

وَمِنْ خُطْبَةٍ لَهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ

From one of his sermons

يُرِيدُ الشَّيْطَانَ أَوْ يُكْنَى بِهِ عَنْ قَوْلِهِ

Regarding the incitement of Satan; alluding to a particular group of people (about Ṭalḥah and az-Zubayr)

أَلَا وَإِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ جَمَعَ حِزْبَهُ وَاسْتَجْلَبَ خَيْلَهُ وَرَجُلَهُ، وَإِنَّ مَعِيَ لَبَصِيرَتِي. مَا لَبَّسْتُ عَلَى نَفْسِي، وَلَا لُبَّسَ عَلَيَّ.

Beware! Satan [1] has collected his group and assembled his horse-men and foot-soldiers. Surely, with me is my sagacity. I have neither deceived myself nor ever been deceived.

وَأَيْلَمُ اللَّهُ! لَأُفْلِحَنَّ لَهُمْ حَوْضًا أَنَا مَاتِحُهُ، لَا يَصِلُونَ [يَصِلُونَ] عَنْهُ، وَلَا يَعُودُونَ إِلَيْهِ.

By Allāh I shall fill to the brim for them a cistern from which I alone would draw water. They can neither turn away from it nor return to it.

Notes:

[1] When Ṭalḥah and az-Zubayr broke their pledge of allegiance and departed for Baṣrah in the company of ‘Ā’ishah, Amīr al-Mu’minīn spoke in these words, which form part of a longer sermon.

Ibn Abī al-Ḥadīd has written that in this sermon “Satan” may refer either to the actual Satan or to Mu’āwiyah, because Mu’āwiyah was secretly conspiring with Ṭalḥah and az-Zubayr and instigating them to fight against Amīr al-Mu’minīn; but the reference to the real Satan is more appropriate, obvious and in accord with the situation and circumstances.