

ISLĀM

A Mercy for All

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Mercy is an essential trait taught and promoted by Islām. It is pivotal in every command and teaching of the Messenger of Islām ﷺ. And why would it not be when the fundamental purpose of the advent of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was to shower mercy upon the universe? Allāh ﷻ states:

And We have not sent you but as mercy for all the worlds.
(21:107)

It would be contrary to reality that the teachings of Islām are of oppression, tyranny, violence and terrorism when the attributes of Allāh ﷻ are *Ar-Raḥmān* (the Most Beneficent) and *Ar-Raḥīm* (the Most Merciful), the Prophet of Islām is entitled ‘Mercy for all the worlds’ and the religion is named Islām which is derived from the root word *slm* (peace). The fact is that without being merciful, a person cannot be called a ‘Muslim’ in the true sense. Rasūlullāh ﷺ has stated:

The [complete] Muslim is one from whose tongue and hand people are safe. (An-Nasa’i)

Furthermore, every Muslim believes that prosperity is not possible without the Pleasure and Happiness of his Creator; therefore, he is obliged to adhere to His every command. It would be incomprehensible for the Creator to command mercy to the creation, whilst at the same time advocate unmerciful acts. Thus, it is self-evident that every command of Allāh ﷻ entails mercy. The problem is that we fail to understand and appreciate the mercies which lie in the teachings of Islām.

Islām is what it is and should be correctly understood from the Glorious Qur’ān and the teachings of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. A person who studies Islām from correct sources and understands correctly the context of its teachings will conclude that every aspect of Islām represents mercy.

Islām advocates mercy of every type to every creation and abhors any type of distress and oppression to any living soul. It is not possible to write every verse of the Qur’ān, every ḥadīth and every incident from the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ which testifies to this fact. However, I will provide a brief insight to illustrate what Islām represents.

Emphasis on Mercy in the Qur’ān

- Allāh ﷻ initiates His Book with: ‘In the name of Allāh, the Most-Beneficent, the Most-Merciful’.
- There are 114 chapters in the Noble Qur’ān. Every chapter, except one, starts with: ‘In the name of Allāh, the Most-Beneficent, the Most-Merciful’.
- In the very first chapter, two great attributes of Allāh ﷻ are mentioned in the second verse; Ar-Raḥmān (the Most Beneficent) and Ar-Raḥīm (the Most-Merciful).
- Allāh ﷻ states in many places that He loves the Muḥsinīn (those who do good).
- Allāh ﷻ states in many places that He does not love the Zālimīn (oppressors) and the Muḥsidīn (those who spread corruption).

- Allāh ﷻ states:

Indeed, Allāh instructs to do justice, adopt good conduct and give relatives (their due rights). And He forbids immoral behaviour, evil deeds and oppression. He advises you so that you may take heed. (16:90)

Emphasis on Mercy in the Aḥādīth

- The Most-Beneficent (Allāh) has mercy on those who are merciful. Have mercy on the inhabitants of the earth, He who is in the heavens will have mercy on you. (At-Tirmidhī, Abū Dāwūd)
- He who is not merciful will not be shown mercy. (Al-Bukhārī, Muslim)
- A believer is an embodiment of love. (Aḥmad, Al-Bayhaqī)
- All the (living) creatures are the dependants (under the care) of Allāh, and the most beloved to Allāh from all the creatures is the one who does good to His dependants. (Al-Bayhaqī)
- You cannot be (complete) believers until you show mercy to others... (Aṭ-Ṭabarānī)

Islām Does Not Allow Any Kind of Inconvenience

Alongside the many commands of adopting good conduct and showing mercy, Islām does not advocate any kind of oppression, harm or hurt to anyone. A good portion of Islamic teachings reflect social etiquettes which do not discriminate

between Muslims and non-Muslims, as each and every person must be treated with justice. Let us take a look at some of these teachings:

Conduct Towards Parents:

- Your Lord has decreed that you worship none but Him, and do good to parents. If any one of them or both of them reach old age, do not say to them: uff [a word or expression of anger or contempt] and do not scold them, and address them with respectful words. (17:23)

Conduct With One Another:

- O you who believe! If a sinful person brings you any news, verify its correctness, lest you should harm people out of ignorance, and then become remorseful over your actions. (49:6)
- O you who believe! No men should mock other men, maybe the latter are better than the former. Nor should women mock other women, maybe the latter are better than the former. And do not find faults in one another, nor call each other with bad names... (49:11)
- O you who believe! Abstain from excessive assumptions [entertaining suspicious thoughts about people without verification]. Verily, some assumptions are sins. And do not spy (on others), and do not backbite one another... (49:12)

- O mankind! Indeed, We have created you from a male and a female, and made you into races and tribes, so that you may recognise one another. Surely, the noblest of you in the sight of Allāh is the one who is the most God-Fearing from you. Surely, Allāh is All-Knowing, All-Aware. (49:13)
- Give the orphans their wealth, and do not exchange the bad [from your wealth] for the good [from their wealth], and do not devour their wealth [by including it] with your own. It is surely a great sin. (4:2)
- Those who spend their wealth (upon the needy) for the Pleasure of Allāh and then do not follow up their spending with [mention of their] favour or [with causing] hurt, they have their reward with their Lord and there is no fear for them nor shall they grieve. A graceful word and forgiveness is better than charity followed by causing hurt (by mention of the favour). Allāh is Independent, Forbearing. (2:262-263)
- O you who believe! When it is said to you, ‘Make room (for others) in the gatherings, then make room, and Allāh will make room for you (in the Hereafter)’. (58:11)
- That person will not enter Jannah from whose mischief his neighbour is not safe. (Muslim)
- When there are three of you, then two should not converse [discreetly] excluding the third for it will grieve him. (Muslim)

- Whoever deceives is not from amongst us. (Muslim)
- He is not from amongst us who does not show mercy to our young ones and does not respect our elders. (At-Tirmidhī)
- After receiving much pain and torment from the non-believers of Makkah, Nabī ﷺ was asked to curse them by his companions. Nabī ﷺ said,

I have not been sent as one who curses. I have been sent only as mercy. (Muslim)

Consideration for One's Own Self:

The teachings of Rasūlullāh ﷺ emphasise such deep consideration and care that a person should not act in a manner that brings undue harm or burden even upon themselves. We find in the Aḥādīth:

- Verily your body has a right over you... (Al-Bukhārī)
- Do not walk with one shoe. (Muslim)
- Nabī ﷺ forbade from sitting in a manner that one is half in the shade and half in the sun. (Ibn Mājah)

Consideration for Animals:

Rasūlullāh ﷺ also taught us to give animals due consideration:

- Fear Allāh regarding these mute animals; mount them when they are fit [i.e. they have fully rested]. (Abū Dāwūd)

- Abstain from making the backs of your animals pulpits. [i.e. do not engage in a lengthy conversation whilst mounted on them]. (Abū Dāwūd)

Consideration for Other Creations of Allāh ﷻ:

Rasūlullāh ﷺ's teachings of consideration and care were not limited to the creatures we can see and perceive, but also to those we cannot. Rasūlullāh ﷺ stated:

Whoever eats from this tree (referring to garlic) should not come close to our masājīd as the angels are inconvenienced by those things which inconvenience humans. (An-Nasa'ī)

To summarise, Islām teaches showing mercy to every creation and does not tolerate causing even the least amount of hurt or grief to anyone. It is beyond comprehension that a religion which emphasises mercy and compassion to such a degree and prohibits causing harm to even non-humans, could allow even the slightest amount of inconvenience to humans, let alone causing harm or even taking lives.

May Allāh ﷻ embed these beautiful teachings in our lives and spread peace throughout the world. Āmīn.

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