

Responsibility 33: Observing Proper Manners

Part 2

Another responsibility is to observe the proper etiquette when the Imam's name is mentioned.

A true believer should only call upon the Imam by his titles such as: al-Hujjah, al-Qa'im, al-Mahdi, Sahib al-Amr, Sahib az-Zaman, Aba Salih and others.

In addition, when one wants to say or write the blessed name of the Imam, one must also display the utmost of respect.

For example, if we use the word 'Haqir' or 'Mawla' or things such as this before his name, then we must also add the various forms of greeting, salutations and prayers after mentioning him, such as: "عَلَيْهِ" (peace be upon him): "سَلَامُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ" (may Allah's peace be upon him): "عَلَيْهِ الصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ" (prayers and peace be upon him): "أَرْوَاحُنَا لَهُ الْفِدَاءُ" (may our souls be sacrificed for him) or "عَجَّلَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى" (may Allah, the Most High, hasten his noble return) after his blessed name.

The Messenger of Allah (S) has said:

مَنْ صَلَّى عَلَيَّ فِي كِتَابٍ لَمْ تَزَلِ الْمَلَائِكَةُ تَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُ مَا دَامَ إِسْمِي فِي ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابِ

"Whoever sends blessings on me in writing, the Angels will continue to ask forgiveness for him for as long as my name is in that book (or writing)."¹

Therefore based on this tradition, we must remember to show honor and respect to the Prophet, the Imam of our time and the other A'immah and this cannot be achieved by merely writing (ص) in the place of (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَ سَلَّمَ), or (ع) in the place of (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) or (عج) in the place of (عَجَّلَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى) and other things such as these.

Many times, we see scholars write long dissertations and do not even try in the least to keep their words

to a minimum or we see speakers who deliver long lectures and never suffice with short talks, however when it comes to showing respect to the A`immah of true guidance, they never follow the code of honor in relation to them or if they do, they resort to using the abbreviated forms of respect.

Therefore, instead of writing out (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) they will write (ص) or even worse, they will cut the salutation off and write (صَلَّى اللّٰهُ)! In place of the prayer, (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) and in place of (عَجَّلَ اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى فَرَجَهُ) they will use the symbols (ع) and (عج)! Sometimes, in place of the prayer (رِضْوَانِ اللّٰهُ تَعَالَى عَلَيْهِ) or the prayer (رَحْمَةُ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ) they will shorten them and write them as (رض) and (ره).

We should keep in mind that not only is the use of such shortened expressions in relation to these noble personalities rude and impolite, but it is also one of the greatest forms of disrespect towards them!

Another point of etiquette in showing respect to the Imam is that we should not touch his name or any of his titles without Wudhu' (spiritual purity).

What we have just mentioned in relation to showing respect and honor to the Imam is just the tip of the iceberg and there are many other forms which can be manifest and indeed these are clear for the one who has true insight and understanding (of the Imam).

It goes without saying that what we have stated in this responsibility in regards to the last Imam also holds true for the rest of the Infallibles.

¹. Biharul Anwar, vol. 94, pg. 71, sec. 29, no. 65; Munyat al-Murid, pg. 347 (The section of Writing and Keeping Books)

². In most English publications, this is written as (S), (s), (SAW), (saws), (pbuh&hf) and other such ways. (Tr.)

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