينةِ وأفتِ الناسَ ؛ فإنّي أُحِبُّ أن يُرى في شِيعَتي مِثلُكَ.

6– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.), speaking to Aban b. Taghlib said, 'Sit in the mosque of Madina and give verdicts to the people, for I love to see the likes of you among my followers.'[Mustadrak al-Wasa'il, v. 17, p. 315, no. 21452]

1. The word 'fatwa' in Arabic specifically denotes a legal verdict or juristic edict (ed.)

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