

Right n. 37: The Right of the Associate

حق الخليل

وَأَمَّا حَقُّ الْخَلِيلِ فَأَنْ لَا تَغُرَّهُ وَلَا تَغُشَّهُ وَلَا تُكْذِبُهُ وَلَا تُغْفَلُهُ وَلَا تَخْدَعُهُ وَلَا تَعْمَلْ فِي انْتِقَاضِهِ عَمَلَ الْعَدُوِّ الَّذِي لَا يُبْقِي عَلَى صَاحِبِهِ وَإِنْ اطْمَأَنَّ إِلَيْكَ اسْتَفْصَيْتَ لَهُ عَلَى نَفْسِكَ وَعَلِمْتَ أَنَّ غَبْنَ الْمُسْتَرْسِلِ رِبًا. وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ

And the right of the associate is that you should not mislead, or cheat him, lie to him or fool him, and you should not trick him. And you should not treat him as an enemy does who does not spare his friend. If he trusts you, you should be very careful of yourself for his sake, and realize that cheating the intimate ones is like usury. And there is no power but in God.

An associate is anyone with whom we somehow associate, such as a classmate, a partner or a friend. Imam Sajjad said that whoever is somehow associating with us has a right. This right is that we should not cheat him, and avoid any kind of trickery with him, and we should not deal with him as we would with our enemies. We should not harm him once he trusts us. There are many verses of the Holy Qur'an and traditions that were presented regarding the rights of the companion. These hold true for our associate too, but we will not restate them here. We will just mention a few traditions regarding the rights of our associates.

Traditions Regarding the Associates

Imam Sadiq quoted on the authority of God's Prophet :

أَسْعَدُ النَّاسِ مَنْ خَالَطَ كِرَامَ النَّاسِ

*"The most prosperous people are the ones who associate with the noblest people."*¹

One of the main factors influencing our prosperity has been pointed out to be having noble friends in this tradition. God's Prophet also said:

سَأَلُوا الْعُلَمَاءَ وَخَالَطُوا الْحُكَمَاءَ وَجَالَسُوا الْفُقَرَاءَ.

“Ask from the learned, associate with the wise, and sit with the poor.”²

In this tradition we are advised to maintain our association with the wise people.

Characteristics of a Good Friend

The Noble Prophet said:

مَنْ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا رَزَقَهُ خَلِيلًا صَالِحًا إِنْ نَسِيَ ذِكْرَهُ وَإِنْ ذَكَرَ أَعَانَهُ.

“He to whom God intends good, He will provide him a righteous friend who will remind him (to remember God) should he forget, and who will help him when he remembers.”³

Friends we choose must be intelligent and experienced. It was pointed out earlier that we should avoid ignorant or dumb friends. Our friends should also be religious and inclined to do good deeds. They should also be polite and good-mannered. A wicked friend will draw one to ill-conduct. Also a friend should be personally inclined to be our friend, and be a real friend. We have been admonished against cheating or tricking our friends by Imam Sajjad .

There is a chapter on this subject in *Usul al-Kafi*. We read the following in the first tradition of this chapter: “The Commander of the Faithful said:

لَوْلَا أَنَّ الْمَكْرَ وَالْخَدِيعَةَ فِي النَّارِ لَكُنْتُ أَمْكَرَ النَّاسِ.

“Were it not that guile and deceit resulted in the Fire (of Hell), I would have been the most guileful of people.”⁴

A deceitful person is not an intelligent one. Being deceitful implies acting opposite to what you are thinking. In the third tradition in this chapter we read: Imam Sadiq quoted on the authority of God's Prophet :

لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ مَكَرَ مُسْلِمًا

“One who is deceitful to a Muslim is not from us.”⁵

The Commander of the Faithful said the following regarding those who lie:

..يَنْبَغِي لِلرَّجُلِ الْمُسْلِمِ أَنْ يَجْتَنِبَ مُوَاخَاةَ الْكَذَّابِ، فَإِنَّهُ يَكْذِبُ حَتَّىٰ يَجِيءَ بِالصِّدْقِ فَلَا يُصَدَّقُ.

“A Muslim should avoid becoming friends with a liar, for he will lie until when he finally tells the truth, he will not be believed.”⁶

In short, a good friend is one of the best blessings of God. He has certain rights incumbent upon us. We should not oppress him by telling him lies, or cheating him. Each friend must honor the rights of his friends.

¹. Bihar al-Anwar, v.74, p. 185.

². Ibid. p. 188.

³. Sharh-i-Risalat al-Huquq, Ghopanchi, v.2, p.289.

⁴. Usul al-Kafi, v.2, p.336.

⁵. Ibid. p.337.

⁶. Bihar al-Anwar, v.74, p.341.

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/a-divine-perspective-on-rights-a-commentary-of-imam-sajjads-treatise-of-rights/right-n-37-right#comment-0>