

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام) إلى الحارث الهمداني

To al-Hārith (ibn ‘Abdillāh, al-A‘war) al-Hamdānī

وَتَمَسِّكُ بِحَبْلِ الْقُرْآنِ وَاسْتَنْصَحَهُ [وَأَنْتَصَحَهُ]، وَأَحْلَلَ حَلَالَهُ، وَحَرَّمَ حَرَامَهُ، وَصَدَّقَ بِمَا سَلَفَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ، وَاعْتَبَرَ بِمَا مَضَى مِنَ الدُّنْيَا لِمَا بَقِيَ مِنْهَا، فَإِنْ بَعْضُهَا يَشْبَهُ بَعْضًا، وَآخِرُهَا لَاحِقٌ بِأَوَّلِهَا! وَكُلُّهَا حَائِلٌ مُفَارِقٌ.

Adhere to the rope of the Qur’ān and seek instructions from it. Regard its lawful as lawful and its unlawful as unlawful. Testify the right that has been in the past. Take lesson for the present condition of this world from the past (condition), because its one phase resembles the other, and its end is to meet its beginning, and the whole of it is to change and depart.

وَعَظَّمَ اسْمَ اللَّهِ أَنْ تَذْكُرَهُ إِلَّا عَلَى حَقٍّ. وَأَكْثَرَ ذِكْرَ الْمَوْتِ وَمَا بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ، وَلَا تَتَمَنَّيَ الْمَوْتَ إِلَّا بِشَرْطٍ وَثِيقٍ. وَاحْذَرْ كُلَّ عَمَلٍ يَرْضَاهُ صَاحِبُهُ لِنَفْسِهِ، وَيَكْرَهُهُ لِعَامَةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، وَاحْذَرْ كُلَّ عَمَلٍ يَعْمَلُ بِهِ فِي السِّرِّ، وَيَسْتَحْيِي مِنْهُ فِي الْعَلَانِيَةِ، وَاحْذَرْ كُلَّ عَمَلٍ إِذَا سَأَلَ عَنْهُ صَاحِبُهُ أَنْكَرَهُ أَوْ اعْتَذَرَ مِنْهُ.

Regard the name of Allāh as too great to mention Him, save in the matter of right. Remember more often death, and (what is to come) after death. Do not long for death except on a reliable condition. Avoid every action which the doer likes for his own self but dislikes for the Muslims in general. Avoid every such action which is performed in secret and from which shame is felt in the open. Also avoid that action about which if the doer is questioned he himself regards it bad or offers excuses for it.

وَلَا تَجْعَلَ عَرَضِيكَ غَرَضًا لِنِيَالِ الْقَوْلِ، وَلَا تُحَدِّثِ النَّاسَ بِكُلِّ مَا سَمِعْتَ بِهِ، فَكَفَى بِذَلِكَ كَذِبًا، وَلَا تُرَدِّ عَلَى النَّاسِ كُلِّ مَا حَدَّثَكَ بِهِ، فَكَفَى بِذَلِكَ جَهْلًا.

Do not expose your honour to be treated as the subject of people’s discussions. Do not relate to the people all that you hear, for that would amount to falsehood. Do not contest all that the people relate to you for that would mean ignorance.

وَأَكْظِمِ الْغَيْظَ، وَتَجَاوَزْ عِنْدَ الْمُقَدَّرَةِ، وَاحْلُمْ عِنْدَ الْغَضَبِ، وَاصْفَحْ مَعَ الدَّوْلَةِ، تَكُنْ لَكَ الْعَاقِبَةُ.

Kill your anger and forgive when you have power (to punish). Show forbearance in the moment of rage, and pardon in spite of authority; the eventual end will then be in your favour.

وَاسْتَصْلِحْ كُلَّ نِعْمَةٍ أَنْعَمَهَا اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ، وَلَا تُضَيِّعَنَّ نِعْمَةً مِنْ نِعَمِ اللَّهِ عِنْدَكَ، وَلْيُرِ عَلَيْكَ أَثَرُ مَا أَنْعَمَ اللَّهُ بِهِ عَلَيْكَ.

Seek good out of every favour that Allāh has bestowed on you, and do not waste any favour of Allāh over you. The effect of Allāh's favours over you should be visible on you.

وَاعْلَمُ أَنَّ أَفْضَلَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ أَفْضَلُهُمْ تَقَدُّمَهُ مِنْ نَفْسِهِ وَأَهْلِهِ وَمَالِهِ، فَإِنَّكَ مَا تَقْدِّمُ مِنْ خَيْرٍ يَبْقَى لَكَ ذُخْرُهُ، وَمَا تَوَخَّرَهُ يَكُنْ لِغَيْرِكَ خَيْرُهُ. وَاحْذَرِ صَحَابَةَ مَنْ يَقِيلُ رَأْيَهُ، وَيَنْكُرُ عَمَلَهُ، فَإِنَّ الصَّاحِبَ مُعْتَبَرٌ بِصَاحِبِهِ.

Know that the most distinguished among the believers is he who is the most forward of them in spending from himself, his family and his property, because whatever good you send forward will remain in store for you and the benefit of whatever you keep behind will be derived by others. Avoid the company of the person whose opinion is unsound and whose action is detestable, because a man is judged after his companion.

وَإِسْكُنِ الْأَمْصَارَ الْعَظَامَ فَإِنَّهَا جَمَاعُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ. وَاحْذَرِ مَنَازِلَ الْغَفْلَةِ وَالْجَفَاءِ وَقَلَّةِ الْأَعْوَانِ عَلَيَّ طَاعَةِ اللَّهِ، وَأَقْصِرْ رَأْيَكَ عَلَيَّ مَا يَعْينُكَ، وَإِيَّاكَ وَمَقَاعِدَ الْأَسْوَاقِ، فَإِنَّهَا مُحَاضِرُ الشَّيْطَانِ وَمَعَارِيضُ الْفِتَنِ. وَأَكْثَرُ أَنْ تَنْظُرَ إِلَى مَنْ فَضَلْتَ عَلَيْهِ، فَإِنَّ ذَلِكَ مِنْ أَبْوَابِ الشُّكْرِ.

Live in big cities because they are collective centres of the Muslims. Avoid places of neglectfulness and wickedness and places where there are paucity of supporters for the obedience of Allāh. Confine your thinking to matters which are helpful to you. Do not sit in the marketing centres because they are the meeting-places of Satan, and targets of mischiefs. Frequently look at those over whom you enjoy superiority because this is a way of giving thanks.

وَلَا تُسَافِرْ فِي يَوْمِ جُمُعَةٍ حَتَّى تَشْهَدَ الصَّلَاةَ إِلَّا فَاصِلًا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، أَوْ فِي أَمْرٍ تُعَذِّرُ بِهِ.

Do not undertake a journey on Friday until you have attended the prayers, except when you are going in the way of Allāh, or in an excusable matter.

وَأَطِعِ اللَّهَ فِي جَمِيعِ أُمُورِكَ، فَإِنَّ طَاعَةَ اللَّهِ فَاضِلَةٌ عَلَيَّ مَا سِوَاهَا. وَخَادِعُ نَفْسِكَ فِي الْعِبَادَةِ، وَارْفُقْ بِهَا وَلَا تَقْهَرَهَا، وَخُذْ عَفْوَهَا وَنَشَاطَهَا، إِلَّا مَا كَانَ مَكْتُوبًا عَلَيْكَ مِنَ الْفَرِيضَةِ، فَإِنَّهُ لَا بَدَّ مِنْ قَضَائِهَا وَتَعَاهِدِهَا عِنْدَ مُحَلِّهَا.

Obey Allāh in all your affairs because Allāh's obedience has precedence over all other things. Deceive your heart into worshipping, persuade it and do not force it. Engage it (in worshipping) when it is free and merry, except as regards the obligations enjoined upon you, for they should not be neglected and must be performed at the five times.

وَإِيَّاكَ أَنْ يَنْزِلَ بِكَ الْمَوْتُ وَأَنْتَ أَبْقَى مِنْ رِيكِ فِي طَلَبِ الدُّنْيَا، وَإِيَّاكَ وَمُصَاحَبَةَ الْفُسَّاقِ، فَإِنَّ الشَّرَّ بِالْشَّرِّ مُلْحَقٌ. وَوَقِّرِ اللَّهَ، وَأَحِبِّ أَحِبَّاءَهُ، واحذرِ الغضبَ، فإنه جند عظيم من جنود إبليس، والسلام.

Be on guard lest death comes down upon you while you have fled away from your Lord in search of worldly pleasure. Avoid the company of the wicked because vice adjoins vice. Regard Allāh as great, and love His lovers. Keep off anger because it is one large army from Satan's armies; and that is an end to the matter.