

**I COUNSEL YOU** to raise your tongue and your heart above attacking Muslims, such as by having a bad opinion of them. Be very, very cautious of mixing with anyone who backbites and attacks them! If you hear something you dislike about someone and you are able to mention it to that person in the form of sincere advice, then do so. If not, then be careful of mentioning something in his absence that would hurt him, [for by doing so you would be] committing two foul acts: the first is not sincerely advising him, and the second is attacking a Muslim.

**I COUNSEL YOU** not to see yourself as being superior to any Muslim. If that thought enters your heart then reflect upon what Allah has previously decreed for you and reflect upon what your ending will be. In any case, any person of sound intellect knows that he possesses many faults and defects. He can be absolutely certain of this. He cannot be equally certain, however, that another person possesses similar faults, for most or all of what you know about your brothers is based on assumption, and “conjecture is the most false speech.” If you see your brother committing an action which is apparently wrong, then this action can be interpreted in many different ways. The scope of interpretation is vast. One should not apply this rule to oneself, because this will allow the lower self to become lazy and freely pursue its base desires.

Man is in great need of making excuses for people and finding interpretations for their actions, especially in this time in which it is rare to find an upright person. Slander is also common, as is the conveyance of incorrect information.

The felicitous one is the one who distances himself from the people of this time, busies himself with his Lord to the exclusion of everyone else and that which they are concerned with, and remains steadfast in this until certainty comes to him. What is meant by “certainty” in the case of the elite is the opening of the heart to the sublime angelic realm. The other meaning of “certainty” is death, which comes both to the common people and to the elite.

**I COUNSEL YOU** to avoid spending time with, mixing with and having dealings with the people of this time. I counsel you not to become familiar with those among them that you do not know unless there is a need, in which case, do so with the utmost caution. Your intention in avoiding contact with them is that they be safe from your harm and you be safe from theirs.

Only keep the company of someone who benefits you in your religion. Flee from keeping the company of anyone who harms you in your religion as you would flee from a fierce predator. In fact you should flee more quickly from someone who harms you in your religion because a predator can only harm your body, which is destined to be consumed by the creatures of the earth. This devil, however, harms your heart, through which you come to know your Lord, and harms your religion, which is your means of salvation in the next life.