

Humility

One day, Imam Musa al-Kazim (a) chanced to pass by the tent of a dark skinned nomad. He went up to him and said, 'Salamun Alaikum'. Then he enquired about his health and welfare, and conversed with him for some time. When the Holy Imam took his leave and bade him good-bye, he added, "If there is anything I can do for you, I am quite willing to do it".

When the disciples of the Imam saw him treating that man in such a friendly manner, they said, "O' Holy Imam! You went up to that humble and ordinary man and conversed with him; and while departing also you told him very warmly that if there was anything you could do for him, you would be quite willing to do it. Is it appropriate for a person like yourself to go and meet such an ordinary man and converse with him in such a cordial manner?

The Holy Imam replied, "You forget that he, too, is a servant of Allah and Allah has created all men equal to one another. Furthermore, since he is also a Muslim, he is our brother-in-faith. Besides this, you should also remember that the circumstances of any person don't remain the same for ever. It is possible that we may be obliged to seek assistance of the same person tomorrow, who stands in need of our help today. If we withhold our help from him now, it will be embarrassing for us to face him at the time of our own need".

Imam Ali (a) quotes from the Holy Prophet (s) saying:

"A Muslim should not leave his brother-in-faith alone to face hardships and should consider that thing for him which he considers to be good for himself and should not desire that thing for him which he does not desire for himself".

A Muslim should protect the honour of his brother-in-faith.

Questions

1. What did Imam al-Kadhim (a) tell the nomad?
2. What did the Imam's disciples object to his associating with the nomad?

3. What did Imam al-Kadhim reply to his disciples?
4. What does Imam Ali quote from the Holy Prophet?

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