

Concerning Dissimulation (Taqiyya)

Says the Shaykh, may the mercy of Allah be on him: Our belief concerning *taqiyya* ¹ (permissible dissimulation) is that it is obligatory, and he who forsakes it is in the same position as he who forsakes prayer.² Imam Ja'far as-Sadiq was told: O son of the Messenger of Allah, verily we see in the mosque one who openly abuses your enemies, calling out their names. And he said: May Allah curse him! Why does he refer to us? He, Who is Exalted above all, says:

“Revile not those who invoke (deities) other than Allah, lest wrongfully they revile Allah through ignorance” (Qur'an 6: 108).

And Imam Ja'far in explaining this verse has said: So do not revile them, lest they revile your 'Ali. And he also said: He who reviles the friend (wali) of Allah (i.e. Ali) has reviled Allah. And the Prophet said: He who reviles thee, O 'Ali, has verily reviled me; and he, who reviles me, has verily reviled Allah.

Now until the Imam al-Qa'im appears, *taqiyya* is obligatory and it is not permissible to dispense with it. He, who abandons it before the appearance of the Qa'im, has verily gone out of the religion of Allah, Exalted is He, and the religion of the Imams, and disobeys Allah and His Messenger and the Imams. Imam Ja'far was asked concerning the Word of Allah, Mighty and Glorious is He:

“Verily the noblest among you, in the sight of Allah, is the most pious” (Qur'an 49: 13).

He said: (It means) he who adheres most scrupulously to the practice of *taqiyya*.

And Allah, the Blessed and Exalted, has described the showing of friendship to unbelievers as being (possible only) in the state of *taqiyya*. And He the Mighty and Glorious says:

“Let not believers take disbelievers for their friends in preference to believers. Whoso doeth that hath no connection with Allah unless (it be) that ye but guard yourselves against them, for fear of being killed” (Qur'an 3:28).³

And Allah the Mighty and Glorious says:

“Allah doth not forbid you to deal with kindness and fairness toward those who have not made war upon you on account of your religion, or driven you forth from your homes: for Allah loveth those who act with fairness (Qur’an 60:8).”

“Only Allah doth forbid you to make friends of those who, on account of your religion, have warred against you, and have driven you forth from your homes, and have aided those who drove you forth: and whoever maketh friends of them are wrong-doers” (Qur’an 60:9)

And Imam Ja'far said: Verily, I hear a man abusing me in the mosque; and I hide myself behind a pillar so that he may not see me. And he (Imam Ja'far) said: Mix with the people (enemies) outwardly, but oppose them inwardly, so long as the Amirate (*imratun*) is a matter of opinion.⁴ And he also said: Verily diplomacy (*arri'a'*) with a true believer is a form of *shirk* (polytheism); but with a hypocrite (*munafiq*) in his own house, it is worship.

And he also said: He who prays with them (hypocrites) standing in the first row, it is as though he prayed with the Prophet in the first row. And he also said: Visit their sick and attend their funerals and pray in their mosques. And he also said: (You should) become an ornament for us, and not a disgrace. And he said: May Allah have mercy on a person who inculcates friendship towards us among men, and does not provoke ill will among them.

The storytellers (*qassasun*) were mentioned before Imam Ja'far, and he said: May Allah curse them, for they speak ill of us. And he was asked concerning the storytellers, whether it is permissible to hear what they say, and he said: No. And Imam Ja'far said: He, who gives ear to a speaker, has verily rendered himself submissive to him; if the speaker (discourses) concerning Allah, then the listener has verily worshipped Allah, and if he speaks of the devil, then the listener has worshipped the devil.

And Imam Ja'far was asked concerning the Word of Allah, Exalted is He above all:

“As for the poets, the erring follow them” (Qur’an 26:224).

He said: These are the storytellers.

¹ In the Delhi edition ch. 39 deals with "the ancestors of the Prophet" and ch.40, with taqiya.

For a general account see R. Strothmann on taqiya in EI, iv. 628, where it is rendered "disguise" and in its technical sense "dispensation from the requirements of religion under compulsion or threat of injury". Professor Browne renders it "prudential concealment", Per. Lit., iv. 17. Numerous instances of taqiya are mentioned by Donaldson (see Index). MC, 107. The tradition books are full of taqiya in the chapters of al-amr bi'l-ma'ruf wa'n-nahy `anil-munkar, Wasa'il, ii. 467; Mustadrak, ii. 357 sqq. It is also recognized among Isma'ilis, KP, 67; at p.96 fasting is explained allegorically as keeping the tenets of true religion secret from others. EC, no.49. In the Da'a'im and Mukhtasaru l-Athar of Qadi Nu` - man, vol. ii, Kitabu'l-ashriba, we have on the authority of Imam Ja'far التقيّة ديني و دين آبائي في كل شيء إلا في تحريم المسكر، إلخ.

² The Urdu translator explains that the real meaning of taqiya is the protection of the true religion from enemies by hiding it, in circumstances where there is fear of being killed or captured or insulted. But an essential condition is that on account of taqiya the true religion should not be destroyed, otherwise, it is not permissible. Similarly, the killing of a true believer (mu'min) is not taqiya,

3. So explained in MB. This phrase has been variously rendered: Palmer – "unless, indeed, ye fear from some danger from them"; Rodwell – "unless, indeed, ye fear a fear from them"; Pickthall– "taking (as it were) security".
4. That is, until the rule of the rightful Imam is finally established. The Urdu rendering: – "So long as the matter remains in the hearts of men" is erroneous.

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