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An Example Of Forget and Forgive

Malik al-Ashtar was a great soldier and general. He is very well remembered in the history of Islam. He later became the Governor of Egypt. Malik al-Ashtar served under the great caliph and Imam Ali.

Once at the time when he was commander-in-chief in Kufa, Iraq, he was walking on foot in the streets. His head was shaven. As he was passing on the way a man seeing his shaven head slapped him on head as a joke to make people laugh. He did not know that it was the Commander-in-chief whom he had slapped. The Commander did not even raise his eyes to see who the offender was. He continued to walk as nothing had happened.

People in the street and the shops saw this. They at first were surprised and expected him to get angry. But soon they began to talk of the great general's humbleness.

The loafer came to know of the identity of his victim. He was greatly shaken with fear. He thought the Commander-in-Chief would punish him for the insult.

He immediately went running after Malik al-Ashtar to beg his forgiveness. He went first to Malik al-Ashtar's house but could not find him. After some search he found him sitting in Masjid al-Kufa (the Kufa Mosque) praying. He waited patiently until the General finished his prayers. Then politely he approached the General, bowed his head and humbly begged for the forgiveness.

Malik al-Ashtar lifted the man and said, "But, my sole purpose to come here was to pray to Allah to forgive you."

There is a lesson to be learnt in this example. Let us keep away from pride and enmity. Let us forget and forgive the wrong done to us. Malik was a follower of Ali.

Imam Ali said:

"Hurry not to punish a man for fault committed."

"Leave room for pardon between the two acts."

"The best deeds of a great man are to forgive and forget."
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