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Leniency

Leniency الرِّفق

The Virtue of Leniency

فَضلُ الرِّفقِ

1ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): إنّ الرِّفقَ لَم يُوضَعْ على شيءٍ إلّا زانَهُ ، ولا نُزِعَ مِن شَيءٍ إلّا شانَهُ

1– The Prophet (S) said, 'No sooner is leniency added to something than it adorns it, and no sooner is it taken away from something than it spoils it.'[al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 119, no. 6]

2ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): ما اصطَحَبَ اثنانِ إلّا كانَ أعظَمُهُما أجراً وأحَبُّهُما إلى اللّهِ عزّوجلّ أرفَقَهُما بصاحِبِهِ.

2– The Prophet (S) said, 'When two people become friends or accompany each other, the one with the greater reward and the most beloved in Allah's eyes is the one who is the most gentle towards his companion.'[al-Kafi, p. 120, no. 15]

3ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): إذا أرادَ اللّهُ بأهلِ بيتٍ خَيرا أدخَلَ علَيهِم بابَ رِفقٍ

3– The Prophet (S) said, 'When Allah wishes to bestow good on a household, he introduces leniency into it.'[Sharh Nahjul Balaghah li Ibn Abi al-Hadid, v. 6, p. 339]

4ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): أعقَلُ الناسِ أشَدُّهُم مُداراةً للناسِ

4– The Prophet (S) said, 'The most intelligent person is he who is the most obliging towards people.'[Amali al-Saduq, p. 28, no. 4]

5ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): إنّ اللّهَ عزّوجلّ رَفيقٌ يُحِبُّ الرِّفقَ في الأمرِ كُلِّهِ.

5– The Prophet (S) said, 'Verily Allah, Mighty and Exalted, is lenient and loves leniency in all matters.'[Kanz al-'Ummal, no. 537]

6ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ): الرِّفقُ مِفتاحُ النَّجاحِ.

6– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Moderation is the key to success.'[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 294]

7ـ الإمامُ الباقرُ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ): إنَّ لِكُلِّ شَيءٍ قُفْلاً وقُفلُ الإيمانِ الرِّفقُ.

7– Imam al-Baqir (a.s.) said, 'Everything has a lock, and the lock of faith is moderation.'[al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 118, no. 1]

8ـ الإمامُ الكاظمُ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ): الرِّفقُ نِصفُ العَيشِ.

8– Imam al-Kazim (a.s.) said, 'Moderation is worth half of one's livelihood.'[al-Kafi, p. 120, no. 11]

Moderation in Worship

الرِّفقُ فِي العِبادَةِ

9ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): إنّ هذا الدِّينَ مَتِينٌ فَأوغِلُوا فيهِ برِفقٍ ، ولا تُكرِهُوا عِبادَةَ اللّهِ إلى عِبادِ اللّهِ فتكونوا كالراكِبِ المُنْبَتِّ الذي لا سَفَراً قَطَعَ ولا ظَهْراً أبقى.

9– The Prophet (S) said, 'Verily this religion is firm so penetrate into it gently, and do not arouse aversion for Allah's worship in His servants that they may become like shattered riders who have neither gotten further in their travel nor have any drive left to continue.'[al-Kafi, p. 86, no. 1]

10ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ): خادِعْ نفسَكَ في العِبادَةِ ، وارفُقْ بها ولا تَقهَرْها ، وخُذْ عَفوَها ونَشاطَها ، إلّا ما كانَ مَكتوباً عليكَ مِن الفَريضَةِ ، فإنّهُ لابُدَّ مِن قضائها وتَعاهُدِها عندَ مَحَلِّها.

10– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Cajole your soul tactfully to worship, and be gentle with it and do not force it. Make allowances for both its weariness and its activity, except for the daily obligations that are incumbent upon it, for it must fulfil them and undertake them at their prescribed times.'[Nahjul Balaghah, Letter 69]

The Benefits of Leniency

ثَمَراتُ الرِّفقِ

11ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): إنّ في الرِّفقِ الزِّيادَةَ والبَرَكَةَ ، ومَن يُحرَمِ الرِّفقَ يُحرَمِ الخَيرَ

11– The Prophet (S) said, 'Verily in leniency is to be found abundance and benediction, so whoever is divested of leniency is deprived of good.'[al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 119, no. 7]

12ـ الإمامُ عليٌّ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): الرِّفقُ يُيَسِّرُ الصِّعابَ ، ويُسَهِّلُ شَديدَ الأسبابِ

12– Imam Ali (a.s.) said, 'Leniency eases hardships and facilitates difficult situations.'[Ghurar al-Hikam, no. 1778]

13ـ الإمامُ الحسينُ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): مَن أُحْجِمَ عن الرَّأيِ وعَيِيَتْ بِهِ الحِيَلُ ، كانَ الرِّفقُ مِفتاحَهُ . .

13– Imam al-Husayn (a.s.) said, 'For him who is rendered helpless in making a decision and who is at a loss of what to do, moderation is the key.'[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 78, p. 128, no. 11]

14ـ الإمامُ زينُ العابدينَ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): كانَ آخِرُ ما أوصى بِهِ الخضرُ موسى بنَ عِمرانَ(: . . . ما رَفَقَ أحَدٌ بأحَدٍ في الدنيا إلّا رَفَقَ اللّهُ عزّوجلّ بِهِ يَومَ القِيامَةِ .

14– Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a.s.) said, 'The last piece of advice that al-Khiar[1] gave to Prophet Moses (a.s.) was: 'When a person is lenient towards someone in this world, Allah will be lenient with him on the Day of Resurrection.'[Bihar al-Anwar, v. 73, p. 386, no. 6]

15ـ الإمامُ الصّادقُ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): إن شِئتَ أن تُكرَمَ فَلِنْ ، وإن شِئتَ أن تُهانَ فاخشُنْ

15– Imam al-Sadiq (a.s.) said, 'One who is lenient and moderate in his affairs will obtain whatever he wants from people.'[al-Kafi, v. 2, p. 120, no. 16]

16ـ الإمامُ الصّادقُ (عَلَيهِ السّلامُ): مَن كانَ رفيقاً في أمرِهِ نالَ ما يُريدُ مِنَ الناسِ

16– Imam al–Sadiq (a.s.) said, 'If you wish to be honoured [by people] be lenient [towards them], and if you wish to be humiliated then be rough.'[Bihar al–Anwar, v. 78, p. 269, no. 109] Translator's Note: The word rifq in Arabic has no exact English equivalent, and can be translated with two or three English words depending on the context it is used in. It denotes 'leniency', 'gentleness' or 'friendliness' when used to depict a trait or virtue, when used to describe one's attitude towards people or when used to describe Allah's leniency towards His creatures, or it can mean 'moderation' when used in an economic or practical context. In the text it has been translated differently in its different contexts in order to best convey the meaning of the traditions, though the title has been kept as 'leniency' because of its most general implication.

1. Khiar: [ic prophet whose equivalent in the biblical tradition in not known (ed.)

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