

Importance of Keeping a Promise

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Abstract: Fidelity is an important moral factor in society that depends on trustworthiness and faithfulness. It becomes more important about governors, who are responsible for people's life. This article is about the difference between two governors in fidelity.

It is hard for human being - when he is powerful or he has to manage a society and work in special situations - to be faithful about a treaty made with others put him in a hard situation. Sometimes if a man - and probably a governor - signs a treaty, then they realize that their power is in danger or they think that it may be damaged by that treaty, they will cancel it - particularly a treaty with an enemy! One of the important differences between Imam Ali (*p.b.u.h*) and Moawiyah is that the latter one was a man of deception. His aim was to keep power and throne, so he needed to commit deception and other immoral works. But Imam Ali (*p.b.u.h*) had special respect for his treaties, and preserved them under any circumstances. He did not cheated people, nor neglected his treaty, even at the cost of his power and government.

Imam Ali (*p.b.u.h*) believes that if a governor enters a treaty with his enemy, he should be faithful to his treaty. Even he put himself as a shield on his promise, until he got injured, but his treaty doesn't get injured. So in no case, betrayal nor deception in the treaty with an enemy is correct. The exalted God, due to His Grace and Mercy to people, asks people to keep the very promise He made with them. The Almighty God puts treaty as a stable shelter. So that people may find stability, security and peace there. So we cannot betray a treaty. Imam Ali (*p.b.u.h*) recommended the Egypt governor: "before a treaty, be careful about all parts of it unless you'll be regretful. But after making a promise, no matter what the problems would be, you have to tolerate it. You have no right to break your promise; It is better for you to wait to resolve it rather breach that promise, or resort to tricks or deceits that will follow God's torture." All the above views and recommendations that Imam Ali (*p.b.u.h*) made to his governor about the treaty with the opponent are by considering the worst situation. So, there is no justification to breach, in any way, or to renege it. Properly Imam Ali (*p.b.u.h*) tries to find a common point that connects all human beings, in every religion, custom or society.

Imam Ail (*p.b.u.h*) tries hard not to let this stable basis of agreement of human society get damaged to save privacy for human beings. In Siffin - war of division- imam Ali was defeated and the history changed forever. But when he saw the work done, with Amr Al-Ass's trick putting Quran

on top of the spears, telling soldiers of Imam Ali, “you fight with Quran? Stop fighting, so we accept this Quran ‘s arbitration between you and us”, Imam Ali reasoned that Moawiyah is cunning and a liar and we are on the verge of victory after a lot of inconveniences and hardship. They did not accept, until they threatened imam to death and imam was forced to accept the court. In case of arbitration, they didn’t accept imam’s idea, and they forced imam to nominate an individual who did not deserve.

Finally imam made the promise with Moawiyah that the destiny of Muslims and legitimacy of the parties should depend on the arbitration. They accepted to judge according to Quran. Finally they who forced imam in arbitration, understood their big mistake, and the Muslim community suffered a huge loss from that decision.

They went to imam with regrets! They went to imam for revenge and war with Moawiyah again.

Imam told that before the promise, he has forecasted all losses and negative outcomes, but they had not accepted. But now I have made promise and I don’t renegade it in anyway. Imam Ali (*p.b.u.h*) told them, “shame on you! Do I renegade after my agreement? Is not it true that Almighty God told: ***“fulfill the covenant of Allah, when you make a covenant and do not break your oaths after they have been confirmed (by swearing in his name) for you make Allah your surety. Allah has knowledge of what you do.”*** (*The Holy Quran; Al-Nahl:91*)

This group, named “Khawarij”, believed that accepting that arbitration was a wrong work; and war with Moawiyah was essential. Since they could not force Imam Ali (*p.b.u.h*) to break his promise, they pulled out their swords. Initially imam tolerated them. Finally, he was forced to come to war with them.