

Ignorance

Ignorance الجَهْل

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.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : الجَهْلُ أَدْوَأُ الدَّاءِ 1

1– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Ignorance is the worst affliction.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 820]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : الجَهْلُ مُمِيتُ الْأَحْيَاءِ وَمُخْلِدُ الشَّقَاءِ 2

2– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Ignorance is death for the living and perpetuates wretchedness.’[Ibid. no. 1464]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : الجَهْلُ فَسَادُ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ 3

3– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Ignorance is the ruination of every affair.’[Ibid. no. 930]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : الجَهْلُ أَصْلُ كُلِّ شَرٍّ 4

4– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Ignorance is the root of every evil.’[Ibid. no. 819]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : الْحِرْصُ وَالشَّرُّ وَالْبُخْلُ نَتِيجَةُ الْجَهْلِ 5

5- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Greed, voracity, and stinginess are a result of ignorance.'[Ibid. no. 1694]

.. الإمام العسكري (عليه السلام) : الجهل خصمٌ 6

6- Imam al-'Askari (a.s.) said, 'Ignorance is an enemy.'[al-Durra al-B?hira, no. 44]

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.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) : إِنَّ الْجَاهِلَ مَنْ عَصَى اللَّهَ وَإِنْ كَانَ جَمِيلَ الْمَنْظَرِ عَظِيمَ الْخَطَرِ 7

7- The Prophet (S) said, 'The ignorant is one who disobeys Allah, even if he is beautiful to look at and of great importance.'[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 1, p. 160, no. 39]

- رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) : صِفَةُ الْجَاهِلِ : أَنْ يَظْلِمَ مَنْ خَالَطَهُ ، وَيَتَعَدَّى عَلَى مَنْ هُوَ دُونَهُ ، وَيَتَطَاوَلَ 8
....على مَنْ هُوَ فَوْقَهُ ، كَلَامُهُ بِغَيْرِ تَدَبُّرٍ

8- The Prophet (S) said, 'The characteristic of an ignorant person is that he oppresses whoever he associates with, acts unjustly towards his subordinates, flatters his superiors, and his speech is without deliberation.'[Tuhaf al-'Uqul, no. 29]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السلام) : الْجَاهِلُ لَا يَعْرِفُ تَقْصِيرَهُ وَلَا يَقْبَلُ مِنَ النَّصِيحِ لَهُ 9

9- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'An ignorant person does not see his own shortcomings and is not willing to accept any advice concerning them.'[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 1809]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السلام) : الْجَاهِلُ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنْ كَانَ حَيًّا 10

10- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'An ignorant person is dead, even though he is living.'[Ibid. no. 1125]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السلام) : الْجَاهِلُ مَنْ انْخَدَعَ لِهَوَاهُ وَغُرُورِهِ 11

11- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'The ignorant is one who has allowed himself to be deceived by his desires and

whims.'[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 1285]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السلام) : لا ترى الجاهلَ إلا مُفْرِطاً أو مُفَرِّطاً¹²

12- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'You will not see an ignorant person except that he is either committing excess in what he does or falling short of what he ought to do.'[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 70]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السلام) : إنما الجاهلُ من استعبدته المطالب¹³

13- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'The ignorant is one whose desires have enslaved him.'[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 3864]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السلام) : الجاهلُ عبدُ شهوته¹⁴

14- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'The ignorant is a slave of his desires.'[Ibid. no. 449]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السلام) : عملُ الجاهلِ وبالٌ ، وعلمُهُ ضالٌّ¹⁵

15- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'The deeds of the ignorant are doomed and his knowledge is error.'[Ibid. no. 6327]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السلام) : إنَّ الجاهلَ من عدَّ نفسه بما جهلَ من معرفة العلم - عالماً ، وبرأيه مكتفياً ، فما يزال¹⁶ للعلماء مباعداً وعليهم زارياً ، ولمن خالفه مخطئاً ، ولما لم يعرف من الأمور مضللاً ، فإذا وردَ عليه من الأمور ما لم يعرفه أنكره وكذب به وقال بجهالته : ما أعرف هذا! وما أراه كان! وما أظنُّ أن يكون! وأتى كان؟! وذلك لثِقته برأيه وقلة معرفته بجهالته! فما ينفكُّ بما يرى مما يلتبس عليه رأيه مما لا يعرف للجهل مُستفيداً ، وللحق مُنكراً ، وفي الجهالة متحيراً ، وعن طلب العلم مُستكبراً.

16- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'The ignorant is one who considers himself knowledgeable about what he is [in actual fact] ignorant of, and he is content with his own opinion. His attachment to scholars only increases his estrangement [from knowledge] since he is constantly finding fault with them. He deems invalid the views of those who oppose him, and that which he does not understand he sees as fallacious. If he comes across something that he does not know, he denies it and falsifies it saying, 'I have never heard of this!' or 'I do not see it as possible! or 'How can it be!' or 'Where is this from?' This is due to his confidence in his own opinion and the paucity of his awareness of his own ignorance.

For this reason he is attached to what he sees as beneficial from his own mistaken opinion, and as a

consequence, denies the truth, remains confused in his own ignorance and too proud to seek knowledge.[Tuhaf al-'Uqul, no. 73]

- الإمامُ الصادقُ (عليه السَّلامُ): مِنْ أَخْلَاقِ الْجَاهِلِ الْإِجَابَةُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَسْمَعَ، وَالْمُعَارَضَةُ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَفْهَمَ، وَالْحُكْمُ بِمَا لَا يَعْلَمُ.

17- Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, 'The attributes of the ignorant are that: he answers before listening, objects before understanding, and passes judgment on that which he does not know.'[A'alam al-Din, no. 303]

- الإمامُ الهاديُّ (عليه السَّلامُ) : الْجَاهِلُ أَسِيرُ لِسَانِهِ18

18- Imam al-Hadi (a.s.) said, 'The ignorant is a prisoner of his tongue.'[al-Durra al-Bahira, no. 41]

The Most Ignorant of People

أَجْهَلُ النَّاسِ

- الإمامُ عليُّ (عليه السَّلامُ) : أَجْهَلُ النَّاسِ الْمُغْتَرُّ بِقَوْلِ مَادِحٍ مُتَمَلِّقٍ ، يُحَسِّنُ لَهُ الْقَبِيحَ وَيُبْغِضُ إِلَيْهِ النَّصِيحَ19

19- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'The most ignorant of people is one who is deluded by the praise of a flatterer who beautifies evil to him and renders a sincere advice detestable.'[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 3262]

- الإمامُ عليُّ (عليه السَّلامُ) : غَايَةُ الْجَهْلِ تَبَجُّحُ الْمَرءِ بِجَهْلِهِ20

20- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'The utter extremity of ignorance is for one to glorify his own ignorance.'[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 6371]

- الإمامُ عليُّ (عليه السَّلامُ) : أَعْظَمُ الْجَهْلِ جَهْلُ الْإِنْسَانِ أَمْرَ نَفْسِهِ21

21- Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'The greatest form of ignorance is for a person to be ignorant of the condition of his own self.'[Ibid. no. 2936]

What is Sufficient to be Considered Ignorant

كَفَى بِذَلِكَ جَهْلًا

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : كَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ جَهْلًا أَنْ يَرْتَكِبَ مَا نَهَى عَنْهُ²²

22– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘It suffices for one to be considered ignorant if he commits that which is forbidden.’[MaO?lib al–Sa’UI, no. 55]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : حَسْبُكَ مِنَ الْجَهْلِ أَنْ تُعْجَبَ بِعِلْمِكَ²³

23– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Self–admiration in one’s knowledge is sufficient to be considered ignorance.’ [Amali al–Tusi, p. 56, no. 78]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : كَفَى بِالْمَرْءِ جَهْلًا أَنْ يَجْهَلَ قَدْرَهُ²⁴

24– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘It suffices as ignorance to be unaware of one’s status.’[Ghurar al–Hikam, no. 7050]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : لَا تَتَكَلَّمْ بِكُلِّ مَا تَعْلَمُ فَكَفَى بِذَلِكَ جَهْلًا²⁵

25– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Do not utter all that you know since that is enough to be considered ignorance.’[Ibid. no. 10187]

.. الإمامُ الصَّادِقُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : كَفَى بِخَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ عِلْمًا ، وَكَفَى بِالْاِغْتِرَارِ بِاللَّهِ جَهْلًا²⁶

26– Imam al–Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘[Possessing] fear of Allah suffices as knowledge, and being conceited towards Him suffices as ignorance.’[Bih?r al–Anw?r, v. 70, p. 379, no. 26]

The Interpretation of Ignorance

تَفْسِيرُ الْجَهْلِ

.. رسولُ الله (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ) : مِنْ الْجَهْلِ أَنْ تُظْهَرَ كُلُّ مَا عَلِمْتَ²⁷

27– The Prophet (S) said, ‘Ignorance is to display all that you know.’[Tanbih al-Khawatir, v. 2, p. 122]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : الرُّكُونُ إِلَى الدُّنْيَا مَعَ مَا تُعَايِنُ مِنْهَا جَهْلٌ²⁸

28– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Relying on this world in spite of all that you face therein is ignorance.’[Nahjul Balaghah, Saying 384]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : رَغْبَتُكَ فِي الْمُسْتَحِيلِ جَهْلٌ²⁹

29– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Your desire for the impossible is ignorance.’[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 5384]

- الإمامُ الحسنُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) - لَمَّا سَأَلَهُ أَبُوهُ عَنْ تَفْسِيرِ الْجَهْلِ - : سُرْعَةُ الْوُثُوبِ عَلَى الْفُرْصَةِ قَبْلَ الْإِسْتِمْكَانِ³⁰ مِنْهَا ، وَالْإِمْتِنَاعُ عَنِ الْجَوَابِ .

30– Imam al-Hasan (a.s.), when his father asked him the meaning of ignorance, said, ‘It is hastening to snatch up an opportunity before having made oneself capable [of fulfilling it], and it is to refuse to answer.’[Ma’ani al-Akhbar, p. 401, no. 62]

- الإمامُ الصَّادِقُ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : الْجَهْلُ فِي ثَلَاثٍ : فِي تَبَدُّلِ الْإِخْوَانِ ، وَالْمُنَابَذَةِ بِغَيْرِ بَيَانٍ ، وَالتَّجَسُّسِ عَمَّا لَا يَعْنِي .

31– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, ‘Ignorance lies in three things: in compromising one’s brothers, declaring war without the command to do so, and spying into affairs that do not concern one.’[Tuhaf al-’Uqul, no. 317]

.. الإمامُ العسكريُّ (عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ) : مِنْ الْجَهْلِ الضَّحْكُ مِنْ غَيْرِ عَجَبٍ³²

32– Imam al-’Askari (a.s.) said, ‘Ignorance is to laugh without any reason.’[Ibid. no. 487]

Man is Averse To What He is Ignorant of

الْإِنْسَانُ عَدُوٌّ لِمَا يَجْهَلُ

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السّلامُ) : النَّاسُ أَعْدَاءُ مَا جَهَلُوهُ³³

33– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘People are antagonists of what they are ignorant of.’[MaO?lib al–Sa’Ul, no. 57]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السّلامُ) : مَنْ جَهَلَ شَيْئًا عَابَهُ³⁴

34– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘He who is ignorant of something finds fault with it.’[Kashf al–Ghamma, v. 3, p. 137]

- الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السّلامُ) : قُلْتُ أَرْبَعًا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى تَصْدِيقِي بِهَا فِي كِتَابِهِ...قُلْتُ : مَنْ جَهَلَ شَيْئًا عَادَاهُ،³⁵
«فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ: «بَلْ كَذَّبُوا بِمَا لَمْ يُحِيطُوا بِعِلْمِهِ

35– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘I have said four things which Allah has verified with verses He has revealed in His Book ... ***I said: ‘He who is ignorant of something will oppose it’, and He revealed: “Rather, they deny that whose knowledge they do not comprehend”.***[*Qur’an 10:39*]

.. الإمامُ عليٌّ (عليه السّلامُ) : لَا تُعَادُوا مَا تَجْهَلُونَ ؛ فَإِنَّ أَكْثَرَ الْعِلْمِ فِيهَا لَا تَعْرِفُونَ³⁶

36– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, ‘Do not oppose that which you are ignorant of; for most knowledge lies in that which you cannot fathom.’[Bihar al–Anwar, no. 10246]