

On the differences of view among the theologians

Amir al-mu'minin said in disparagement of the differences of view among the theologians

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام) في ذمّ اختلاف العلماء في الفتيا

تَرُدُّ عَلَى أَحَدِهِمُ الْقَضِيَّةَ فِي حُكْمٍ مِنَ الْأَحْكَامِ فَيَحْكُمُ فِيهَا بِرَأْيِهِ،

When a problem is put before anyone of them he passes judgement on it from his imagination.

ثُمَّ تَرُدُّ تِلْكَ الْقَضِيَّةَ بِعَيْنِهَا عَلَى غَيْرِهِ فَيَحْكُمُ فِيهَا بِخِلَافِ قَوْلِهِ،

When exactly the same problem is placed before another of them he passes an opposite verdict.

ثُمَّ يَجْتَمِعُ الْقُضَاةُ بِذَلِكَ عِنْدَ إِمَامِهِمْ

Then these judges go to the chief

الَّذِي اسْتَقْضَاهُمْ فَيُصَوِّبُ آرَاءَهُمْ جَمِيعاً،

who had appointed them and he confirms all the verdicts,

وَاللَّهُمَّ وَاحِدٌ!

although their Allah is One (and the same),

وَنَبِيُّهُمْ وَاحِدٌ!

their Prophet is one (and the same),

وَكِتَابُهُمْ وَاحِدٌ!

their Book (the Qur'an) is one (and the same)!

أَفَأَمَرَهُمُ اللَّهُ - سُبْحَانَهُ - بِالْاِخْتِلَافِ فَأَطَاعُوهُ!

Is it that Allah ordered them to differ and they obeyed Him?

أَمْ نَهَاَهُمْ عَنْهُ فَعَصَوْهُ!

Or He prohibited them from it but they disobeyed Him?

أَمْ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ دِينًا نَاقِصًا فَاسْتَعَانَ بِهِمْ عَلَى إِتْمَامِهِ!

Or (is it that) Allah sent an incomplete Faith and sought their help to complete it?

أَمْ كَانُوا شُرَكَاءَ لَهُ فَلَهُمْ أَنْ يَقُولُوا وَعَلَيْهِ أَنْ يَرْضَى؟

Or they are His partners in the affairs, so that it is their share of duty to pronounce and He has to agree?

أَمْ أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ دِينًا تَامًّا فَقَصَّرَ الرَّسُولُ (صلى الله عليه وآله) عَنْ تَبْلِيغِهِ وَأَدَائِهِ؟

Or is it that Allah the Glorified sent a perfect faith but the Prophet fell short of conveying it and handing it over (to the people)?

وَاللَّهُ سُبْحَانَهُ يَقُولُ:

The fact is that Allah the Glorified says:

(مَا فَرَطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ)

We have not neglected anything in the Book (Qur'an) (6:38).

وَفِيهِ تَبَيَانٌ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ،

and in it is a 'clarification of everything'

وَذَكَرَ أَنَّ الْكِتَابَ يُصَدِّقُ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا،

And He says that one part of the Qur'an verifies another part and that there is no divergence in it

وَأَنَّهُ لَا اخْتِلَافَ فِيهِ، فَقَالَ سُبْحَانَهُ: (وَلَوْ كَانَ مِنْ عِنْدِ غَيْرِ اللَّهِ لَوَجَدُوا فِيهِ اخْتِلَافًا كَثِيرًا)

as He says: And if it had been from any other than Allah, they would surely have found in it much discrepancy. (4:82).

وَإِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ ظَاهِرُهُ أُنِيقٌ وَبَاطِنُهُ عَمِيقٌ،

Certainly the outside of the Qur'an is wonderful and its inside is deep (in meaning).

لَا تَفْنَى عَجَائِبُهُ، وَلَا تَنْقُضِي غَرَائِبُهُ،

Its wonders will never disappear, its amazements will never pass away

وَلَا تُكْشَفُ الظُّلُمَاتُ إِلَّا بِهِ.

and its intricacies cannot be cleared except through itself.