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Letter 29: To the People of Basrah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى أهل البصرة

Whatever disunity and schism you have is not hidden to you. I have forgiven your wrong-doers and held back my sword from those who ran away. I received everyone who came to me from among you. If devastating matters and wrong and silly views are prompting you to break the pledge with me and to oppose me then (listen) I have kept ready my horses and put saddles (on my riding camels), and if you force me to advance towards you I shall come down in such a manner that before it the battle of Jamal too would appear like the last licking of the tongue. At the same time I know the high position of the obedient among you and the right of the sincere without confusing the sinless with the offenders or the faithful with the pledge-breakers.

وَقَدْ كَانَ مِن انْتِشَارِ حَبْلِكُمْ وَشِقَاقِكُمْ مَا لَوْ تَغْبَوْا عَنْهُ، فَعَفَوْتُ عَنْ مُجْرِمِكُمْ، وَرَفَعْتُ السَّيْفَ عَنْ مُدْبِرِكُمْ، وَقَبِلْتُ مِنْ مُقْبِلِكُمْ. فَإِنْ خَطَتْ بِكُمُ الْأُمُورُ الْمُرْدِيَةُ، وَسَفَهُ الْآرَاءِ الْجَائِرَةِ . إِلَيَّ مُنَابَذَتِي وَخِلَافِي، فَهَا أَنَاذَا قَدْ قَرَّبْتُ جِيَادِي، وَرَحَلْتُ رِكَابِي. وَلَئِنْ أَلْجَأْتُمُونِي إِلَى الْمَسِيرِ إِلَيْكُمْ، لَأَوقِعَنَّ بِكُمْ وَقْعَةً لَا يَكُونُ يَوْمُ الْجَمَلِ إِلَيْهَا إِلاَّ كَلَعْقَةِ لَاعِقٍ، مَعَ أَنِّي عَارِفٌ لِذِي الطَّاعَةِ مِنْكُمْ فَضْلَهُ، وَلِذِي النَّصِيحَةِ حَقَّهُ، غَيْرُ مُتَجَاوِزٍ مُتَّهَماً إِلَى بَرِيٍّ، وَلَا نَاكِثاً إِلَى وَفِيٍّ.

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