

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Letters of Ali Addressed to Muawiyah

Challenge to Muawiyah

Muawiyah gave the threat of war, and in reply Ali challenged him as follows: "O Muawiyah what will you do when this mantle of the world which you are wearing is taken off from you. The world has attracted you. It spread its net, and you have been trapped therein. The world called you, and you welcomed its call. You have forgotten that you will be summoned to a place where no shield would protect you. Thus you should desist from the course you have adopted. Prepare your account, and take steps to protect you from the disaster that is going to overwhelm you. Do not listen to the advice of those who have strayed from the right path. If you do not desist from the wrong course that you have adopted, bear in mind that I would bring to you to senses. What are you? You are merely a wayward profligate man who has been enslaved by Satan. Satan has now become your sole guide, the end all and be all of your existence. O Muawiyah tell me when were you the leader of the community, and the ruler of the people. You had no priority in Islam. Even in the age of ignorance you held no office. Seek the protection of God. Misfortune makes you tread the wrong way. Fired with ambition and greed you are proceeding on the way that leads to perdition.

You have invited me to war. Very well Keep all the men aside, and step forward to meet me in single combat. Why engage all the troops in armed conflict. Let us decide this issue by a duel, so that it may become evident as to who has gone astray and has become blind. Have you forgotten that I am the man who in the Battle of Badr killed your maternal grandfather, maternal uncle and brother. You accepted Islam as a matter of expediency and Islam is as yet not a matter of faith with you. You have declared that you have stepped into the field to seek vengeance for the blood of Othman. You know very well who were responsible for the murder of Othman. If you are in earnest in your declaration, seek vengeance from the right quarter. But I am seeing something else. I very well see that when war is brought about, you will shriek like a wounded camel. I foresee that in war afraid of the carnage your men will call me to go back of God, although they have falsified the word of God and violated the oath of allegiance that they had taken to me. "

[View Page](#)

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