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Title: Condolence Letter

Author: Abd al-Hamid

Synopsis

This is a letter expressing condolences and describing the author's situation in Afghanistan. The letter is written by an individual named Abd al-Hamid and is addressed to a man named Abu al-Qayim.

Key Themes

The letter consists of two main parts. The first includes Abd al-Hamid's expression of condolences to Abu al-Qayim although it is unclear what exactly happened. Regardless, al-Hamid urges him to keep his faith and maintain his devotion to God and religion.

The second part consists of Abd al-Hamid's description of his situation in Afghanistan. He characterizes his circumstances as generally bad and identifies strained relations with the local people as the main reason. According to the letter, the problem stems from differing opinions of the "Taliban government." Al-Hamid later notes, the people see the Taliban as righteous and devoted to God while he and his colleagues see them as unbelievers and apostates.

The disagreement appears to have been exacerbated by a letter, written by al-Hamid, on the topic of whether or not apostates and unbelievers may participate in fighting. Though the letter was intended to bring the Taliban back in line with orthodoxy the unintended result was increased "insolence and alienation" among the local population and the launch of a smear campaign by the Taliban in a book, written by Sheik Abu Qutada, bearing the title: "Alliance in Exposing the Fighters Who Do Not Adhere to the Principles of Religion."

Al-Hamid, in the letter, comments that he responded with a reasoned rebuttal in his own book, "Verification and Evidence in Refuting the Author of Alliances of the Righteous." However, at the time of writing to al-Qayim the relationship with the people and the Taliban remains strained as evidenced by al-Hamid and his followers being branded "passing apostate-dogs and sinners."