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Responsibility 75: Remaining Unknown and Anonymous

Another responsibility of the true believer is to remain unknown and refrain from gaining popularity within the society because being well-known may result in problems in the spiritual growth and may prevent the believer from ease and free time.

Imam Ja'far b. Muhammad as-Sadiq (as) has said:

إِنِ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ لاَ يَعْرِفَكَ أَحَدٌ فَافْعَلْ

"If you are able remain unknown to others, then do so."1

Jabir b. 'Abdullah al-AnSari said to Imam Muhammad b. 'Ali al-Baqir (as):

يَابْنَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ مَا أَفْضَلُ مَا يَسْتَعْمِلُهُ الْمُؤْمِنُ فِي ذَلِكَ الزَّمَانِ؟ قَالَ: حِفْظُ اللِّسَانِ وَ لُزُومُ الْبَيْتِ

"O'son of the Messenger of Allah! What is the best action which a true believer can perform in that period (of the occultation of the Imam)?" The Imam replied: "Protecting the tongue and staying at home (to remain unknown to the people)."2

The Commander of the Faithful 'Ali b. Abi Talib (as) has said:

وَ ذَلِكَ زَمَانٌ لاَ يَنْجُو فِيهِ إِلاَّ كُلُّ مُؤْمِنٍ نُوَمَةٍ إِنْ شَهِدَ لَمْ يُعْرَفْ وَ إِنْ غَابَ لَمْ يُفْتَقَدْ، أُولَئِكَ مَصَابِيحُ الْهُدى

"During that time (the occultation), none will be saved except the anonymous believers who, when they are present, will not be recognized and when they are absent, nobody will miss them. They are surely the lanterns of true guidance."3

1. al-Kafi, vol. 2, pg. 456; Biharul Anwar, vol. 77, pg. 216, sec. 8, no. 1 (with slight difference)
2. Kamal ad-Din wa Tamam an-Ni'mah, vol. 2, pg. 330
3. Nahj al-Balagha (Faidhul Islam), pg. 305, Speech 102

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