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<u>Home</u> > <u>Mizan al-Hikmah (Scale of Wisdom)</u> > <u>Habitual Practice</u> > Prohibition of Discontinuing a Good Practice

Habitual Practice

السُنَّة Habitual Practice

Enjoinment of Adopting (Good) Habitual Practices

الحَتُّ عَلى لُزومِ السُنَّةِ

ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صلَّى اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): صاحِبُ السُّنَّةِ إن عَمِلَ خَيراً قُبلَ مِنهُ ، وإن خَلَطَ غُفِرَ لَهُ1

1– The Prophet (S) said, When someone with good habits does something good it is accepted from him, and even if he makes a mistake, he is forgiven for it. [Kanz al-'Ummal, no. 911]

2– Imam Zayn al-Abidin (a.s.) said, 'The best of deeds in the sight of Allah are those that are performed habitually, even if they be few in number.'[al-Kafi, v. 1, p. 70, no. 7]

The Recompense of One Who Establishes a Habitual Practice

جَزاءُ مَن سَنَّ سُنَّا

ـ رسولُ اللهِ (صَلَّيَ اللهُ عَلَيهِ وَ آلِهِ): مَن سَنَّ سُنَّةً حَسَنةً عُمِلَ بها مِن بَعدِهِ كانَ لَهُ أُجرُهُ ومِثلُ أُجُورِهِم مِن غَيرِ أَن 3 يَنقُصَ مِن أَجُورِهِم شيئًا ، ومَن سَنَّ سُنَّةً سَيِّئَةً فَعُمِلَ بها بَعدَهُ كانَ عليهِ وَزِرُهُ ومِثلُ أُوزارِهِم مِن غَيرِ أَن يَنقُصَ مِن يَنقُصَ مِن أُجُورِهِم شيئًا .

3– The Prophet (S) said, 'Whoever establishes a good habitual practice that people follow even after him, he will get his own reward for it as well as the like of their reward for performing it, without any decrease in their reward thereof. And whoever establishes an evil habitual practice that is followed by people after him, he will be responsible for the burden of his own sin as well as the burden of their sins, without any decrease in their burdens thereof.' [Kanz al-'Ummal,no. 43079]

Prohibition of Discontinuing a Good Practice

- الإمامُ عليُّ (عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ) - في كتابٍ لَهُ إلى الأَشتَرِ لَمَّا وَلاَهُ مِصرَ -: لا تَنقُضْ سُنَّةً صالِحَةً عَمِلَ بها صدُورُ هذهِ4 الأُمَّةِ ، واجتَمَعَت بها الأَلفَةُ ، وصلَحَت علَيها الرَّعِيَّةُ ، ولا تُحدِثَنَّ سُنَّةً تُضِرُّ بِشَيءٍ مِن ماضِي تِلكَ السُّنَنِ، فيكونَ الأُمَّةِ ، واجتَمَعَت بها الأَلفَةُ ، وصلَحَت عليها الرَّعِيَّةُ ، ولا تُحدِثَنَّ سُنَّةً تُضِرُّ بِشَيءٍ مِن ماضِي تِلكَ السُّنَنِ، فيكونَ .

4– Imam Ali (a.s.) wrote in one of his letters to al–Ashtar, when he appointed him governor of Egypt, 'Do not discontinue a good practice that the pioneers of this community acted upon, by virtue of which there was general unity and through which the subjects prospered. Do not innovate a practice that will infringe on these earlier practices in any way, for the reward of those who had laid them down will continue, whereas you will be the one to bear the burden for discontinuing them.'[Nahjul Balaghah, Letter 53]

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