

Letter 41: To one of his officers

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى بعض عماله

Now, I had made you a partner in my trust, and made you my chief man. And for me no other person from my kinsmen was more trustworthy than you in the matter of sympathizing with me, assisting and respecting my trusts. But when you saw that time had attacked your cousin, the enemy had waged war, the trust of the people was being humiliated, and the whole community was trackless and disunited, you turned your back against your cousin and forsook him when others forsook him, you abandoned him when others abandoned him, and you betrayed him when others betrayed him. Thus, you showed no sympathy to your cousin, nor discharged the trust.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي كُنْتُ أَشْرَكَكَ فِي أَمَانَتِي، وَجَعَلْتُكَ شِعَارِي وَبِطَانَتِي، وَلَمْ يَكُنْ مِنْ أَهْلِي رَجُلٌ أَوْثَقَ مِنْكَ فِي نَفْسِي، لِمُؤَاسَاتِي وَمُؤَازَرَتِي وَأَدَاءِ الْأَمَانَةِ إِلَيَّ. فَلَمَّا رَأَيْتَ الزَّمَانَ عَلَى ابْنِ عَمِّكَ قَدْ كَلَبَ، وَالْعَدُوَّ قَدْ حَرَبَ، وَأَمَانَةَ النَّاسِ قَدْ خَزَيْتَ، وَهَذِهِ الْأُمَّةَ قَدْ فَتَنَّتْ وَشَغَرَتْ، قَلْبْتَ لِابْنِ عَمِّكَ ظَهَرَ الْمَجَنِّ، فَفَارَقْتَهُ مَعَ الْمُفَارِقِينَ، وَخَذَلْتَهُ مَعَ الْخَازِلِينَ، وَخُنْتَهُ مَعَ الْخَائِنِينَ، فَلَا ابْنَ عَمِّكَ آسَيْتَ، وَلَا الْأَمَانَةَ أَدَيْتَ.

It seems as if you do not want (to please) Allah by your jihad, and as if you do not stand upon a clear

sign from your Lord, and as if you have been playing tricks with this ummah (Muslim community) to earn (the pleasure of) this world and watching for the moment of their neglectfulness to usurp their share of the wealth. As soon as it was possible for you to misappropriate the ummah's trust, you hastened to turn around and attack (them), and made a swift leap to snatch away whatever you could from their property meant for their widows and their orphans as a wolf snatches a wounded and helpless goat. Then, you happily loaded it off to the Hijaz without feeling guilty for having appropriated it. Allah's woe be to your ill-wishers; it was as though you were sending to your family what you had inherited from your father and mother.

وَكَاَنَّكَ لَمْ تَكُنْ تُرِيدُ بِجِهَادِكَ، وَكََاَنَّكَ لَمْ تَكُنْ عَلَى بَيِّنَةٍ مِنْ رَبِّكَ، وَكََاَنَّكَ إِنَّمَا كُنْتَ تَكِيدُ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةَ عَنْ دُنْيَاهُمْ، وَتَنْوِي غِرَّتَهُمْ عَنْ فَيئِهِمْ! فَلَمَّا أَمَكَّنْتَكَ الشَّدَّةَ فِي خِيَانَةِ الْأُمَّةِ، أَسْرَعْتَ الْكُرَّةَ، وَعَاجَلْتَ الْوَثْبَةَ، وَاخْتَطَفْتَ مَا قَدَرْتَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمُ الْمَصُونَةَ لِأَرَامِلِهِمْ وَأَيَّتَامِهِمْ، اخْتَطَفْتَ الذُّبَّ الْأَزْلَ دَامِيَةَ الْمَعْرَى الْكَسِيرَةَ، فَحَمَلْتَهُ إِلَى الْحِجَازِ رَحِيبَ الصِّدْرِ بِحَمَلِهِ، غَيْرَ مُتَأْتِمٍ مِنْ أَخْذِهِ، كَاَنَّكَ - لَا أَبَا لِعَيْرِكَ - حَدَرْتَ إِلَى أَهْلِكَ تَرَاثِكَ مِنْ أَبِيكَ وَأُمَّكَ..

Glory be to Allah! Do you not believe in the Day of Judgement, or do you not fear the exaction of account? O you who were counted by us among the men possessed of mind, how can you enjoy food and drink when you know that you are eating the unlawful and drinking the unlawful. You are purchasing slavemaids and wedding women with the money of the orphans, the poor, the believers and the participants in jihad to whom Allah had dedicated this money and through whom He had strengthened these cities. Fear Allah and return to these people their properties. If you do not do so and Allah grants me power over you I shall excuse myself before Allah about you and strike you with my sword with which I did not strike anyone but that he went to hell.

فَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ! أَمَا تُؤْمِنُ بِالْمَعَادِ؟ أَوْ مَا تَخَافُ نِقَاشَ الْحِسَابِ! أَيُّهَا الْمَعْدُودُ - كَانَ - عِنْدَنَا مِنْ ذَوِي الْأَلْبَابِ، كَيْفَ تُسَيِّغُ شَرَابًا وَطَعَامًا، وَأَنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَأْكُلُ حَرَامًا، وَتَشْرَبُ حَرَامًا، وَتَبْتَاعُ الْأَمْوَالَ وَتَنْكِحُ النِّسَاءَ مِنْ مَالِ الْيَتَامَى وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُجَاهِدِينَ، الَّذِينَ أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِمْ هَذِهِ الْأَمْوَالَ، وَأَحْرَزَ بِهِمْ هَذِهِ الْبِلَادَ؟! فَاتَّقِ اللَّهَ، وَارْجِعْ إِلَى هَوْلَاءِ الْقَوْمِ أَمْوَالَهُمْ، فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ ثُمَّ أَمَكَّنَنِي اللَّهُ مِنْكَ لِأَعْدَرَنِّي إِلَى اللَّهِ فِيكَ، وَلَا ضَرِبَنَّكَ بِسَيْفِي الَّذِي مَا ضَرَبْتُ بِهِ أَحَدًا إِلَّا دَخَلَ النَّارَ!

By Allah, even if Hasan and Husayn had done what you did there would have been no leniency with me for them and they could not have won their way with me till I had recovered from them the right and destroyed the wrong produced by their unjust action. I swear by Allah, the Lord of all beings, that I would not be pleased to regard their money which you have appropriated as lawful for me and to leave it to my successors by way of inheritance. Mind yourself and consider for a while as though you had reached the end of life and had been buried under the earth. Then your actions will be presented before you in the place where the oppressor cries "Alas" while he who wasted his life yearns for return (to the world),

but time was none to escape. (Qur'an, 38:3)

وَاللَّهِ لَوْ أَنَّ الْحَسَنَ وَالْحُسَيْنَ فَعَلَا مِثْلَ الَّذِي فَعَلْتَ، مَا كَانَتْ لَهُمَا عِنْدِي
هُوَادَةٌ، وَلَا ظَفِيرًا مَنِّي بِإِرَادَةٍ، حَتَّى آخُذَ الْحَقَّ مِنْهُمَا، وَأُزِيحَ الْبَاطِلَ عَن
مَظْلَمَتِهِمَا. وَأُقْسِمُ بِاللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ مَا يَسُرُّنِي أَنَّ مَا أَخَذْتَهُ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ حَلَالٌ
لِي، أَتَرَكُهُ مِيرَاثًا لِمَنْ بَعْدِي، فَضَحَّ رُؤْيَدًا، فَكَأَنَّكَ قَدْ بَلَغْتَ الْمَدَى، وَدُفِنْتَ تَحْتَ
الثَّرَى، وَعُرِضَتْ عَلَيْكَ أَعْمَالُكَ بِالْمَحَلِّ الَّذِي يُنَادِي الظَّالِمُ فِيهِ بِالْحَسْرَةِ،
وَيَتَمَنَّى الْمُضَيِّعُ الرَّجْعَةَ، (وَلَاتِ حِينَ مَنَاصٍ)! وَالسَّلَامُ.

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