

58: Avoiding Fame

This is so because fame is an avoidable evil and salvation lies in remaining unknown. There is a tradition from Imam Sadiq (as) in *Al-Kafi*. Imam (as) says, “If possible lead such a life that people do not recognize you.” That is you do not become a well-known personality.

Imam Muhammad Baqir (as) is quoted through a correct chain of narrators in *Kamaluddin*, that he said, “A time will come upon the people when their Imam will be ghaib (in occultation). Fortunate are those who remain steadfast on our Imamat. The least Thawab they would receive at that time is that Allah would address them: O My slaves! Believe in Our secret and testify to Our unseen. Good news to you for My good rewards O My slaves! I shall accept your deeds and forgive your sins. I shall quench your thirst with rain and remove calamities from you. And if you people hadn't been there I would have sent chastisement upon them. (The world).” Jabir says that he asked Imam (as) regarding the most preferable act of a believer during such times. Imam (as) replied, “Controlling his tongue and sitting at home.”^{[1](#)}

Amirul Momineen (as) says in a sermon of *Nahjul Balagha*: There would be a time wherein only a sleeping (inactive) believer would be safe (such that) if he is present he is not recognized but if he is absent he is not sought. These are the lamps of guidance and banners of night journeys. They do not spread calumnies nor divulge secrets, nor slander. They are those for whom Allah would open the doors of His mercy and keep off from them the hardships of His chastisement. O People! A time will come to you when Islam would be capsized as a pot is capsized with all its contents.”^{[2](#)}

As-Sayyid ar-Razi says: As regards Amirul Momineen's words “kullu mu'minin nuwamah” (every sleeping believer), he implies thereby one who is talked of little and causes no evil. And the word “al-masayih” is the plural of “misyah”. He is one who spreads trouble among people through evils and calumnies. And the word “al-madhayi” is the plural of “midhya”. He is one who on hearing of an evil about someone spreads it and shouts about it. And “al-budhur” is the plural of “badhur”. He is one who excels in foolishness and speaks rubbish.

In *Ghaibat Nomani* it is narrated from Imam Abu Abdillah Sadiq (as) that he said: “A tradition that you

understand is better than ten that you narrate (without understanding them). Every truth has a fact and every rightness has a light. By Allah, we do not consider a Shia as a jurisprudent until a mistake is committed before him and he notices the mistake. Amirul Momineen (as) has said from the pulpit of Kufa: There will be dark, blind and dim seditions awaiting you, from which no one will be saved except the 'Nooma'.

People asked: What is the 'Nooma'? He said: It is one, who knows people but people do not know him." Then he added: Know well that the world will not be empty of an authority (Hujjah) from Allah but Allah will make His people not see His authority because of their injustice, oppression and excessiveness in disobedience. If the world remains without an authority (from Allah) for an hour, it will sink with its people. The authority knows people but they don't know him. It is like Prophet Yusuf (as), who knew people but they denied him."³

In the same book also through the author's own chain of narrators it is mentioned about Imam Abu Abdillah Sadiq (as) that one of his companions came to him and said: "May I be sacrificed on you! By Allah, I love you and love whoever loves you. O my master, how numerous your Shias are!" His Eminence said, "Would you please mention them?" The man said, "They are too many." He said, "Could you count them?" The man said, "They are much more than to be counted."

Abu Abdillah as-Sadiq (as) said, "If the number becomes three hundred and a little more, then what you want will happen. Our Shias are those, whose voice does not pass beyond their ears, nor does their zeal go beyond their body, nor do they praise us openly, not quarrel with anyone because of us, nor sit with anyone criticizing us, nor talk with anyone abusing us, nor love whoever hates us and do not hate whoever loves us."

The man said, "Then how do we deal with these different groups, who pretend that they are Shias?" He said, "They will be tried, purified and distinguished. Years that will perish them, a sword that will kill them and disagreement that will scatter them. Our real Shias are those, who do not growl like a dog, do not covet like a crow and do not ask people for alms even if they die of hunger." The man said, "May I be sacrificed on you, where can I find such a kind of people?"

He said, "You can find them in the far sides of the world. They are those, whose lives are so simple, whose abodes move from one place to another, who if seen will not be known, if absent, will not be missed, if they become ill, will not be visited, if they propose to a woman, will not be married and if they die, their funerals will not be attended. It is they, who divide their monies among them, who visit each other in their graves and who never disagree even if their countries are different."⁴

This tradition has also been recorded from another channel with the addition: And when they see a believer they accord him honor and when they come across a hypocrite they keep away from him and at the time of death they are not impatient; and they visit each other in their graves.

I say: That which proves this is the statement of His Eminence (aj): If they are present no should

recognize them and when they are absent no one searches for them...because His Eminence (aj) through this statement has mentioned the merit of being unknown among the people and flayed becoming famous among them and it is from this aspect I have mentioned the whole tradition as there are many merits in it. And all the matter that is related to that time is condensed in the following couplets:

And I remained concealed from the people and they didn't recognize me. And from this aspect I became clear to the hearts. And my friend has put me into loneliness therefore I have disappeared from his sight, since I have obtained the companionship of the knower of the unseen. And how can the lonely day make me afraid while the fact is that my beloved is away from my competitor and near to me. That is why jinns and men are afraid of me as I am attached to my loneliness and my friend is with me.

- [1.](#) Kamaluddin, Vol. 1, Pg. 330
- [2.](#) Nahjul Balagha, Sermon 102, Faiz, Pg. 291
- [3.](#) Ghaibat Nomani, Pg. 70
- [4.](#) Ghaibat Nomani, Pg. 107

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/mikyal-al-makarim-fi-fawaid-al-dua-lil-qaim-vol-2-sayyid-muhammad-taqi-musawi-isfahani/58-avoiding#comment-0>