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Some Rights of Muslims

It has already been discussed that Islam does not mean severing relationships, solitude, living an individual life and simply glorifying Allah the High in seclusion. Rather, it means living by establishing mutual cooperation with each other. Hence, Islam spreads the message of worshipping Allah the Glorious by using the plural terms إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَ إِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ. Both نَعْبُدُ and نَسْتَعِينُ are plural. **We worship only You and to You do we beseech for help** and not "I" worship only You and to You do "I" beseech for help. There is no individualism in Islam. If it has ordered to live with each other then it must definitely contain rights of each other as well. In the traditions of Ahle Bait (a.s.), these rights have been discussed on many occasions. Ameerul Momineen Ali ibn Abi Talib (a.s.) has explained these rights thus:

"A Muslim has 30 rights upon his Muslim brother. The way to be relieved of these rights is either by fulfilling them or seeking forgiveness from our brothers regarding non-fulfillment of these rights. These rights are as follows:

1. Forgive his faults

2. Have mercy on his tears

3. Cover his sins

4. Accept his excuses

5. Defend him when others backbite him

6. Ignore his mistakes

7. Admonish him

8. Safeguard his friendship

9. Keep his promise and covenant

10. Attend to him while he is sick

11. Participate in his funeral

12. Answer him when he calls

13. Accept his gifts

14. Repay his good behavior with goodness

15. Thank him for his bounties

16. Help and assist him in the best possible way

17. Protect his family

18. Fulfill his needs

19. Solve his problems

20. Pray for him when he sneezes

21. Guide him if he forgets his way

22. Reply to his salutation (*salaam*)

23. Talk to him politely

24. Repay his gifts with goodness

25. Testify for his promises. Befriend his friends and don't befriend his enemies.

26. Help him whether he is an oppressor or oppressed. If he is an oppressor then help him by preventing him from oppressing. If he is oppressed then help him get his rights.

27. Don't leave him alone

28. Don't try to disgrace him

29. Whatever good one desires for oneself, the same should be desired for him

30. Dislike for him what you dislike for yourself

After this Ameerul Momineen (a.s.) said:

"I have heard the Messenger of Allah (*s.a.w.a.*) *say: If anyone of you forsakes* (*any of*) *the rights of his believing brother and if he is asked about that right on the Day of Judgment, then it will be decided against him."*[1]

It means that non-fulfillment of that right will result into a big loss for that person on the Day of Judgment.

Mo'alla ibn Khonays was a reliable companion of Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.). He asked Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.): What is the right of a Muslim upon another Muslim? He (a.s.) said:

"There are seven obligatory rights and fulfilling each of them is obligatory."

May I be sacrificed for you, what are those rights?

"Surely I am compassionate towards you. I fear (for you) that you might not be able to fulfill those rights and might neglect them."

Mo'alla persisted: I will protect and fulfill them. Imam (a.s.) said:

"The easiest right is that you like for him whatever you like for yourself and dislike for him what you dislike for yourself.

The second right is that you guard against his displeasure, obey his satisfaction and happiness and comply with his orders.

The third right is that you help him with your body, wealth, tongue, hands and feet.

The fourth right is that you become his eyes, his guide and his mirror.

The fifth right is that it shouldn't happen that you are satiated while he is hungry, you are quenched while he is thirsty and you are clothed while he is without clothes.

The sixth right is that you have a slave for yourself while he does not. Then it is obligatory that you send your slave to him who will wash his clothes, prepare food for him and make his bed.

The seventh right is that you accept his promise, accept his invitation, visit him when he is sick, participate in his funeral, if you come to know of his requirement then strive to fulfill it immediately, do not allow him to ask for his needs from you rather you fulfill it proactively, for, if you do this, then you have established your friendship (vilaayat) with his friendship and his friendship with your friendship." [2]

Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) said in his reply to Abu al-Ma'moon al-Haarithi concerning the rights of believing brothers:

"A believer has the following rights upon another believer: to possess his love in his heart, make him a partner in his wealth, be his substitute (in his absence) for his family, help him when someone oppresses him, if anything is being distributed among the Muslims and he is not present there then take his share for him, visit his grave when he dies, he should not oppress him, he should not deceive him, he should not betray him and he should not belie him. Do not utter even an 'uff' to him." [3]

A group of Shias came to Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.). Imam (a.s.) asked them about the believing brothers. The people praised and appreciated each other a lot. Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) asked them:

"Do the rich help the poor?"

Very rarely

"Do the rich meet the poor?"

Very rarely

"How is the behavior of the rich towards those poor people who work for them?"

You are asking us about those things which are found very rarely in our people.

"Then how can you even think that they are Shias?"[4]

If the human society and that too Muslims, especially those who are lovers of Ahle Bait (a.s.), start following these basic rules, the world would be a different place. It is possible for someone to think that in this world and age it is very difficult and challenging to follow these rules and uphold these moral principles. The reply to this is that if man wishes to act upon these rules independently then it is indeed very difficult, but if he prays to Allah sincerely with a pure tongue and heart, then all these stages would become easy by the grace (taufeeq) of Allah.

1. Behaar al-Anwaar, v. 74, p. 236
2. Al-Kaafi, v. 2, p. 169
3. Al-Kaafi, v. 2, p. 171
4. Al-Kaafi, v. 2, p. 173

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