

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام) إلى سهل بن حنيف الأنصاري، وهو عامله على المدينة في معنى قوم من أهلها لحقوا بمعاوية

To Sahl ibn Ḥunayf al-Anṣārī, his Governor of Medina about certain persons in Medina who had gone over to Mu‘āwiyah.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَقَدْ بَلَّغَنِي أَنَّ رِجَالًا مِمَّنْ قَبْلَكَ يَتَسَلَّمُونَ إِلَى مُعَاوِيَةَ، فَلَا تَأْسِفْ عَلَيَّ مَا يَفُوتُكَ مِنْ عَدَدِهِمْ، وَيَذْهَبُ عَنْكَ مِنْ مَدَدِهِمْ، فَكَفَى لَهُمْ غِيًّا، وَلِكَ مِنْهُمْ شَافِيًّا، فِرَارَهُمْ مِنَ الْهُدَى وَالْحَقِّ، وَإِيضَاعَهُمْ إِلَى الْعَمَى وَالْجَهْلِ.

Now, I have come to know that certain persons from your side are stealthily going over to Mu‘āwiyah. Do not feel sorry for their numbers so lost to you or for their help of which you are deprived. It is enough that they have gone into misguidance and you have been relieved of them. They are running away from guidance and truth and advancing towards blindness and ignorance.

وَإِذَا مَا هُمْ أَهْلُ دُنْيَا مُقْبِلُونَ عَلَيْهَا، وَمِهْطَعُونَ إِلَيْهَا، وَقَدْ عَرَفُوا الْعَدْلَ وَرَأَوْهُ، وَسَمِعُوهُ وَعَوَّهُ، وَعَلِمُوا أَنَّ النَّاسَ عِنْدَنَا فِي الْحَقِّ أَسْوَةٌ، فَهَرَبُوا إِلَى الْأَثَرِ، فَبَعْدًا لَهُمْ وَسَحَقًا!

They are seekers of this world and are proceeding to it and are leaping towards it. They have known justice, seen it, heard it and appreciated it. They have realized that here, to us, all men are equal in the matter of right. Therefore, they ran away to selfishness and partiality. Let them remain remote and far away.

إِنَّهُمْ وَاللَّهِ لَمْ يَنْفِرُوا مِنْ جَوْرِ، وَلَمْ يَلْحَقُوا بِعَدْلِ، وَإِنَّا لَنَطْمَعُ فِي هَذَا الْأَمْرِ أَنْ يُذِلَّ اللَّهُ لَنَا صَعْبَهُ، وَيَسْهَلَّ لَنَا حَزَنَهُ، إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ، وَالسَّلَامُ.

By Allāh, surely they have not gone away from oppression and joined justice. In this matter, we only desire Allāh to resolve for us its hardships and to level for us its unevenness, if Allāh wills; and that is an end to the matter.