

Question 70: What Is Lying For A Hidden Wisdom?

Question: What is the command in Islam for lying for hidden wisdom? And did the Prophets and great leaders lie in this manner?

Answer: Falsehood in itself is a very evil deed. And it is the root of most of our present difficulties and problems. Some of the sayings of the Holy Imams (a.s.) that have reached us mention that lying is the key to all sins.

But in spite of this in some special circumstances it is possible that if one speaks the truth there would be a great mischief and discord. If he does not state the truth the fire of mischief cools down.

For example when there is serious enmity between two and each of them speaks ill of the other in his absence we are also listening and we know that the questions we are being asked, if we give the truthful replies of the same and reveal the ill speaking of that person the fire of mischief and discord will flame up and it is possible that as a result of this there is a great loss.

Then obviously in such circumstances it would be wrong to speak the truth. And no intelligent person can say that in those conditions also we must speak the truth. It is an understood rational law that when the loss of something is greater than its benefit, we must refrain from it.

The Islamic rules also support this command and in such exceptional circumstances it allows lying.

However, two important points must be kept in mind here. First of all this topic has very exceptional aspects. And except for the above stated conditions lying is not permitted and it must not be that some people take the excuse of lying for hidden wisdom, without any sufficient cause or for personal gains resort to lying and thus commit this illegal act. And say that it was some hidden wisdom.

Secondly, Islam gives such great importance to the subject of lying that in such a condition when it is really necessary that one could lie, it has commanded *Toriya*. And this decree is well known among our jurists and scholars.

Toriya means that when circumstances demand instead of lying we say a sentence which the listener can interpret in his way. While the aim of the speaker is something else. For example if someone asks us that such and such person has spoken such evil about me and we reply in the negative while we actually imply that he has not said in those words, even though he has said the same things in other words. Even though the hearer may imagine that the other person has not said anything.

And if the religion leaders in needful circumstances that is for saving life and property of people and controversies that are created between them and for prevention of mischief and discord if they have spoken words, which are based on lying for hidden wisdom, then certainly they fall under the category of Toriya which cannot be considered as lying.

This point is worth remembering that in circumstances when the duty of man is Toriya or lying for hidden wisdom, if he tells the truth, he is a sinner. In the same way he is responsible for the mischief that is created in this way.

Obviously there is no scope of Toriya or lying for hidden wisdom in the explanation or interpretation of the ayats of Holy Qur'an. That is as a rule there is no such need as for as ayats and Islamic laws are concerned.

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