

## **Khalifa Umar bin al-Khattab - Inter-Personal Relations and Interactions**

### ***Umar And His Whip***

It is related that once while riding a camel, the whip of Umar dropped. Many persons who saw the whip fall rushed to pick up the whip to hand it over to the Caliph. Umar asked them to mind their own business, and not to bother about his whip. Umar dismounted and picked up his whip himself.

Iqbal has dramatised the episode in his classic poem 'The Secrets of the Self'. Iqbal exhorts:

"Like Umar, come down from the camel,

Beware of incurring obligations, beware"

From this episode, Iqbal deduces a code of conduct, the highlights whereof are:

"Do not incur the obligation of any person,

Do not debase yourself by receiving benefits.

Self is weakened by asking; asking disintegrates the Self,

By asking, poverty is made more abject.

By begging, the beggar is made poorer,

Even if you are poor and overwhelmed by affliction,

Do not seek your bread by the bounty of another."

Iqbal further elaborates:

"God loves a man that earns his living;

Woe to him that accepts bounty from another's table.

The more your hands are empty, the more you are master of yourself.

Seek no favours and walk with your head erect like the pine.

Sweet is a little dew gathered by one's own hand,

Be a man of honour, and like the bubble

Keep the cup inverted even in the midst of the sea."

[View Page](#)