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## 15) Do not talk about what you do not know or speak about what is not required of you.

In these sentences, Imam 'Ali (as) emphasizes two ethical principles:

**1.** Do not talk on anything you lack information about. This is because your statements might turn out to be false. In such cases you have both told a lie and misled people into ignorance, both of which are religiously forbidden. Such a case would lower one's social position.

The Prophet (S) told Abdallah b. 'Amr b. al-'As: "What if you are among low and mean people who are united in not keeping their promises, what would you do?"

Abdallah said, "You guide me what to do, O Messenger of Allah".

The Prophet (S) replied: 1 "Act on what you know, leave what you don't know and keep to yourself".

- **2.** Do not interfere in anything not related to you and so do not speak of anything not concerning you. The Prophet (S) has said: "Among a Muslim's good deeds is to leave anything that does not concern him."2
  - 1. Sharh Nahj al-Balaghah by Ibn Abi'l Hadid, vol. 16, pp.63-64; and by Ibn Maytham, vol. 5, p. 10.
  - 2. Op cit.

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