

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Peace upon Those Who Follow Right Guidance: Letters from the Prophet (ﷺ) to some of the Non-Muslim Rulers

Prepared by Abū al-Ḥasan Mālik Ādam al-Akhḍar

[1] Wording of the Prophet's (ﷺ) Letter to Heraclius, ruler of the Byzantine:

(The letter was carried by the noble Companion Diḥyah b. Khalīfah al-Kalbī (رضي الله عنه)¹ in the 6th year of the *Hijrah*)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ إِلَى هِرَقْلَ عَظِيمِ الرُّومِ: سَلَامٌ عَلَيَّ مِنْ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَى، أَمَا بَعْدُ، فَإِنِّي أَدْعُوكَ
بِدَعَايَةِ الْإِسْلَامِ، أَسْلِمْتَ تَسْلَمَ، يُؤْتِكَ اللَّهُ أَجْرَكَ مَرَّتَيْنِ، فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتَ فَإِنَّ عَلَيْكَ إِثْمَ الْأَرِيسِيِّينَ وَ { يَا
أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ
بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ }

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful: From Muḥammad, the servant of Allāh and His Messenger to Heraclius, the ruler of the Byzantine. Peace be upon the one who follows right guidance. Verily, I invite you to *al-Islām*. Accept *Islām*, and you will be safe, and Allāh will double your reward, and if you reject, you bear the sins of the *Arisiyyīn*.

﴿ قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ
بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِن تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ ﴾

“Say: O people of the Scripture, come to a word that is just between you and us, that we worship none but Allāh and that we associate nothing in worship with

¹ He is Diḥyah b. Khalīfah b. Farwah b. Faḍālah al-Kalbī, from the Khazraj. The Prophet (ﷺ) mentioned that the angel Jibrīl (عليه السلام) resembled him, and that Jibrīl would sometimes come in his form, as found in the narration collected by al-Nasā'ī in his *Sunan* (no. 4991) on the authority of Abū Hurayrah (رضي الله عنه) that a man came to the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ), from the most handsome and best smelling of the people. It was as if no dirt had touched his garment; he asked him about the rulings of Islām, and the Messenger (ﷺ) answered him. When he left, the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “By the One Who sent Muḥammad with the truth, guidance and glad tidings, I did not know him any more than any man among you. Indeed that was Jibrīl, who came in the form of Diḥyah al-Kalbī.” *Shaykh* al-Albānī authenticates this narration in *Ṣaḥīḥ Sunan al-Nasā'ī* (no. 5063). Diḥyah lived until the Caliphate of Mu'āwiyah ibn Abū Sufyān (رضي الله عنه) and died in the year forty-five *Hijrī*.

Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allāh. Then, if they turn away, say: ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims.’”

[*Āli-‘Imrān* 3:64]²



² See *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (no. 7) and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (no. 1773), from the narration of Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه).

[2] Letter to al-Najāshī, ruler of Abyssinia:

(The letter was carried by the noble Companion ‘Amr ibn Umayyah al-Ḍamrī رضي الله عنه³)

((عَنْ أَنَسٍ: أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَتَبَ قَبْلَ مَوْتِهِ إِلَى كِسْرَى وَإِلَى قَيْصَرَ وَإِلَى النَّجَاشِيِّ وَإِلَى كُلِّ جَبَّارٍ يَدْعُوهُمْ إِلَى اللَّهِ» وَلَيْسَ بِالنَّجَاشِيِّ الَّذِي صَلَّى عَلَيْهِ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ))

Anas b. Mālik رضي الله عنه reported that before the death of Allāh’s Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم, he wrote to Kisrā, Qaysar, al-Najāshī and every tyrant, calling them to Allāh, but this was not the Najāshī for whom the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم prayed [the *Janāzah*].⁴

Al-Ḥākim collects a version of the letter in his *al-Mustadrak*:

قَالَ ابْنُ إِسْحَاقَ: هَذَا كِتَابٌ مِنَ النَّبِيِّ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ إِلَى النَّجَاشِيِّ:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

هَذَا كِتَابٌ مُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ إِلَى النَّجَاشِيِّ الْأَصْحَمِ عَظِيمِ الْحَبْسِ سَلَامٌ عَلَيَّ مَنْ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَى، وَأَمَّنَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَشَهِدَ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، لَمْ يَتَّخِذْ صَاحِبَةً وَلَا وَلَدًا، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ، أَدْعُوكَ بِدُعَاءِ اللَّهِ، فَإِنِّي أَنَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، فَاسْلِمْ تَسْلِمًا {يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ} [آل عمران: 64]، فَإِنْ أَبَيْتَ فَعَلَيْكَ إِثْمُ النَّصَارَى

Muḥammad ibn Ishāq stated: This letter was sent by the Messenger of Allāh to al-Najāshī: “In the Name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful. From Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allāh, to al-Najāshī, the ruler of Abyssinia: Peace be upon those who follow right guidance and believe in Allāh and His Messenger, testifying that nothing has the right to be worshipped besides Allāh, Who has no partner or offspring, and that Muḥammad is His Servant and Messenger. I invite you with the call of Allāh, for indeed I am the Messenger of Allāh. Embrace Islām and you will be safe.

³ He is ‘Amr b. Umayyah b. Khuwaylid b. ‘Abd Allāh al-Kinānī, Abū Umayyah. It is said that he accepted Islām early and was from those who emigrated to Abyssinia and later *al-Madīnah*. He died in *Madīnah* during the Caliphate of Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه.

⁴ Collected by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no. 1774) and al-Tirmidhī in his *Jāmi‘* (no. 2716)

﴿قُلْ يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ تَعَالَوْا إِلَى كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَقُولُوا اشْهَدُوا بِأَنَّا مُسْلِمُونَ﴾⁵

“Say: O people of the Scripture, come to a word that is just between you and us, that we worship none but Allāh and that we associate nothing in worship with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allāh. Then, if they turn away, say: ‘Bear witness that we are Muslims.’”

[*Āli-‘Imrān* 3:64]⁵

If you refuse, then the sin of the Christians is upon you.⁶



⁵ See *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* (no. 7) and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (no. 1773), from the narration of Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه).

⁶ See *al-Mustadrak ‘alā al-Ṣaḥīḥayn* by al-Ḥākim (no. 4303)

[3] Wording of the Prophet's (ﷺ) Letter to Kistrā, ruler of the Persians:

(This letter was carried by ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥudhāfah al-Qurashī ⁷)

كَتَبَ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - إِلَى كِسْرَى:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ إِلَى كِسْرَى عَظِيمِ فَارِسَ، سَلَامٌ عَلَى مَنْ اتَّبَعَ الْهُدَى وَأَمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ، وَشَهِدَ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ؛ أَدْعُوكَ بِدِعَايَةِ اللَّهِ، فَإِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَى النَّاسِ كُلِّهِمْ لِيُنذِرَ مَنْ كَانَ حَيًّا، وَيَحَقِّقَ الْقَوْلَ عَلَى الْكَافِرِينَ. أَسْلِمِ تَسْلِمًا، فَإِن تَوَلَّيْتَ فَعَلَيْكَ إِثْمُ الْمَجُوسِ

The Prophet (ﷺ) wrote to Kistrā:

In the name of Allāh, the Beneficent, the Merciful: From Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allāh, to Kistrā, the ruler of the Persians: Peace be upon the one who follows right-guidance and believes in Allāh and His Messenger, testifying that nothing has the right to be worshipped except Allāh Alone and that He has no partners and that Muḥammad is His Servant and Messenger. I invite you with the call of Allāh, for indeed I am the Messenger of Allāh to all mankind, to warn those who are living and say a just word to the disbelievers. Embrace Islām and you will be safe. If you refuse, then the sin of the Magi is upon you.⁸

وَعَنْهُ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - بَعَثَ بِكِتَابِهِ إِلَى كِسْرَى مَعَ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ خُذَافَةَ السَّهْمِيِّ، فَأَمَرَهُ أَنْ يَدْفَعَهُ إِلَى عَظِيمِ الْبَحْرَيْنِ، فَدَفَعَهُ عَظِيمُ الْبَحْرَيْنِ إِلَى كِسْرَى فَلَمَّا قَرَأَ مَرْقَاهُ، قَالَ ابْنُ الْمُسَيَّبِ: فَدَعَا عَلَيْهِمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - أَنْ يُمَزَّقُوا كُلُّ مُمَرِّقٍ.

‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنه) said that the Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) sent ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥudhāfah al-Sahmī with a letter to Kistrā, commanding him to deliver it to the ruler of al-Baḥrayn. The ruler of Baḥrayn delivered it to Kistrā, and when he read it, he tore it up. Ibn al-Musayyib said: “The Messenger of Allāh (ﷺ) supplicated against him that his kingdom be torn asunder.”⁹



⁷ He is ‘Abd Allāh b. Ḥudhāfah b. Qays b. Adiy b. Sa’d al-Qurashī, Abū Ḥudhāfah. He died during the Caliphate of ‘Uthmān b. ‘Affān (رضي الله عنه) in the year thirty-three Hijrī.

⁸ The report has been graded *Ḥasan* by al-Albānī in his checking of *Fiqh al-Sīrah* (p. 388)

⁹ Collected by al-Bukhārī in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* (no. 4424)