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# Self -Sacrifice

One of the most outstanding features in the life of the Shaykh was his serving the needy people and making self-sacrifice even in his very poverty. From the viewpoints of the Islamic traditions, self-sacrifice and altruism are the most beautiful benevolence, the highest levels of faith, and the most superior ethical bounties1.

In spite of the reverend Shaykh's meager re-muneration from his tailoring profession, he was highly generous and altruistic. The accounts about the self-sacrifices of this man of God is really amazing and instructive.

## Self-Sacrifice toward other People's Children

One of the Shaykh's children quotes his mother as saying: "It was a famine period, Hasan and Ali2 were on top of the house roof making a fire. I went up to see what they were doing. I noticed they had taken a leather bag to roast and eat. Seeing such a scene, I burst into tears. I climbed down the roof, picked up some copper and bronze (utensils) took it to the small market nearby, sold it, andbought some cooked rice. On the way back, I ran into my brother, Qasim Khan, who was a rich man. He saw I was very disturbed; he inquired the reason for my disturbance. I told him the story. When he found about the issue, he said: 'What are you talking about? I saw Shaykh Rajab Ali handing out one hundred tokens for chelowkebab among the people! Charity begins at home! When does this man want to…? It is true that he is a devoted and ascetic man, but his acting this way (neglecting his own family) is not rightful.'

"Hearing these words I got even more frustrated. When at night the Shaykh came home I had an argument with him…and then went to sleep disturbed and agitated. In the middle of the night I heard I was called out to get up. I got up, I saw (in the dream) it was Mawla Ali Amir al-Mu'minin (a) who introduced himself and said: He has been looking after the people's children, and we have been looking after yours! When your children starved to death, then go on and complain!"

## Self-Sacrifice toward a Bankrupt Neighbor

One of the reverend Shaykh's sons related: 'One night my father woke me up and together picked two bags of rice; he carried one and I carried the other. We carried the bags to the home of the richest man in our neighborhood. Handing the bags over to the owner of the house, my father said:" Dear fellow! Do you remember the British took the people to the doorstep of their embassy and gave them rice, and took back an ass-load[3] of rice in return for each grain they had given to them, and they still do not let them go?!"

With this joking, we handed the rice over and returned home. The next morning he called out to me and said:" Mahmud! Buy a quarter of a kilo half-broken rice as well as two Rials of fat oil and give it to your mother to cook some rice!"

At those times, such behavior of my father was too heavy and unintelligible, for why must he have to give away the rice we had at home, whereas for our lunch we had to buy half-broken rice?!

Later on, I found that fellow had been bankrupt and (meanwhile) he was going to have a large feast.

## Self-Sacrifice on the New Year's Eve

The late Shaykh Abd al-Karim Hamid relates: 'I was working as an errand-boy at the Shaykh's shop for one *toman* a day. On the New year's eve, the reverend Shaykh had fifteen *tomans;* he gave me some money to provide rice and deliver to some addresses, and at last five *tomans* was left that he gave to me!'

'I thought to myself: Is he going home empty-handed on the eve of the New Year? And at the same time his son's trouser leg was torn. So, I left the money he had given to me in the counter's drawer and ran away. Whatever the Shaykh shouted I did not return. When I got home I found he had been chasing me. He said:

"Why did not you take money?" And he insistently gave the money to me! ,

1. Mizan al-Hikmah : 1, 22 : 1.
2. Two of the Shaykh's sons who have died.
3. A kharwar equals about 300 kilograms.

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