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Letter 73: To Mu'awiyah

ومن كتاب له (عليه السلام)

إلى معاوية

Now, (in) exchanging replies and listening to your letters my view has been weak and my perception has been mistaken. When you refer your demands to me and expect me to send you written replies, you are like one who is in deep slumber while his dreams contradict him, or one who stands perplexed and overwhelmed, not knowing whether whatever comes to him is for him or against him.

You are not such a man but he is (to some extent) like you (as you are worse than him). I swear by Allah that, had it not been for (my) giving you time, you would have faced from me catastrophe that would have crushed the bones and removed the flesh. Know that Satan has prevented you from turning to good actions and listening to the words of counsels. Peace be upon those who deserve it.

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي عَلَى التَّرَدُّدِ فِي جَوَابِكَ، وَالاسْتِمَاعِ إِلَى كِتَابِكَ، لَمُوَهِّنٌ رَأْيِي، وَمُخَطِّئٌ فِرَاسَتِي. وَإِنَّكَ إِذْ تُحَاوِلُنِي الأُمُورَ وَتُرَاجِعُنِي السُّطُورَ، كَالْمُسْتَثْقِلِ النَّائِمِ تَكْذِبُهُ أَحْلاَمُهُ، وَالْمُتَحَيِّرِ الْقَائِمِ يَبْهَظُهُ مَقَامُهُ، لاَ يَدْرِي أَلَهُ مَا يَأْتِي أَمْ عَلَيْهِ، وَلَسْتَ بِهِ، غَيْرَ أَنَّهُ بِكَ شَبِيهٌ. وَأُقْسِمُ بِاللهِ لَوْ لاَ بَعْضُ الاسْتِبْقَاءِ لَوَصَلَتْ إِلَيْكَ مِنِّي قَوَارِعُ، تَقْرَعُ الْعَظْمَ، وَتَهْلِسُ اللَّحْمَ! وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ قَدْ ثَبَّطَكَ عَنْ أَنْ تُرَاجِعَ أَحْسَنَ أُمُورِكَ، وَتَأْذَنَ لِمَقَالِ نَصِيحَتِكَ، وَالسَّلاَمُ لِأَهْلِهِ

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