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Letter 50: To the officers of his army

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى أمرائه على الجيوش

From the servant of Allah, `Ali, Amir al-mu'minin to the Officer-in-charge of garrisons:

مِنْ عَبْدِاللهِ عَلِيٍّ أَمِيرِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ إِلَى أَصْحَابِ الْمَسَالِحِ

Now, it is obligatory on an officer that the distinction he achieves, or the wealth with which he has been exclusively endowed,should not make him change his behaviour towards those under him, and that the riches Allah has bestowed on him should increase him in nearness to his people and kindness over his brethren.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ حَقّاً عَلَى الْوَالِي أَلاَّ يُغَيِّرَهُ عَلَى رَعِيَّتِهِ فَضْلٌ نَالَهُ، وَلاَ طَوْلٌ خُصَّ بِهِ، وَأَنْ يَزِيدَهُ مَا قَسَمَ اللهُ لَهُ مِنْ نِعَمِهِ دُنُوّاً مِنْ عِبَادِهِ، وَعَطْفاً عَلَى إِخْوَانِهِ.

Beware, that it is obligatory for you on me that I should not keep anything secret from you except during war, nor should I decide any matter without consulting you except the commands of religion, nor should I ignore the fulfilment of any of your rights nor desist till I discharge it fully, and that for me all of you should be equal in rights. When I have done all this, it becomes obligatory on you to thank Allah for this

bounty and to obey me, and you should not hold back when called, nor shirk good acts, and you should face harships for the sake of right.

If you do not remain steadfast in this, there will be no one more humiliated in my view than the one among you who has deviated, and then I will increase the punishment for him, wherein no one will get any concession from me. Take this (pledge) from your (subordinate) officers and accord to them such behaviour from your side by which Allah may improve your matters; and that is an end to the matter.

أَلاَ وَإِنَّ لَكُمْ عِنْدِي أَلاَّ أَحْتَجِزَ دُونَكُمْ سِرّاً إِلاَّ فِي حَرْب، وَلاَ أَطْوِيَ دُونَكُمْ أَمْراً إِلاَّ فِي حُكْم، وَلاَ أُؤَخِّرَ لَكُمْ حَقّاً عَنْ مَحَلِّه، وَلاَ أَقِفَ بِهِ دُونَ مَقْطَعِه، وَأَنْ تَكُونُوا عِندِي فِي الْحَقّ سَوَاءً، فَإِذَا فَعَلْتُ ذلِكَ وَجَبَتْ لله عَلَيْكُمُ النِّعْمَةُ، وَلِي عَلَيْكُمُ الطَّاعَةُ، وَأَلاَّ تَنْكُصُوا عَنْ دَعْوَة، وَلاَ تُفَرِّطُوا فِي صَلاَح، وَأَنْ تَخُوضوا الْغَمَرَات إِلَى الْحَقّ، فَإِنْ أَنْتُمْ لَمْ تَسْتَقِيمُوا لِي عَلَى ذلِكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ أَحَدٌ أَهْوَنَ عَلَيَّ مِمَّنْ اعْوَجَّ مِنْكُمْ، ثُمَّ أُعْظِمُ لَهُ الْعُقُوبَةَ، وَلاَ يَجِدُ عِنْدِي فِيها رُخْصَةً، فَخُذُوا هذَا مِنْ أُمَرَائِكُمْ، وَأَعْطُوهُمْ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ مَا يُصْلِحُ اللهُ بِهِ أَمْرَكُمْ. وَ السَّلامُ.

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