

Right n. 42: The Right of the Counselor

حق الناصح

وَأَمَّا حَقُّ النَّاصِحِ فَإِنَّ تُلِينَ لَهُ جَنَاحَكَ ثُمَّ تَشْرَابُ لَهُ قَلْبَكَ وَتَفْتَحَ لَهُ سَمْعَكَ حَتَّى تَفْهَمَ عَنْهُ نَصِيحَتَهُ، ثُمَّ تَنْظُرُ فِيهَا، فَإِنْ كَانَ وَفَّقَ فِيهَا لِلصَّوَابِ حَمَدْتَ اللَّهَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ وَقَبَلْتَ مِنْهُ وَعَرَفْتَ لَهُ نَصِيحَتَهُ، وَإِنْ لَمْ يَكُنْ وَفَّقَ لَهَا فِيهَا رَحِمْتَهُ وَلَمْ تَتَّهَمَهُ وَعَلِمْتَ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يَأْلُكَ نَصْحًا إِلَّا أَنَّهُ أَخْطَأَ إِلَّا أَنْ يَكُونَ عِنْدَكَ مُسْتَحِقًّا لِلتُّهْمَةِ فَلَا تَعْبَأُ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ أَمْرِهِ عَلَى كُلِّ حَالٍ. وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ.

And the right of your counselor is that you should treat him gently, then you should be wholeheartedly attentive to him, and open your ears for him so that you understand his counsel. And then study it deeply. And if what he presents to you is right, you should praise God for it, and accept it from him and acknowledge his favor.

But if what he presents to you does not agree with you, you should be kind to him and make no accusations against him. And you should know that he spared no efforts to provide you with the best advice, but he made a mistake. But if he deserves to be accused, then you should not pay any attention to him under any circumstances. And there is no power but in God.

In short, Imam Sajjad advises us to be humble and listen to the one who is counseling us. We should think it over, and praise God if what he says is right. We should also be grateful to him. However, if what he says is not right, we should know that he did not have any bad intentions and we should not accuse him. We should realize that he has made a mistake, and should not act upon his advice. In the previous chapter, we cited the verses of the Holy Qur'an and the traditions regarding those who seek our counsel.

In this chapter, we will mention some traditions regarding the rights of the counselor. The Commander of the Faithful said:

لِيَكُنْ أَحَبُّ النَّاسِ إِلَيْكَ الْمُشْفِقَ النَّاصِحَ.

*“The most beloved person for you should be your sympathetic counselor.”*¹

He also said:

مَنْ أَعْرَضَ عَنِ نَصِيحَةِ النَّاصِحِ أُحْرِقَ بِمَكِيدَةِ الْكَاشِحِ.

*“One who rejects the sincere advice of a counselor will burn in the scheming of a secret enemy.”*²

The Commander of the Faithful has also said:

أَمَّا بَعْدُ، فَإِنَّ مَعْصِيَةَ النَّاصِحِ الشَّفِيقِ الْعَالِمِ الْمُجَرَّبِ تُورِثُ الْحَسْرَةَ وَتُعْقِبُ النَّدَامَةَ

*“Disobeying the compassionate counselor who is knowledgeable and experienced will result in remorse and regret.”*³

He also said:

إِسْمَعُوا النَّصِيحَةَ مِمَّنْ أَهْدَاها إِلَيْكُمْ وَاَعْقِلُوهَا عَلَى أَنْفُسِكُمْ.

*“Listen to the advice of those who grant you their advice, and keep it in yourselves (for future use).”*⁴

He also said:

أَشْفَقُ النَّاسَ عَلَيْكَ أَعُونَهُمْ لَكَ عَلَى صَلَاحِ نَفْسِكَ وَأَنْصَحُهُمْ لَكَ فِي دِينِكَ.

*“The most compassionate people to you are those who are the most helpful to you in improving yourself, and those who most sincerely counsel you in your religion.”*⁵

In another wise saying he said:

مِنَ أَكْبَرِ التَّوْفِيقِ الْأَخْذُ بِالنَّصِيحَةِ.

*“One of the greatest successes is to accept advice.”*⁶

He also said:

مُنَاصِحُكَ مُشْفِقٌ عَلَيْكَ مُحْسِنٌ إِلَيْكَ نَاطِرٌ فِي عَوَاقِبِكَ مُسْتَدْرِكٌ فَوَارِطُكَ، فَفِي طَاعَتِهِ رَشَادُكَ وَفِي مَخَالَفَتِهِ فُسَادُكَ.

*“Your counselor is kind to you. He does you good. He sees the final outcome (of your actions). He recognizes your shortcomings. Your being rightly directed lies in your obedience to him, and your corruption lies in your opposing him.”*⁷

At the end let us mention that the Commander of the Faithful recommends the counselor to advise in private, not in public and says:

نُصْحُكَ بَيْنَ الْمَلَأِ تَقْرِيعٌ.

*“Your advising him in public is a rebuke.”*⁸

1. Sharh-i-Ghurar wa Durar, v.5, p.51, quoted from Ghurar al-Hikam.

2. Sharh-i-Ghurar wa Durar, v.5, p.350,

3. Sharh-i-Risalat al-Huquq, Ghopanchi, v.2, p.412.

4. Sharh-i-Ghurar wa Durar, v.2, p.242.

5. Ibid. p.486.

6. Ibid. v.6, p.20.

7. Ibid. p.139.

8. Ibid. p.172.

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